FAST CAPITALISM

An Interdisciplinary Journal

Volume 10 • Issue 1

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Fast Capitalism is an academic journal with a political intent. We publish reviewed scholarship and essays about the impact of rapid information and communication technologies on self, society and culture in the 21st century. We do not pretend an absolute objectivity; the work we publish is written from the vantages of viewpoint. Our authors examine how heretofore distinct social institutions, such as work and family, education and entertainment, have blurred to the point of near identity in an accelerated, post-Fordist stage of capitalism. This makes it difficult for people to shield themselves from subordination and surveillance. The working day has expanded; there is little down time anymore. People can 'office' anywhere, using laptops and cells to stay in touch. But these invasive technologies that tether us to capital and control can also help us resist these tendencies. People use the Internet as a public sphere in which they express and enlighten themselves and organize others; women, especially, manage their families and nurture children from the job site and on the road, perhaps even 'familizing' traditionally patriarchal and bureaucratic work relations; information technologies afford connection, mitigate isolation, and even make way for social movements. We are convinced that the best way to study an accelerated media culture and its various political economies and existential meanings is dialectically, with nuance, avoiding sheer condemnation and ebullient celebration. We seek to shape these new technologies and social structures in democratic ways.

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Getting to Ten

Ben Agger , Timothy W. Luke

Nearly a decade ago on the eve of the Great Recession, we believed that new publishing possibilities afforded to anyone with sufficient Internet connectivity and enough intellectual contacts provided an outlet for the historical sociology, cultural studies, political economy, and aesthetic criticism that anchors critical social theory. Older existing print journals had not yet fully made their ways into the digital domain, and maybe some of them never would. What could a "born digital" journal do differently, how might it create new scholarly networks, who would join its experiments from across the academy, around the world, and alongside the established media ecologies of print journals? Running with this sense of curiosity, and pushing ahead with a willingness to give it a try, Fast Capitalism journal posted its 1.1 issue in 2005.

Our journal was born of excitement about interdisciplinary critical theory and cultural studies, and frustration about existing so-called peer reviewed journals. There are two types of faculty-those with strong and singular disciplinary identities (e.g., chemist, economist, psychologist) and others of us with diffuse and multiple identities, such as cultural studies and critical theory. We are at home nowhere and everywhere, and this is an outlet for people like us! Our editorial board reflects the fact that most of us are of the second type, working across, and between, disciplines. Fast Capitalism not only bridges disciplines; it connects social and cultural studies. As well, we were frustrated by traditional so-called refereed journals that use peer reviewing as a political shield. We are convinced that editing is undecidable authorial work, which is to say that editors have a great deal of control over what they publish-picking reviewers, reading and interpreting reviews, passing advice back to authors, making final editorial decisions. The process is far from objectively grounded in a Platonic notion of quality or merit. It is, as all readings are, political. We resist and deplore the editorial will to power, which pretends that there is an Archimedean standard of quality that is external to the busy, muddy literary work that underlies intellectual life. As Derrida said, there is nothing outside the text, by which he meant that it is impossible to escape the prison house of language, first identified by Nietzsche. Paraphrasing Merleau-Ponty, where he acknowledges the difficulty of predicting the timing of a socialist revolution, editorial standards are not written indelibly on any wall nor inscribed in a metaphysical heaven. We are Nietzchean Frankfurters open to French insights about texts, writing and reading, and it is clear that what we publish here reflects our frustration with (call it) positivist editing.

Whether authors who publish in our pages can reap career capital is somewhat beside the point. Certain U.S. disciplines, such as English, more quickly validated electronic publication than have some of the social science disciplines. Inasmuch as it is nearly impossible to remain invisible on the Internet, we suspect that our articles have impact, even as they may fall through the cracks of disciplinary valorization for hiring, tenuring and promoting purposes. Perhaps in ten years, most of us will be driving down the road in hybrids, and, similarly, books and articles will be issued mainly, or only, in electronic form. The crisis of book publishing certainly suggests this possibility.

Moving the journal from an idea into actual implementation amid what was then uncertain acceptance of purely digital content, we believed Fast Capitalism would be a test for the wide-open possibilities of "open source" scholarly publishing. The contradictions created by greater connectivity and multiple scholarly communities becoming trapped in the intellectual property rights regime of print capitalism were, and still are, quite real. The chance to get new ideas to more people even faster, while maintaining a sense of a free intellectual commons, had been possible for nearly a decade. Yet, too few were truly trying something new. Clearly, Fast Capitalism's authors and audiences have been frustrated by the overly compartmentalized and strangely disciplinary leanings of far too many established

print outlets as they puzzled their paths through these evolving publication possibilities. No longer needing to watch and wait, we launched Fast Capitalism as an exploration in open source, multi-media, mixed method, and cross-disciplinary discourse to speak from the Left to any who would listen. Taking "fast capitalism" as its title from Agger's 1989 book with the University of Illinois Press, the journal has endeavored in many respects to be a critique of the political economy and sociology that Luke's 1989 book, also with the University of Illinois, mapped out as "screens of power." It is fitting that our journal is available on the screen.

As we anticipated in Year Zero of the post-Cold War terrains of the "New World Order," the organic connections between accelerating, expanding, and intensifying fast-capitalist exchange and the seductive, secretive, and selective screening of power have only become more fascinating and significant over the past quarter century as many new nations and economies have become ensnared in their own constant contact with 24x7 transnational exchange in the development of actually existing neoliberalism. While some academic journals and a few engaged sites of critical discourse did address their import, none did so with the eclectic scope and effective focus we believed was necessary. After the dismal re-election of George W. Bush in 2004, the reckless choice by the U.S. and its "coalition of the willing" to go to war in Iraq in 2003, the loss of that coalition's sense of mission for the Afghan intervention in 2002, the shocking Al Queda terrorist attacks in 2001, and the miserable institutional failures experienced during 2000 by the "world's sole remaining superpower" in the Bush/Gore presidential contest as well as the popping of the dotcom economic bubble, 2005 definitely seemed like an opportune moment to wade into the flow of discourse rising on the Internet in e-journals, web logs, e-books, and listservs. It was time to consider the uncommon crises that the U.S. and the world at large have been confronting in the 21st century.

With little institutional support beyond a bare minimum bandwidth provision, software application support, benign silent tolerance, and occasional news releases from our home campuses at the University of Texas-Arlington and Virginia Polytechnic Institute & State University, Fast Capitalism launched issue 1.1 during mid-2005 after several months of preliminary development and extended discussion. Using standard simple HTML constructs, deploying a few flash pages juxtaposing images of contemporary capitalism, the journal used images, sound, music, and movement to introduce old and new generations of authors to new audiences in the Anglophone infosphere. Matthew Levy designed the journal, keeping its look spare and to the point. Noah Kersey has assumed the managing editorship, and does the arduous coding work that makes publication possible. He is our means of production.

Some Fast Capitalism writers have been at their trade since the 1960s, while others published their first articles as intellectuals in Fast Capitalism in the 2000s. Even though it is posted in the U.S., the journal is a global publication that has invited contributions from around the world as well as taken up topics of concern in every corner of the world. The writing is political and critical, but it also can be introspective and reflective as authors think through questions of theory and practice, rationality and emotion, order and disorder, personality and society.

Like many journals, it expresses the personal interests, professional networks, and political engagements of the editors, its advisory board, and the authors who publish in it. Yet, it also has captured, if only in part, many currents in mainstreams of our 21st century Zeitgeist, rising from many events that have marked the contours the past decade. Like 10.1, 1.1 was anchored by a major multimedia work organized by Robert Goldman, and this initial number investigated the technocultures of speed, power, and capital. 2.1 in 2006 continued this interest with another collection of contributions on technocapitalism and its destructively creative practices. In early 2007, 2.2 examined animal rights, the critical theory of nature developed by William Leiss, and other questions of environmental order/disorder. The concerns of textuality and new media preoccupied 4.1 in 2008, while 5.2 in 2009 looked into the dynamics of social media like Facebook. 6.1 in 2009 was a special examination of narrative, biography, and identity with elaborate online art presentations and works of reflective writing. The global economic crisis was at the center of 7.1 in 2010, and 8.1 in 2011 was another special issue tied to studies of Slovenia, the European project, and crisis-ridden capitalism. The disruptive role of new media in the academy concerned many of the pieces in 8.2 during 2011, while the implications of the global "Occupy Wall Street" movements tied together many of the studies presented in 9.1 during 2012.

Along the way, two other issues - 3.1 in 2007 that focused on the April 16, 2007 shootings at Virginia Tech and 5.1 in 2009 that reflected back on the influence of Paul Piccone and his journal Telosin "the Americanization of critical theory" since the 1960s - were quickly picked up by established publishing houses to appear as bound print books respectively in 2008 and 2011. The Virginia Tech book was issued by Rowman & Littlefield, and the book on Piccone's legacy appropriately appeared under the imprint of Telos Press. Likewise, issue 10.1 initially was planned around the theme of "gun violence and public life" in the wake of the 2012 shootings at Sandy Hook Elementary

School in Newton, Connecticut, but this compendium of papers went instead directly into production as a bound book with Paradigm Publishers.

What comes next is always difficult to foretell, but there will be a Fast Capitalism 10.2 and/or 11.1. To get there, and beyond, we invite you to join the debates that have unfolded here for nearly a decade.

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Searching for Value in the Wastelands of Commodity Fetishism

Robert Goldman, Andrew Miller

Even as the dust of the 2008 global financial crisis settled into a grim recession, a majority of advertising discourses continued to herald landscapes of well-being produced by corporate technologies of speed and rationality set against a backdrop of an invisible no-hands market. We have long since become culturally accustomed to advertising narratives that depict technologies and commodities, and not necessarily people, as the key sources of productivity and value. During recent decades, the hegemonic tilt of both corporate and commodity advertising has exalted computerized technologies and financial capital as the essential sources of value and well-being. And of course, the whole of the advertising system is organized to lend value to brands—one cannot successfully market consumer commodities in global markets without a brand identity. In a postmodern ad world, a strong case can be made that the source of value has been relocated to the semiotic organization of visual symbols. With globalization, the separation of production from consumption has widened, at the same time that the pressure on commodity advertising has escalated to infuse brand, or sign, value into its products. The sum of this is that advertising routinely divorces commodities from their producers—as a discourse, commodity advertising is prone to reproducing ideologies of commodity reification.

But hegemonic discourses, by their very nature, exist in a force field of contestation and contradiction. In order to affirm the value of brands in commodity relations, the vast majority of advertising represses most of the social and cultural "effects" produced by a commodity system, as well as, of course, repressing key contradictions of structural inequality in the global capitalist system.

But in an oversaturated advertising world where so many advertisers mimic one another, this leaves open a space for a few advertisers who seek to gain advantage by differentiating their brands—making them stand out—by raising otherwise repressed questions about the relationship between "value" and human "labor." What constitutes value, and where does it come from? What happens when soft questions about the meaningfulness of labor reappear on the screen of the spectacle? We begin by looking at how the subject of value, and what constitutes it, flows throughout advertising as a form of tacit knowledge.

The Question of Value in Advertisements

Advertising presides over the production of semiotic exchange values—sign values—within the globalizing commodity system. This system of commodified semiotics has evolved into a primary axis for differentiating branded consumer goods under the regime of global capital.

When we look at advertisements we see discursive instruments aimed at socially constructing value. Concepts of value are almost always embedded in the structure, as well as in the interpretation, of ads. The semiotics of value is so intrinsic to contemporary advertising practice that we rarely take notice that the premise of valuation—which the ad hopes to lead us to validate—is the subtext of most ads. The average consumer ad has been devised according to a formula for creating structural equations aimed at bolstering a value proposition. As such, advertising constitutes

a technological form for reproducing what Jean Baudrillard referred to as "the structural law of value," a stage of value construction that rests on referential fluidity. The matter, in a nutshell, is that value can no longer be considered a stable or durable entity: indeed, as Capital continues to mature, the half-life of "value" becomes more and more fleeting, requiring that more value, new value, amplified value, be ceaselessly assembled to replace that which decays and falls out of orbit. In short, advertising is an institution charged with the task of conjuring up value semiotically, even though the process of accomplishing this simultaneously undermines this goal by contributing to a clutter of signs and values.

Ads semiotically frame the cultural production of value. Lending additional value to a commodity via advertising is the goal, but not all can succeed in a competitive sign economy. In competitive markets, commodities without a memorable sign value are at a significant disadvantage in staying price competitive and offsetting the erosion of price margins. Along with cutting production costs through global supply chains and the outsourcing of labor, semiotically adding value to brands has become a basic tool in trying to offset the tendency for rates of profit to decline as markets mature. This process requires mining the value of already existing signifieds: those signifieds may be drawn from a celebrity athlete's perceived market value, or from the ideological category of "Moms" who sacrifice for their kids. The potential list of signifieds could go on ad infinitum, although in practice the tendency is to overconcentrate on a relative few: e.g., when LeBron James wins championships, the brand bandwagon effect launches into frenzied repetition.

Sign value can be thought of in terms of a few ideal types; in practice, of course, there is a good deal of overlap. One commonplace method sets up a framework for constructing exchange value by placing a good or service into equivalence with another value—permitting value to be expressed as an exchange value. At the level of content, the range of signifiers and signifieds may seem nearly infinite, but structurally this approach obeys a more limited series of semiotic maneuvers (see Williamson, 1978). For instance, a shampoo might be valued by the number of admiring glances its models draw, so that admiring glances become the currency behind the currency—this Baudrillard (1981) called symbolic exchange value. In the currency of sign values, signifiers (the carriers of meanings) and signifieds (the meanings) must be unhinged from wider meanings systems so that they can be recombined and modified in service of the Brand value. Another approach translates the meaning of a commodity into symbolic value—the classic example is how diamonds have been made to symbolize eternal love; or how Nike has come to symbolize a philosophy of everyday life ("Just do it"). A third route involves what Baudrillard (1981) called "the sign value of an object; its value within a system of objects." This is most obvious in what we call "sign wars" ads, ads in which one brand's logo bests another.

In the current stage of commodity-sign capitalism, the brand must function as a meta-sign. That is to say, the leading brands are leading brands because they are able to unify under their logo a whole range of meanings; for example the Nike swoosh gathers and unifies a range of signifiers and signifieds under its umbrella. The Brand as meta-sign

"gathers" a multiplicity of meanings into a single Name and thus "opens up" a whole world. Levi's does not just point towards the alleged properties of a pair of jeans, it sustains a whole world of meaning(s) which provides the background against which we experience what it is to wear jeans, the "world" which comes with wearing jeans" (Slavoj Žižek, 2010:356-357).

The Levi's "Go Forth to Work" campaign, which we shall discuss in detail, fashioned together images of Braddock, Pennsylvania to summon forth "a whole world of meaning(s)." Levi's history of trying to ontologically frame "real spaces" goes back to the early 1980s and the "Levi's 501 Blues" campaign that sought to tap into the musical texture of urban Blues to locate an aura or climate of individual authenticity. That 1980s' campaign cultivated a stance of self-awareness about the ontology of everyday life as expressed via the TV commercial itself—it marked a postmodern turn in advertising, a "knowing wink" about commodity identities in the age of the simulacra (Goldman and Papson, 1991). The campaign constructed hyperreal signifiers of realism, wrapped in a self-referential awareness about the nature of advertising itself. As a central player in those early efforts (1984-1987) at constructing a simulacrum of the real, Levi's sought to position itself as a space of authenticity that ran counter to the rest of the world of commodity signs with their admonitions that one could find a prefabricated authenticity by consuming a particular brand of jeans or soda pop or cars. The 1984-1987 Levi's campaigns represented a shift in the landscape of advertising—the question of what constitutes "the real" when passed through the lenses of the media was now permanently a part of a wider cultural discourse. But the knowing wink had a self-fulfilling dimension: viewers hailed by "the knowing wink" soon learned to be wary of its claims, as well as its many imitators. Cynicism continued to evolve as the spectator's armor of protection.

The current phase of this "semiotic capitalism" has been heavily influenced by the shift to digital technologies that are linked to the rise of social media. Digital technologies streamline the processes of fracturing meaning into semiotic particles so that they can be recombined to form novel [read, differentiated] meanings. Exposure increases, as does the speed and the frequency of delivery of commodity sign formulas. When joined to social media this leads to heightened awareness of ads and a percentage of viewers grow restive, cynical and resistant about their participation in this sign economy.

If every advertiser used the same formulas, the same signifiers, and the same signifieds, the clutter would make it even more difficult to differentiate the sign values they concoct and promote. So advertisers adopt a variety of strategies in how they set up their valuation equations—the appropriation of a cultural value is one frequent starting point; followed by simple semiotic comparisons or contrasts that place the preferred cultural value in relation to the brand's value. This dialectic of differentiation and mimetic repetition defines the search for value amongst advertisers, so that the same prosaic tropes frequently repeat themselves until they burn out from overuse—like the way that too many beer ads juxtapose having to choose between a beautiful woman or a brand-name beer. This tired advertising joke invariably ends with surprise, surprise, the male selecting the value of the beer brand over the value of sex. The logic is that if being with a beautiful woman is seen as having value in our culture, then this beer must really be worth purchasing. But if desire is the true metric of value in a market society, then this discursive game must be replayed endlessly because evanescent desire, under this system, itself needs to be reproduced endlessly. Value in this light is always contestable, because it is always a matter of semiotic assembly and disassembly.[1] Today, the very fabrication of semiotic superiority has become the subject of mockery in still other ads. To illustrate, Geico ran a 2012 ad campaign playing on the ubiquitous taste test—a simple device for demonstrating the semiotic superiority of brand X over brand Y—by staging a "car insurance taste test" with good-natured volunteers who sip small cups of drink representing Geico and "Other" (its competitor). After each participant prefers the taste of Geico over the taste of the "Other" (accompanied by grimacing facial gestures) the joke is completed when they are asked if this was "your first insurance taste test?" to which they respond with dumbfounded looks.

We are intrigued by what we might learn from those ads that incorporate self-reflection about where value comes from into both the narrative frame and the theme of the ad. Why bother to raise the question of value from the tacit to the manifest level? Let us begin with two ads that explicitly draw attention to what constitutes value in order to affirm the value of the particular advertised good. The first ad for a highly disposable commodity (gum) seems to be set up as a joke, while the second ad for hopefully the most durable commodity that we will purchase (a house), a commodity that functions as the primary investment vehicle for millions of people, presents itself as a folksy-ministerial homily that edifies the true bedrock of value—the wealth of uncommodified personal experiences, the part that MasterCard calls "priceless."

A 2010 Trident campaign jokingly imagined for viewers a world in which people would want to get paid with Trident gum. Despite the fact that the ad's premise confuses currency as a medium of exchange with the accumulation and consumption of objects of miniscule value, the silliness briefly exposes the arbitrariness of value, and the way it is represented. Set in a suburban middle class home, a stereotypical father comes home from work to his family.

> Father excitedly enters: "Hey, guess who got a raise?"
> Wife: "Really, how much?"
> Husband: "Twenty thousand, (pause) packs of Trident Layers."
> Wife: "What?"
> Husband: "Yeah!"
> Daughter: "You're getting paid in gum?"
> Husband: "No! That would be crazy. I'm getting paid in Trident Layers—delicious layers of flavor."
> Wife: "I don't believe this."
> Husband: "I know. We're set for life."

The ad's joke structure acknowledges anxieties about stagnant wages and "underwater" mortgages, and the doubts thus triggered about what constitutes a secure, reliable basis for value in a world beset by volatile upheavals where value invariably turns out to be much more insubstantial than advertised. The pragmatic wife (who is presumably responsible for managing the household budget) immediately registers her incredulity at her husband's foolishness. When even his daughter questions the rationality of being paid in gum, the father responds with the ad's crucial line in defining value: "No! That would be crazy. I'm getting paid in Trident Layers." Had it been generic commodity gum, yeah, this would not represent a fair price, but because Trident Layers are supposedly unique and deliciously flavorful (a proprietary commodity), their value instead becomes elevated into something materially substantial. Although

structured as a joke about the contemporary compensation for the performance of labor, like most advertising jokes it does not ask us to dwell long, or deeply, about matters of exploitation accomplished through this streamlining of the commodity-money-commodity circuit of relations that Marx explored. Perhaps a more daring campaign would have included a follow-up ad that featured the father trying to pay his mortgage in Trident Layers.

A 2012 Coldwell Banker ad performs a more sweetly nostalgic account of "what defines value."

> Voiceover by Tom Selleck: "How to put a value on a home.
> You start by taking the smell of pancakes made on Sunday morning,
> and times that by the sound of kids laughing from the bottom of their bellies.
> Then you add the taste of a good Cabernet with family at Thanksgiving,
> And multiply that by the warmth of a winter fire.
> Then you subtract the stress of work, and minus the struggles of the outside world.
> Add the power of a bedtime story, and times that by the square root of a grandmother kissing her grandchild.
> Multiply this by about fifty thousand memories, and a hundred thousand smiles,
> And then you have the value of a home.
> Coldwell Banker, where home begins."

With scene after scene of adorable laughing children, this ad operates on shameless appropriation of the value of family in American mythology. The nostalgic desire for an imaginary family of yore, a comfortable family unit that encompasses multigenerational emotional commitments and celebrates the traditions, becomes a selling point. In consumer ideologies, labor has long since been erased as the site of meaningful self-production, and indeed, as a site of necessity. Instead, the house emerged as both the new fountain of value production and as the preeminent site of meaningfulness. During the boom years, it did indeed seem as if the capitalist Holy Grail had been achieved through the magic of financial instruments that appeared to permit the multiplication of value without the necessity of wage labor. Home values skyrocketed, as did second mortgages to cash in on disposable income to keep the consumer pipeline streaming during an era of stagnant wages (Brenner, 2004). And then the music stopped and a lot of folks lost all of that imaginary value. The reverberations of the valuation bubbles—the housing bubble, then the derivatives bubble, and the financial crisis that ensued—have however raised anew concerns about the relationship between price and value. The Coldwell Banker ad accomplishes a sleight-of-hand as it redirects reflection away from the housing bubble with its attendant questions on how to distinguish 'real' value from the puffery of market illusions. By placing all this within the language of mathematical formulas and equations, it reminds us that emotion-laden sets of calculations represent the true socially and culturally constructed calculus of value.

Labor, Value & the Search for Meaning in the Spectacle of Commodity Fetishism

Representations of labor made a stealthy reappearance in the world of television advertising following the 2008 financial crisis. While this makes sense, given that recessions prompt messages suitable for the times, why have previous recessions not rattled the soft convictions of advertising discourse quite so much? For decades, Labor has registered as little more than an invisible assumption in consumer-goods ads, the necessary but tacitly invisible prerequisite to being able to consume. As anticipated by Guy Debord, Jean Baudrillard and Wolfgang Fritz Haug, commodity fetishism jumped the fence from production relations to consumption relations in the second half of the 20th century.

So why would a self-reflexive attitude about labor reappear in the last few years? And when we say 'reappear,' we are aware that this represents but a modest cameo disturbance in the overall force field of representations produced by advertisers. Still, reading the more typical representations in terms of such minority texts permits us to "overturn the hierarchy at a given moment" (Derrida, 1981:41).

Though representations of labor may have disappeared over the years in consumer-goods ads, representations of employees have never quite disappeared in corporate image ads. Their appearance in corporate ads over the last decade is usually included to indicate how happily productive the firm is, or how up-to-date technologies harmonize with a contented and dedicated workforce. With the possible exception of ads for online employment agencies (e.g., Monster.com) few ads, however, actually raise questions about the meaning of a job or about its relation to the production of value.

Two consumer campaigns from 2010 raised questions about the relationship between meaningful labor and

what is valuable to us. At first glance, these campaigns for Volkswagen Jetta and Levi's 501 jeans appear to share little in common. The Volkswagen campaign for the 2011 Jetta model featured ads that called attention to commodity fetishism in relation to two different kinds of labor and two different motivations for labor. In the Jetta ads, however, the text takes the side of the consumer. In the first ad, titled 'Moonlighting,' the laborer and the consumer are the same person, a reminder that wage labor is still necessary for most of us if we wish to make expenditures for durable goods like aesthetically pleasing automobiles. Put another way, labor is treated as an activity devoid of meaning, but merely as a means to the end of consumption. The second ad, entitled 'Dream Team,' addresses labor from the side of an engineering team that designed the new Jetta—it offers a winking joke about the tragedy of commodity fetishism if one actually takes pride, or seeks meaning, in one's work. It ends by reaffirming the goal of commodity fetishism as price fetishism because price fetishism always serves the consumer.

There is no joke in the Levi's 'Braddock' campaign, which included a print campaign, television ads, and a series of eleven documentary-style YouTube videos that dwelt on individual personalities trying to make it in Braddock, Pennsylvania, a long-suffering rust-belt city. These videos raise questions about the value of labor, about its meaningfulness, and possibly about the resurrection of an American work ethic in order to find fulfillment, community and authenticity.

Volkswagen Jetta Tells Fetishism Jokes

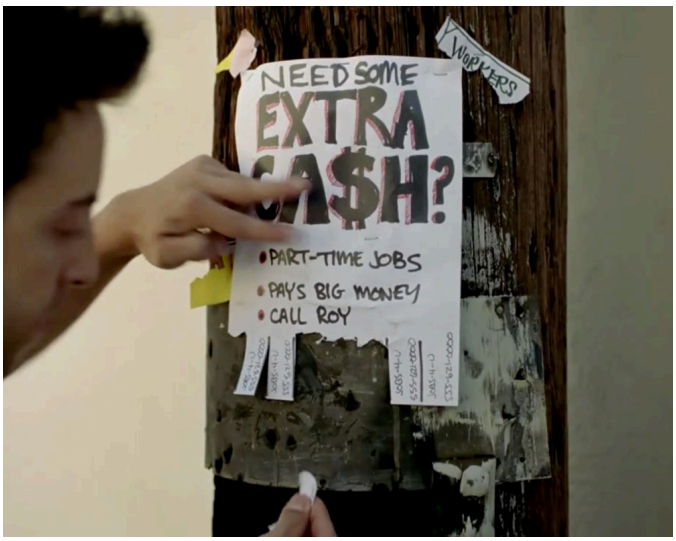
Volkswagen Jetta ads from 2010 affirm a familiar ideological ring—the greater good when it comes to conflicting interests between consumers and workers should always go to the side of consumers. An ad titled 'Moonlighting' actually situates the balance between the consumer's interest and the worker's interest within the same person, a worker who is willing to suffer in order to make his consumer self happy. In a sense the ad asks 'what is the value of alienated labor?' Though this yields a familiar advertising conclusion, the path of the narrative and how it is told reveals something more. Viewers are introduced to a young man who works as a hospital orderly (his day job), bureaucratically organized and regulated. The narrative is established in the opening scenes as the orderly looks out a window and becomes entranced by a billboard that pictorially envisions the new Jetta in the same way a glamorous model might appear in a Victoria's Secret ad. This billboard image makes no mention of price; it is a tease that tempts him (seduces) with its allure. He tears the same ad from a newspaper and mounts it, like a centerfold, next to him to keep himself motivated while he works. As the ad plays out it evolves into a discourse about how much labor is required to acquire this car, even though the ad treats the car itself almost entirely as a commodity fetish. If the car's value as a material product hinges on the exercise of labor by autoworkers, this remains fully out of sight and out of consciousness. Instead the ad mirrors an oddly non-reflexive self-reflection on the relationship between the advertising of desire and the consuming subject. It is hard to imagine a more one-dimensional account of advertising's seductive powers: to wit, the car's visual image immediately excites his desire to possess it!

Behind the images, the story is narrated by the lyrics of a five-decades-old country song by Wynn Stewart, "Another Day, Another Dollar." Though it is a rhythmically and harmonically upbeat song about the dulling rhythms and routines of everyday working class life, the lyrics convey a sobering dose of fatalism, inevitability and sacrifice. Written in 1962, the song exemplifies the Bakersfield sound, country music for the western white working class of that era.

> Another day another dollar, daylight comes I'm on my way.
> Another day another dollar, workin' my whole life away.
> The boss told me I'd get paid weekly and that's exactly how I'm paid.
> Another day another dollar, workin' my whole life away.
> Another day another dollar, daylight comes I'm on my way.
> Another day another dollar, workin' my whole life away.
> My family is my thanksgiving, I love them more and more each day.
> And they're the reason I keep living and working my whole life away.
> Another day another dollar, daylight comes I'm on my way.
> Another day another dollar, workin' my whole life away.
> Workin' my whole life away.

Considering that this is an ad, the lyrics are remarkably unedited until the lines about "My family is my thanksgiving,

I love 'em more and more each day. And they're the reason I keep living and working my whole life away." Those lines are omitted in the ad. The reason given in the original song for enduring the loss of freedom—the grind, the bosses, the weekly wage (and not a salary—was because of love of family. By contrast, in the ad, love of family has been replaced as the primary motivation by the individual's desire to own an aesthetically pleasing object of desire. The song reaffirmed an echo of the masculine pride that had been surrendered to the hourly wage, by recasting this loss of manhood in the workplace within a patriarchal, and romanticized, image of loving [taking care of] one's family. In the Jetta ad, even that patriarchal pride seems to have melted away—indeed, the jobs he accepts all require that he degrade himself in some way—in order to serve the engines of his own desire. His desire to possess the car seems to rest on a revival of deferred gratification and a willingness to endure suffering and humiliation for a reward. Thus motivated and in need of "extra cash," the young man throws himself into the informal economy, taking on part-time work as a dog walker, a punching bag for a women's self-defense class, shagging golf balls, a sidewalk hotdog mascot, and a rodeo clown. He freely chooses unfreedom as a worker in order to transfer the "sign of 'freedom'… to the domain of consumption" (Baudrillard, 2005:11). As Marx observed, the freedom of wage labor was essential to the structural condition of alienation (the unfreedom) of the worker.



The informal economy visually symbolized.

After a quick serial survey of the many forms of degrading labor that he performs for extra cash, we see him counting his accumulating stash of money, measuring the distance from his desire. When we see him again as a hospital orderly cleaning a patient's feet, he spies an updated advertising billboard that places the price of the car next to the image. He suddenly realizes that this object of immeasurable desire is so affordable that he can now purchase two with his accumulated cash. Upon seeing this new information about the car's price, he drops his cleaning bucket to the floor; by the time the bucket hits the ground, the scene and the meaning of the bucket transform from a signifier of workday drudgery to his driveway where the bucket's purpose is for lovingly washing his two new VW Jetta vehicles—each now identified by vanity license plates, "MINE" and "MINE 2."

A second ad for the VW Jetta was titled "The Dream Team." Set to bold, energetic music that builds toward a goal, the narrative arc of the first half of the ad tells a story of dedicated and highly skilled engineers and designers working single-mindedly, putting in hours around the clock to accomplish the ideal engineering of the perfect personal vehicle. The crucial labor shown here is the creative labor of designers and engineers. Halfway through the ad the car is showcased at VW headquarters to enthusiastic applause and recognition. For a split second these fashion designers of the car universe receive the acclaim they seek for their labors. The celebration continues in the following scene with the public debut of the car staged as a spectacle—where the most important feature of the car is its ostensible visual beauty and where its fetish value matters most. But when the price is announced at $15,995 the team of designers turns emotionally crestfallen before sinking into despair, devastated by how cheap the product of their labor has been made. Instead of this vision of beauty proving their talent, it replaces them. All their hard work and the perfection they have engineered are devalued in this moment. This twist captures what Richard Sennett refers

to as "talent and the specter of uselessness" (Sennett, 2007:83). Their talent, after all, does not make them special or worthy of honor as they had hoped, but rather replaceable and dispensable.

Though this is great news for you, the potential consumer, ("great for the price of good"), the creators experience a loss of meaning—with their identities hinged to the product of their labors, their characters react to this price depreciation as a sign of their own deflated significance. How then can so much value be had without exploiting some part of the labor process? By replacing labor with technological automation? Or by reminding us that there is no solid footing for even talented labor in liquid modernity (Bauman, 2000)? The ad treats the dream team's experience of creative alienation as a joke, for their alienation benefits the consumer in lower prices. What remains tacit is that their alienation also benefits the capitalist's bottom line.

Ads work best when they address the task of conceptualizing the value of a branded good or service. A tacit conception of value as worth is the thing that premises the price of said goods. Historically, brand goods advertising eschewed the explicit matter of price: that is, the ads aimed at bolstering the social, cultural, or economic reasons for having the commodity. That changed with the advent of Wal-Mart and other giant retailers, where a competitive emphasis on low prices in their advertising has for all practical concerns made price and value the same thing. Effacing value is however not a viable long-range strategy. By continuously lowering prices, the Wal-Marts of the world run headlong into the potential devaluation of value. That is, the distinction between value and price—or between use value and exchange value—begins to disappear, and without that distinction the meaning of value begins to wane. This is precisely what the Volkswagen joke is about—the hegemony of price eclipses quaint classical conceptions of the meaningfulness of labor and the durability of value.

Running opposite the Volkswagen discourse on labor and value is the Levi's "Ready to Work" campaign that posits that honest labor is its own reward and the only way to rebuild institutions that have broken down. In the Levi's universe of Braddock, labor that has purpose leads to a vision of re-centering the self and community—of a self that is not immaterial and seeks certainty about one's sense of self being grounded in something social.

Looking for Meaning at the Landfill

Catalyzed by inflated asset value bubbles, the post-2008 recession came with double-digit unemployment rates coupled with continued employment at stagnant wages. The recession and its impact on youth entering a shaky labor market were inextricably bound to irrational exuberance and its manic-depressive aftermath. In the midst of this, those entering the first decade of their "careers" confronted a sobering moment of reflection. With the pursuit of "career" already in tatters,[2] many young people had become disillusioned with the prospects of a trail of corporate jobs coupled with the extension of the same old consumerism that had already lost its allure. From the perspective of marketers seeking to reconnect with this youthful demographic, this crisis of motivation looks like a collective search for authenticity situated against a global financial system that accommodates artificially inflated values while marginalizing and depreciating concrete sources of value, namely manual labor.

In the Levi's "Ready to Work" campaign, our theoretical question coincides with their practical task: how can sources of value be relocated or articulated in ways that seem achievable? In cultural, rather than political-economic terms, something like Marx's labor theory of value seemed more necessary than ever. Could the revival of value be resituated in the immediacy of labor, while severing the labor theory of value from its anti-capitalist implications? The Levi's campaign opens a window into how this curious historical sensibility could be represented. Our reading of the Levi's campaign interprets the campaign's representations against the backdrop of global capitalist social relations. We argue that the Levi's ads referenced, but did not formally acknowledge the dimension of capitalist life. As such, Levi's raised questions about labor and social equality in the decimated landscape of capitalist deindustrialization, but treated the latter primarily as a visual abstraction.

When Levi's via Wieden + Kennedy framed the sound bites collected from the young people they found in Braddock, Braddock was made to represent a space outside of the capitalist social relations that they have come to mistrust. And in truth, Braddock had really gone missing from the map of contemporary capitalism. A town left behind, where it just doesn't pay to maintain markets, Braddock had been all-but-abandoned by Capital. The era of Post-Fordist globalization signaled the death warrant for industrial manufacturing in Braddock. After the steel plants closed, unemployment drove away the population and the collapse of the retail infrastructure followed. Without a tax base, the public sector withered, and there was no money to maintain the urban infrastructure of buildings

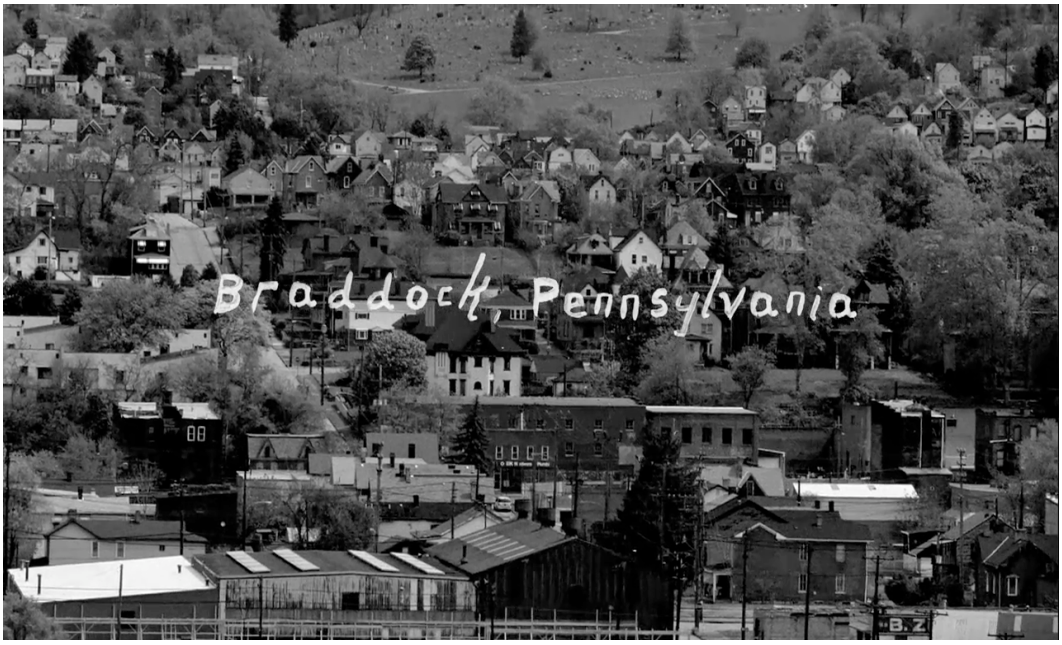
and streets. The real-estate market essentially collapsed, and without liquidity or capital infusions, the city decayed. What's left ranged in the ads from a few retirees who have been able to make ends meet along with the last of the middle class—such as a Miss-Havisham type who sits cloistered amongst her antiques. But the ads themselves focus primarily on the new migrants to town such as a self-styled urban farmer, very serious about his mission to grow food from earth that once sat beneath the buildings of urban industrialization.

The ad's director made clear that the campaign aimed to hail their 18-to-34 audience with a focus on the theme of "authenticity." We use the category of Hipster to refer to a disunified cultural category, but one that stands out as a subset of the Millennial generational demographic that finds mainstream commodity culture unsatisfying and empty—a desert of meaning. The audience hailed in the Braddock stories runs across a number of social categories—interracial, local working class, former lumpenproletariat, and hipster migrants who are college educated. All of these taken together form an imagined "new working class."[3] As much middle class as working class, these groups seem to coalesce around cultural preferences, and unify in their commitment to manual labor—aimed at both demolition and rebuilding.

Font-work 101: these images convey the general theme of Levi's campaign through font use, namely the preference for that which is done-by-hand over that which can be accomplished via computer codes. Flouting kerning techniques (top) and signifying a "historical" Braddock through handwritten captioning (bottom) are two examples of how font can guide interpretation.

The 2010 Levi-Strauss "Ready to Work" campaign posed questions about the meaning and value of labor. An integrated, multi-chapter series of videos focused on the deteriorating steel town of Braddock, Pennsylvania as a specific backdrop, and a symbolic microcosm, of the devaluation of American labor, and as a home to the revival of a collective sense of spirit and meaning, manifest in urban renewal projects that invoke the forsaken value of blue-collar, manual labor—sweat equity. Throughout the series, Levis constructed montages of urban decay, post-industrial wastelands, interwoven with the faces of those who have borne witness to Braddock's history or have since migrated to the Pennsylvania mill town. Levi's framed these scenic montages with a title card that read "We Are All Workers." This title card aimed at hailing a relatively youthful totem group that identifies with the marginalized and displaced population of blue-collar workers.

Font-work 101: these images convey the general theme of Levi's campaign through font use, namely the preference for that which is done-by-hand over that which can be accomplished via computer codes. Flouting kerning techniques (top) and signifying a "historical" Braddock through handwritten captioning (bottom) are two examples of how font can guide interpretation.



This title card consisted of slightly mismatched felt letters akin to those amateurishly placed (that is, they are not perfectly spaced) on little league baseball jerseys. Considerable font-work has been undertaken to fashion a "hand-made" sign—the letters are of varied sizes and spacing. In the advertising world, where so much signification has been compressed into the association of a font with a brand, this stylized way of differentiating the totemic heading, "WE ARE ALL WORKERS" can be seen as a signifying strategy for accentuating various possible meanings: "Imperfect," "Working Class," "Workers with Limited Resources," all of which allude to pride in the flawed, but nevertheless vulnerable sources of otherwise forgotten labor that unite this newly reestablished collective.

Levi's undertook this campaign in the midst of a crisis of the global capitalist system. This pivotal historical moment may be attributed, at least partly, to globalization and the decline of the American work ethic, once mythologized by an upwardly mobile manual-laboring class that has been supplanted by the rise of immaterial labor as a fresh source of value for capitalist accumulation. Braddock, PA signifies a rustbelt town left behind in the information age, an industry-heavy town that failed to adapt to the post-Fordist standards of production. Indeed, as a long-time Braddock resident laments, "I remember when Braddock started to change, not because Braddock changed—the whole world was changing." This helpless recollection speaks about economic, social, and political restructurings of a globalizing capitalist system that sent manufacturing chasing cheap labor elsewhere, while devaluing blue-collar labor. In other words, the shift from a Fordist economy, centered on a productionist, blue-collar working class, to post-Fordism, where immaterial labor within a flexible, knowledge- and communication-based economy generates higher forms of value by catering to multinational consumer capitalism and expanding lucrative financial markets (Hardt & Negri 2000). The Levi's campaign, then, sought to rekindle the ideals of value that are inextricably bound to the American work ethic and manifest in manual labor, but which have since been displaced by intellectual and immaterial labor in recent decades.

Before going further, while we refer to the Levi's campaign, their advertising agency—Wieden+Kennedy—also played a major role in shaping the campaign philosophically. It is particularly noteworthy that Wieden+Kennedy also sculpted the Chrysler ad campaign that culminated with the "Halftime in America" ad during the 2012 Superbowl. The Chrysler campaign hailed the collective solidarity of those who identify with the United States, and it did so with an inspirational narrative about making an economic recovery through teamwork and hard work. In both campaigns W+K has constructed redemption and revival stories. At first blush, the Chrysler campaign seems more direct about "our" economic and political circumstances, but Chrysler's CEO stated categorically that "It was not intended to be any type of a political overture on our part. The message is sufficiently universal and neutral that it should be appealing to everybody in this country…" Here is an excerpt from Clint Eastwood's speech in the Chrysler ad:

> It's halftime in America, too. People are out of work and they're hurting. And they're all wondering what they're going to do to make a comeback. And we're all scared, because this isn't a game.
>
> The people of Detroit know a little something about this. They almost lost everything. But we all pulled together, now Motor City is fighting again.
>
> I've seen a lot of tough eras, a lot of downturns in my life. And, times when we didn't understand each other. It seems like we've lost our heart at times. When the fog of division, discord, and blame made it hard to see what lies ahead.

Nonetheless, Karl Rove, the right-wing political strategist, labeled this as propaganda for the Obama administration because of the auto industry bailout in 2008. The Chrysler campaign hailed audiences struggling with employment and hard times, but did so by drawing parallels between Capital and viewers under a simple narrative of adversity and the willingness to fight. In the Chrysler ad, the power of collective spirit will prevail—however, this unification of spirit occurs not by engaging the Hegelian dialectic, but by minimizing the negation of loss. By contrast, the Braddock campaign dwells on the disrepair and debris that remains of an industrial city, foregrounding the death of industrial capitalism and the lifestyle it offered. The abandoned homes of Braddock reveal a foreground littered with the scattered debris of excess packaged consumption and commodity obsolescence. Still, like the Chrysler campaign, the Braddock ads are also crafted to be inspirational, focused on a reversion to the elementary acts of hard work driven by the choices of free (frontier) men and women.

An aura of nostalgia frames the Braddock campaign (e.g., a banjo sets the tone over the opening credits of every chapter in the documentary) as an axis of revaluation. While nostalgia establishes a predominant feeling-tone of the campaign, the ads also encode sentiments of authenticity and primitivism that mimic desires amongst disenchanted youth. Set against a growing perception of commodity inauthenticity that surrounds Wall Street and consumer capitalism, the Levi's campaign seeks a dialogue with those who might sympathize with the Occupy movement. Consumer capitalism has begun to get a slightly wider negative rep amongst educated youth. The Levi's campaign presents a discursive commitment to authenticity—an authenticity defined by a landscape of rust belt ruins. It is here that we are introduced to characters who seek to find themselves in manually rebuilding a community.

Revalorizing Labor

Levi's first episode of its Braddock series, entitled "The Seeds of Change," laid the foundation for its campaign by providing a brief history of Braddock that traces its rise and fall, and, more importantly, what the town needs in order to realize any hope for prosperity again. While panning across grainy scenes of industrial decay and landfills that dot the landscape of the western Pennsylvania town, a Braddock resident shares his insight into the city's ills by explaining that "What Braddock really needs is a wave of hardworking, motivated people." Just as this is spoken, the camera cuts to a shot of a white male rolling up his denim sleeves. These frames paint a picture of what has been lost and thus what is needed to revitalize the city.

In contrast to the Volkswagen ads discussed above, which wryly mocked the lack of respect for labor and appealed to the cynicism of contemporary ideologies (Žižek, 1989), the Braddock campaign invites it audience to dwell on the labor performed with our hands. There is more than a touch of nostalgia here for a time when human labor was respected as a fundamental source of human value, and as a fundamental source of moral identity. Indeed, the campaign seeks to revalue the collective spirit of human labor by heroizing it—affording acts of deliberative, purposive manual labor their dignity. Nearly all the forms of labor that are revalued throughout the series are manual tasks such as gardening, landscaping, demolition, and construction. There is nothing high tech in these scenes. Braddock distances itself from labor at the cutting-edge of capitalism, but also declines the degradation of labor. Whereas most corporate advertising since the mid-1990s has spun tales about technologies of flexibility and speed that envision computer-enhanced capitalism as the path to prosperity, Braddock is situated at the tail end of capital's stage of flexible accumulation. Left behind by decades of post-Fordism to the forces of entropy, 90% of Braddock "is in a landfill somewhere." Under such circumstances, Levi's continues to quote John Fetterman, Braddock's mayor, that "reinvention is our only option" for survival.

As global capitalist forces leave behind antiquated spaces, the youthful hipsters who are alienated from commodity culture and marginalized in formal labor markets look to emptied spaces such as Braddock for opportunities to make

a mark culturally (paradise might be an art renaissance) and materially (restoring properties and buildings that are ready for the junk heap). Levi's translates this into new "frontiers" where the frontier is a space that is structurally open, whether that means rebuilding houses abandoned to the decay of neglect and time, or putting in the raised beds of an urban farm on a site that formerly held dilapidated buildings. In hard times it means the opportunity to work and to make meaning through the exercise of one's labors.

Marshall, the self-styled urban farmer, seems intent on reconnecting with Nature à la Thoreau—he is not just doing organic farming, he is doing it all by hand. And he is doing it on the former site of industrial capitalism. This is his frontier, abandoned empty lots that can become an "opportunity" for individual visions and passions. Focused on the negation of industrialization, he cultivates his perfect anti-modern space, free from the intrusions of oppressive workplace authority. He represents the newfound ideological enthusiasm for urban farming—all the buzzwords are here: sustainable, local, fresh, and organic. More romanticist than capitalist in his motivations—this is his spirituality: he finds meaning in this communion between himself and the earth, nothing else mediating the activity. He is "mostly just staring at the ground," intent on the micro tasks in front of him, the raised beds, because it is in these raised beds that he has found his purpose (calling).

Especially in their television ad, Levi's tries to re-establish an aura around manual labor. In a way that seems oddly reminiscent of attempts to replicate "aura" around historical theme parks, the Levi's ads turn the tools of hyperrealism to simulate the grittiness of a radically depressed space, in turn opening up a radically new space for meaning, for the purposes of radical social change or, on the other end of the spectrum, for new outlets for capitalist penetration. In the case of the "Ready to Work" campaign, the latter applies: the re-enchantment of aura around manual labor forms a signifier/signified about which some portion of the 18-to-34 consumer demographic can rally.

Further, to continue with language apropos of geography, the ad distances Braddock from the discourses of late capitalism that privilege space over place and a nomadic lifestyle. Whereas corporate narratives about the capacities of post-Fordist capitalism celebrate an epoch of space that overcomes distance as an obstacle to development and prosperity (Goldman & Papson, 2011), texts like the Levi's Braddock campaign call for a rediscovery of place, a reseeding of the landscape that embraces, rather than rips out, rootedness. In this sense, the Braddock campaign attempts to relocate value in the context of a place. Listen, for example, to Jeb, an artistic migrant to Braddock , share his enthusiasm for having

> The rare chance to sort of do something very unique and something that I was really sort of intrigued by which was the, the opportunity to sort of craft and shape a place, and, uh...pioneer, I suppose a neighborhood or a community that I think needed some, um, some assistance (emphasis added).

In other words, the Levi's campaign sought to wring out and extract value from Braddock as a specific place where community can be rekindled and neighborhoods revived. These are the very social forms that otherwise create a drag on capitalist development in an age where social, economic and political organization tends to be fluid, mobile and nomadic. The rediscovery of place coupled with the revaluation of human labor can be read as a counterattack against the triumph of space over place in the late capitalist era and, more importantly, as Levi's commitment to those who want to locate themselves in place again.

Levi's television ad entitled "Go Forth to Work" offers a romanticized narrative of Braddock. The opening scene harkens back to the Great Depression. A new day rises on Braddock: in a field adjacent to the city, a young man—his faithful dog next to him—warms his hands over a campfire while watching a freight train slowly roll past. A montage unfolds of a city in disrepair mixed with scenes of its residents waking up to "go forth to work." A measured voiceover by a young girl narrates the rest of the ad with an account of the history of westward expansion by American pioneers. The juxtaposition of voiceover and visual scenes draws a parallel to Braddock's reinvention as a contemporary frontier. Though the scenic tour begins in ruin, this is, when said and done, a story of the resiliency of spirit. Set against a montage of construction laborers working to restore abandoned public buildings, the child sage offers this historical mythology coupled with spiritual wisdom:

> "We were taught how the pioneers went into the West. They opened their eyes and made up what things could be. A long time ago, things got broken here. People got sad and left. Maybe the world breaks on purpose, so we can have work to do. People think there aren't frontiers anymore. They can't see how frontiers are all around us."

As a motivational discourse about pressing on through adversity, this is very nearly the stuff of Nike. Indeed, that is precisely where the subject of meaningful labor has been hiding all these years—in ads for athletic shoes that

repeatedly allude to the benefits of hard work, disciplined bodies and the accomplishments of purposeful physicality. The Levi's ad seems to invoke a sense of spirituality, choosing to substitute the passive construction of "maybe the world breaks on purpose" for the active voice of the Occupy movement that we must confront the crises of capitalism. Mystifying the crises of capitalism as world spirit (a world that possesses purpose) throwing challenges in our way in order for us once again to prove ourselves, diverts attention from the contradictions of global capitalism that have left Braddock a blighted relic of heavy industrialization. Instead of pointing out that these new frontiers are the product of the uneven development of economic geographies, the ad valorizes a negative landscape as an emptied space (frontier) that affords a new opportunity for personal growth and capital accumulation. This message might have been more emotional and poignant in 2010 when viewed against the experience of collapsing housing markets and broad layoffs: from 2007 to 2010 the median family lost 40% of its net worth, and the situation was much worse for younger people.

Authentic individual subjectivity and its accompanying complexes of anxiety and alienation have been "displaced" in the postmodern era by the fragmentation of the subject (Jameson 1984). Where Braddock was once a site of industrial alienation, now it beckons as a site where authenticity can be found—by working the soil of an urban farm with one's hands; by rolling up one's sleeves to demolish and rebuild; by creating the conditions for an urban renaissance. Levi's Braddock campaign hails a totem group of individuals who it imagines feel disenchanted and fragmented, and who seek to rediscover themselves in the accomplishments of serving a community by raising food and building shelters and creating art or utility. In a sign economy the imagery of alienation is the essential precondition for authenticity. But while the visual representations of alienation are rendered in terms of a rustbelt aesthetic, the motivational alienation that the ad summons has more to do with a lifetime of disappointing consumer narratives. We suspect that the youthful social demographic that Levi's hails has grown weary of the fabricated authenticity claims that saturate the landscape of commodity consumption. This hipster imaginary is also hungry for experiences of community, experiences that have been sometimes negligible in a social world oriented around hyper-individuated commodity consumption. Though impoverished and materially struggling, Braddock is depicted as a place where individuals can engage in non-alienating social relations by submitting to the necessity of work, and thus re-rooting themselves in a place, in a community that fosters authentic relationships.

This campaign that seems to advocate a return to roots as the first step toward an authentic, meaningful existence is, however, merely disguising the underlying sign game. Indeed, the entire Braddock campaign rests on the premise that the intended audience of educated, urban middle-class twenty-somethings is alienated from the inauthenticity of consumer capitalism. The campaign hails these alienated spectators by using the very instruments of inauthenticity that brought about these disenchanted sentiments and from which these spectators seek to distance themselves. Put another way, the Levi's campaign tapped the same immaterial labor necessary to reproducing consumer capitalism—the spectator's interpretive labor that is necessary to the completion of sign values. Because the subject is Braddock, Levi's can hail a generation of consumers weary of a generally inauthentic and placeless sign economy about the satisfaction of committing to real labor. As it always has been, alienation and the promise of utopian possibilities form a shared couplet. The difference this time around is how Levi's articulates the value of alienation, for it does value alienation here, turning it into a visual totem around which future value (e.g., the value of feeling a connection to a community) can be visualized.

Contested Signs

As we have already observed, relationships between advertisers and viewers change over time—they have a history—as each round of experience leaves a trace. Particularly from the consumer side, the technological advent of social media has made it possible for a broad demographic of 18-34 to comment on the efforts of advertisers and marketers. From the blogging community, the Levi's campaign elicited mixed reactions. With titles such as "Levi®'s Go Forth "We Are All Workers" Marketing Campaign: Aspirational Or Exploitative?" bloggers responded to the Levi's campaign with well-considered critiques. Some distrusted the encoding strategies that defined the campaign's look: the artsy, moody, over-aestheticized black & white photography of Braddock signified to them a romanticized mythology of Braddock that better fit the Levi's narrative than that of Braddock. Representative of this critique were the following:

> In their campaign, Levi's has romanticized the Depression era through their beautiful, moody black and white photography,

> and trivialized the experience of those who suffered through it in the process. By invoking the "Grapes of Wrath" metaphor, Levi's has implied that we are, as a country, facing similar hardships by linking those images with narratives and slogans like "We are all workers" and "Go Forth to Work."[4]
>
> "The ad in question is a genius melding of amnesiac musings, blue collar fetishism, and astoundingly brazen brand-name posturing (posted by Shaun)."

These reactions fed into a second criticism that this kind of romanticization diverts attention from Levi's own global production practices:

> "The irony of Levi's romanticizing a working-class theme and setting— a sentiment shared by others who deride the brand for harboring a "sweatshop" culture in their own factories abroad— was not lost on online consumers."[5]

The following online comment from a Facebook page was cited in behalf of this interpretation:

> I hate Levi's ads. They promote that there are frontiers here in America to conquer. Like they really give a crap. Go Forth... they say. Go forth and move all your manufacturing overseas, close factories here, lay of [sic] workers and try to still claim you care. They should be ashamed of themselves. -- Roger Cropley

This contestation effectively extended for some into a guerrilla sign war, such as this pointed commentary over a photo of a Levi's campaign billboard in Oakland. Applying a Derrida-like practice of erasure effectively establishes the tension between that which is deleted and that which is inserted.

Situating this semiotic contestation more explicitly within the political economy of globalized supply chain systems, a few linked the generalized critique of manufacturing outsourcing with subcontractors in Third World countries to specific charges against Levi's regarding environmental pollution, occupational health considerations, and the exploitation and repression of workers.[6]

A deep current of cynicism runs through these discourses, so deep that few even comment on the shades of a subterranean Marx in Levi's slogans –"Everyone's Work Is Equally Important"—along with Marx's radical anthropology that humans make themselves in the act of making their world.[7] Cynicism also premises the harshest criticisms aimed at Levi's for being hypocrites—Levi's talks the talk by donating to Braddock's restoration efforts, but they certainly aren't bringing manufacturing jobs to this destitute place in the U.S.A. Though the impulse behind this criticism stems from an admirable sense of social justice, we wonder if this is not a critique forty years out of

date, that wants to turn back the clock on the very logic of neoliberal globalization that explains the disappearance of jobs from Braddock. While these critics seem media savvy about consumer marketing strategies and are quick to expose the campaign's inconsistencies, their criticisms don't really theorize this political economy of signs in relation to a global capitalist context. They thus don't situate the Levi's campaign as a logical outcome of cultural capitalism. Slavoj Žižek explains that contemporary capitalism has evolved a tendency to view social responsibility as a series of exploitation offsets. Corporate marketing encourages the feeling that through the act of consumption "at the same time you fulfill a series of ethical duties." The Levi's campaign fits Žižek's analysis to perfection.

Like the general media within which it is situated, the Levi's campaign tends to separate the effects of capitalism from a structural etiology of capitalism. Discourses about capitalism become turned into news accounts of scandals and accidents that are invariably framed in terms of individual human frailties of "greed" rather than the institutional logic of profit at any cost. The blame goes to individuals or to specific companies or to government rather than illuminating the structural contradictions of capitalism, thus insulating the unquestioned ideological faith in capitalist "free" markets.

Alongside these frames, as Žižek points out, cultural capitalism has evolved a semiotics of compensation, so that some brands wrap themselves in sign values that embrace philanthropy and ethics.

"[W]e should probably distinguish between the two[8] phases of this "cultural capitalism," as exemplified by a shift in the logic of advertising. In the 1980s and 1990s, it was the direct reference to personal authenticity or quality of experience that predominated, without any direct ideological coloring, while, over the last decade, one can note the increasing mobilization of socio-ideological motifs (ecology, social solidarity): the experience referred to here is that of being part of a larger collective movement, of caring for nature and for the ill, the poor and the deprived, of doing something to help" (Žižek, 2010:356).

At this stage of cultural capitalism ethical consumption has developed into a potentially lucrative field of sign value. Such sign values are, however, poised on the knife-edge of a dialectical tension. Even though Levi's appeals to a desire for community and for meaningful labor seem to be the antipode of cynicism, they take shape in the same cultural cauldron. For some years now, a cynical attitude towards the mainstream of commodities has shaped notions of hipness. Within the so-called Millennial generation, the Hipster subcultures react with immediate scorn for conventional commodity signs, seeking instead to find, or rather rediscover, value in the esoteric, the offbeat, and the resistant. So, when Levi's represented Braddock as the antipode to all that has been previously defined as hip, they opened the door to hipness residing there. In capitalist terms, Braddock has been tapped out of value for decades, and it now lies at the edge of the garbage dump. But it is precisely here on the edge of the anti-hip that Levi's imagines a new landscape for individual expression, and thus Braddock is turned into a site for the new hipness—this is the "new frontier": a place where it might be hip to work with your hands and your back when no one else does anymore; hip to imagine yourself as a part of a community; hip to take the path less taken. All of this is folded into a second-order signifier, and its signifying value is linked to the brand sign.

An element of this hip cynicism is a fetishism of demasking. In this cultural context, ideological demasking or "throwing away the veils which are supposed to hide the naked reality" may not actually aim at "the liberating gesture of saying finally that 'the emperor has no clothes'" (Žižek, 1989:25). Calling Levi's out for its hypocrisy and inconsistencies offers a means for demonstrating that one is hip to reading commodity semiotics, and not easily fooled by the visual sleights-of-hand. The act of demonstrating that one is not subject to brand machines allows individual spectators to wax poetic against Levi's, Urban Outfitters, American Apparel or any other manifestation of retail Capital that hails a hip demographic, while the underlying structures, conditions and contradictions of global capitalism remain out of sight and off limits.

This is how the commodity-sign machine works. Once we understand this circuitry, it seems nearly impossible that inspirational and romanticized ad campaigns like this by Levi's will not further beget the reproduction of cynicism.

The Wolf Jigsaw Puzzle as Art

To tie together two threads of recuperation and aura that run throughout the Braddock campaign, it is necessary to make explicit how Levi's, in addition to pointing to the city of Braddock as the object of recuperation and reinvention

under the aura of memory and nostalgia, further intends to recuperate the loss of aura that surrounds manual labor. Susan Willis, in her analysis of Walter Benjamin's "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction," narrates the dialectic of Benjamin's "'aura,' the concept Benjamin used to describe all the unique magical qualities of great traditional art" (1991:10). Benjamin recognized that the commodified mechanical reproduction of culture—what came to be known as mass culture—had an erosive effect on the aura of bourgeois culture. While the fading of aura may indeed foster new opportunities "for a radically optimistic definition of mass culture" thanks to the "smashing" of traditional bourgeois meaning systems, on the flip side, "the forces of containment" are just as capable as subcultural forces of reappropriating signs with the intention of boosting sign values (1991:11-12). The deterioration of traditional meaning systems creates new avenues for redefining cultural artifacts, some with revolutionary potential, while others are put to the service of commodity sign production.

Whatever aura Braddock's working-class aesthetic has come to possess has been constructed retroactively. The difference between aura and myth has become hard to discern. It begins by referencing the dialectical between heavy industrial labor and its accompanying blue-collar, working-class culture that was mediated by the consumption of mass culture artifacts. In their day, Adorno and Horkheimer bemoaned the preconstituted conformism of mass-marketed culture. At the height of an industrial working class culture, heavy-duty work wear became part of a functional workingman's uniform—this included Levi's, Ben Davis Work Wear, Dickies and Carhartt. Over the years, as the clothing shifted from work to leisure wear and the fabric became less durable (consumer obsolescence), and industrial jobs became scarcer, youth grew nostalgic for the classics—perhaps hoping that their substance signified an identification with a romanticized nobility of working-class labor.

In this sense, the aura of working class culture stems from the recombinant semiotics of the ironic subcultural aesthetics that have not only shaped, but also forged, the "aura" that came to be associated with blue-collar, manual-labor—such as that which has been appropriated by the Levi's campaign. To put it another way, irony and self-reflexivity has generated a pseudo-aura, a simulacrum of sorts, a post-mortem aura that some retailers have plucked from the debris of detached and discarded meaning systems. Benjamin began the discussion of aura as coterminous with traditional, modernist art and its concomitant bourgeois meanings, but recognized that it could be replaced with mechanically fabricated aura in the media spectacle. As such, ironic self-reflection is more likely found swirling about the pseudo-aura. In the context of the Braddock campaign then, the pseudo-aura that hovers around representations of blue-collar, manual labor or zip-code tattoos that signify pride of place in an inhospitable world become little more than a "work of art" for the purposes of sign value accumulation. Levi's takes the hip fetishization of working-class signifiers to a new level, complete with hardcore ruin porn, lo-fi working-class tunes, combined with other features of the hipster aesthetic, like tattoo sleeves, to create a commodity sign campaign grounded in a pastiche of signifiers.

Simon Metcalf (2009) sketched out the complex genealogy of the wolf T-shirt as a hyperreal signifier in hipster subcultures, an adaptation that drew on the perceived kitsch of hypercommodified souvenirs—reproductions. Knowingly wearing such signs of trash culture, hipsters found in the cheesy wolf icon a sign that demonstrated the impossibility of equivalence to the real, and could thus be worn as a sly joke about a culture of commodity representation. So it becomes doubly interesting when Levi's camera comes to rest on an assembled jigsaw puzzle depicting a wolf pride framed as a piece of art and mounted on the wall of an indigenous working class family from Braddock. Here is the ultimate in the mechanical reproduction of art. Though certainly this could be interpreted as another adoption of kitsch, it seems here to represent an authentic sentiment of a family's cultural identity. It regains a non-ironic sense of aura—a sincere expression of a primitivist sensibility—a statement of defiance against both the vicissitudes of industrialization and the high priests of auratic art.

Including the framed wolf jigsaw puzzle in the depiction of Braddock's cultural identity is rich in self-contradiction. It cuts to the heart of a tension in the ad campaign between the representation of a sincere pursuit of primitivist authenticity and the ironic pose that is associated with hipster culture (can authenticity be cheesy?). Obviously, hipster culture is contradictory by design; in this case, there is a dialectical tension between the motivated search for authenticity in moving to the crumbling ruins of Braddock (here we suspect the ruin porn fetish is less ironic than nostalgic), and the authentic cheesiness, paradoxical in and of itself, which is a defining feature of hipster culture. The Braddock working class family, in whose home the wolf puzzle appears framed as art, are not hipsters but they have embraced a primitivist aesthetic. So, does this represent simply an authentic preference for "poor taste" or has our culture reached the point where these signifiers have been subjected to so much irony and self-reflexivity (partly now attributable to hipster culture's interaction with commodity culture), that it has become increasingly

difficult to separate feelings of genuine identity from self-reflexive, ironic constructions? Although this applies to only a handful of signs at the moment (wolves in this case), it is only going to expand and apply to more and more signs as they become increasingly coated in layers of ironic self-reflexivity. So, if this campaign begins from the premise that there has developed a legibility deficit, here it throws a wrench into the machine of legible meaning systems: the Braddock campaign largely appeals to people in a youthful demographic, who, armed with their semi-theorized disenchantment with late capitalism, can't help but giggle knowingly at "the wolves" images.

The Cultural Politics of Cynicism in an Era of Capitalist Semiotics

Franco Berardi (2009) used the term semio-capitalism to describe the stage of capitalism devoted to the endless reproduction of brand values—commodity-sign values. It is a stage characterized by the maturation of the "structural law of value." Advertising, in particular, in the latter half of the 20th century became an engine of semiotic recombination, always aimed at turning commodities as objects into commodities as signs. If, following Harvey (1985), the secondary circuit of capital is real estate, we might also conceptualize a tertiary circuit of capital as this system of recombinant semiotics devoted to the endless reproduction of commodity signs. The fate of Braddock as seen in its remains might be interpreted as a kind of testament to Baudrillard's assertion that a shift toward the structural law of value coincided with the beginning of the "end of production." Rather than locate the structural law of value as marking the "end of production" (though it could easily be mistaken for it), we see it as marking the shift from one production regime to another—from the production of goods to the production of signs. The circuitry of semiotic capital has become central to bolstering a regime of globalized production dependent on attaching a circuitry sign/brand/sign (S-B-S) to commoditized goods and services.

Today, nearly four decades after deindustrialization began we see a nearly abandoned, broken down, decomposing steel town, while the sign scape pays homage to the nitty-gritty of ruin porn. Though less glamorous than the ruin porn of Detroit born out of the stately bourgeois architecture of early modernism, Braddock's more modest ruin porn speaks to the possibility of a restoration of spirit. The ad draws what seems to be a stark contrast between the soullessness of shiny consumer capitalism, and this discarded place that consumer capitalism has left behind. In the cultural geography of Levi's Braddock the human spirit can again soar because it can again find purpose in itself—in its immediate exercise of labor. The spirituality of this labor is made symbolically evident by the installation of the stain glass window in the community building that is being restored.

The regime of sign production renders superfluous distinctions between production and consumption in the value articulation process. This is because a necessary form of labor in this process is the unpaid interpretive labor performed by viewers—spectators and consumers. Because this is truly an endless process—the machinery of sign production can never rest—various degrees of interpretive alienation have settled like a cloud over recent generations. The so-called hipster generation is best known for the way they wear their alienation from signs—like

the punks who preceded them they intentionally mismatch the signs of consumerism that have come and gone, embracing tackiness and kitsch in ways that would make Celeste Olalquiaga green with envy. Above all, hipster cultures pivot on an aesthetic sensibility that is profoundly uncomfortable with the commodification of signs. To this extent, the knowing hipster is always prepared to abandon particular aesthetic preferences once they catch on and become appropriated by others. Many of the affectations that have become associated with hipsters involve an ironic fetishization of formerly working class signifiers—e.g., PBR, the kitsch animal T-shirt, or the tattoo sleeve. Whereas Norman Mailer's "white negro hipster" fetishized blackness in the post World War II era, the contemporary hipster fetishizes proletarian lifestyles.

In practice, capital flows give rise to uneven development with capital flowing to where investors perceive the potential for the highest returns on investment. This process overweights capital in some sectors while ignoring others; over time, where capital has become oversaturated the tendency for the rate of profit to decline ensues, and the previously ignored sectors—capital vacuums—become more appealing as investment sites. In the secondary circuit of capital this takes the spatial form of gentrification—as capital flows into areas that seemed to have been exhausted by previous development. In the tertiary circuit of capital, sign reproduction similarly invades those consumer goods from the past whose meaningfulness appears to be exhausted. Hipsters circa the millennium have performed what we shall call semiotic gentrification. Think of it as a semiotic rent gap. Ever aware of the fraud of value in the epoch of the simulacrum, hipsters function as ironically self-aware commodity bricoleurs who have been able to regenerate sign values for consumer goods whose values had been exhausted.

In the circulation of signs, where material signifiers have been worn out and consigned to thrift shops—it is here that the highest return on semiotic investment is possible. It is ironic that hipsters (who often seem ambivalent about their attachment to capitalism) have been notable as part of a creative class that has taken advantage of both the gentrification of urban spaces and the spaces of sign circulation (axes of class and status respectively). In fact, the spaces of gentrification and the spaces of sign revival overlap substantially, both conceptually and materially.

Landscapes of Ruin and Discourses of Commodity Fetishism

The Levi's televisual campaign was anomalous in that it reintroduced the material premise of history—that is, that the meaning of place has both a before and after, rather than the eternal now of the spatially abstracted image. In fact, the campaign actually invokes the past as a referent, evident in the primacy of landscapes of ruin. But even with these referential traces, this is mostly a past without a motivated history. Though these are landscapes of capitalist ruin, and the visuals are faithful to the task of recording the absence of Capital (which is relatively easy since, after all, Capital has run off elsewhere in the global system) the advertising narrative makes no note of Capital whatsoever, nor its practices. It is not just invisible, it is also a narrative, or conceptual, absence.

The Levi's campaign builds off the contradictions within the capitalist system, but in a not-quite-straightforward way. It is not uncommon for advertisers to appropriate a hot subcultural trend or look. And Levi's does try to appropriate subcultural signifiers from youth subcultures, but they do something more: the Levi's campaign exemplifies how the tragedy of capitalist development can be turned into a repository of sign values. Braddock represents the collateral damage that follows from the logic of capital disaccumulation in the era of globalization. As a signifier of disrepair, however, Braddock is quietly separated from the conditions of a political economy that produced it, while finding a new home within the political economy of consumer sign-values. Perhaps this is further indication of a cultural shift that defines the postmodern as the cultural logic of late capitalism, wherein signs that would otherwise signify obstacles to capitalist accumulation actually constitute resources for capitalist accumulation.

Critiques of advertising by Williamson (1978) and Ewen (1976) demonstrated that 20th century advertising routinely turned attention from production relations to relations of consumption. Commodity fetishism distills out all traces of production, making it seem as if commodities spring de novo from the signs that circulate about them. At first glance, the Levi's campaign seemed unwilling to countenance the discourse of commodity fetishism. True, the Levi's campaign situates the value of work front and center on the screen, but it nonetheless manages to conceal the social relations of commodity production for the product being advertised (jeans). In part, it does so by severing the relationship between place and space in the contemporary capitalist universe of globalization. Fredric Jameson wrote in his essay on the "Cultural Logic of Postmodernism" that

> Appropriately enough, the culture of the simulacrum comes to lifein a society where exchange-value has been generalized to

> the point at which the very memory of use-value is effaced, a society of which Guy Debord has observed, in an extraordinary phrase, that in it 'the image has become the final form of commodity reification' (The Society of the Spectacle) (Jameson, 1984:65).

Times change. In the Levi's campaign we bear witness not to the total effacement of "the memory of use value" but rather to its nostalgic resurrection in this visually post-apocalyptic landscape of capitalist ruin. Indeed, what Levi's has artfully accomplished is to situate the sign of Levi's in relation to stylized signs of use-value, labor and meaning. And in this way, Debord's prophecy rings more true than ever. It is not accidental that the material good (the jeans) is essentially on holiday in this TV campaign because the real product being produced here is the commodity sign—in this case it is the sign of work. So while our attention has been directed toward the immediate value of labor and a world free of commodity fetishism, the ad not only reifies the commodity, it also conceals the labor required to produce the sign, and in fact turns work into a sign of itself.

The signifieds of work and use-value are turned into second-order signifiers of a Levi's Ethos. Conjuring up memories of use value and labor is not just about nostalgia, these are also offered as a hyperreal remedy to the crisis of meaning prompted by swimming endlessly through the circuitry of the simulacrum. Signs of labor and use-value as a hyperreal tonic? Do the signs of labor and use-value combat the hyperreal or reproduce it? Maybe it's not an either-or? But one does have to wonder whether rather than combating commodity reification, if reviving the signifieds of labor and use value may actually steer towards reproducing a blindspot about commodity reification, so that media culture can go on separating cultural capitalism from the system that organizes the conditions of production in factory towns in Haiti, Soweto, Mexico, Turkey and Taiwan.

Endnotes

1. See Robert Goldman and Stephen Papson, Sign Wars, for an extended analysis of this semiotic contestation.

2. Richard Sennett has made compelling arguments about the gradual historical disappearance of the career as either a route toward upward mobility or personal satisfaction.

3. Not to be confused with the 1960s use of this term by SDS.

4. (http://mprcenter.org/blog/2011/02/16/levis-goforth-and-exploit-part-1/)

5. (http://www.localspeak.com/blog/93/levis-goforth-we-are-all-workers.html).

6. Christopher Lehmann, The Big Levi's Lie Campaign | The Awl http://www.theawl.com/2010/06/rich-people-things-the-big-levis-lie-campaign, June 28, 2010. (http://boringpittsburgh.com/boring-pittsburgh/levis-braddock-pa-ad-campaign/. See alsoLawrence Delevingne, "Gap And Levi Strauss Are Poisoning African Children," http://articles.businessinsider.com/2009-08-11/green_sheet/30038146_1_lesotho-gap-dangerous-waste.

7. Kathy Newman, http://workingclassstudies.wordpress.com/2010/10/17/levis-braddock-exploitation-or-visibility/

8. Actually we see this as a third phase of "cultural capitalism" rather than the second. Žižek skipped over the glossier first phase of commodity sign assembly (the late 1960s to the early 1980s) during which authenticity was not yet a concern and the quality of experience was generally an airbrushed abstraction.

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Time for Timbits? Fast Food, Slow Food, Class and Culinary Communication

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The only problem with choice is that citizens have to choose. Time is precious and how resources are utilized and expended, particularly in a recession, matters. Often the issue is not only the choices that are made, but the distribution of resources on the basis of these decisions. While some eat too much, others eat too little. Similarly, governments make a decision about priorities in public services. In 2011, the City of Toronto brought in KPMG to audit 'expendable' services. This expendable list of expenses in the budget included cuts to public libraries. While there was a public outcry in response to such a decision,[1] Councillor Doug Ford, brother of Toronto's then Mayor Rob Ford and representing Ward 2 in Toronto, deployed an odd metaphor to justify such a decision. On the radio station Newstalk 1010, he stated that, "we have more libraries per person than any other city in the world. I've got more libraries in my area than I have Tim Hortons."[2] The idea that a politician would compare the value of fast food and libraries is inappropriate, bizarre and foolish. The reality that he was factually wrong in his comparison makes his statement even more bizarre. Not only were there more Tim Hortons in his district than libraries (39 to 13),[3] but Toronto did not even hold the record for the most libraries per person in Canada, let alone the world.

There is a significant lesson to be learned when a politician appears to validate fast food restaurants over libraries. Such a statement provides an entrée (appropriately) to think about food as a mode of communication with political resonance and bite, particularly after the global recession and the continuing financial instability. The aim of this article is clear: to explore the function of speed – as a trope and variable - in thinking about food as a platform to communicate information. I investigate fast food and its context, slow food and its context, and finally probe how a consciousness of food in/justice is often blocked through the automation of decision making and the deskilling of cooking.

Speed and Accelerated Culture

Two examples provide a resonant introduction to this study of food and speed, platform management and information literacy. Consider the differing speeds of our online communication. The average email is read within 24 hours and responded to within 48 hours. The average text message is read within a minute and responded to within five. Email is being used less for personal correspondence and more for business and educational communication.[4] Text messaging and social networking are becoming the dominant ways in which personal lives are negotiated. But this changing function in organizational communication is not the focus for this article. Instead, the speed of answering text messages is the propulsion for my inquiry. Why are text messages read immediately and responded to rapidly? What is learnt about the priorities when negotiating analogue and digital time and space? Odd behaviours are emerging, with physical events, people and experiences displaced in favour of digitized correspondence. Analogue lectures and funerals are interrupted. Dinners and meetings are suspended, delayed, mediated and extended to make up for interruptions and distractions.[5] Such practices are normalized and accepted, if occasionally attacked, critiqued or questioned on the basis of manners or efficiency.

This is a displacement culture. There is a desire and decision to deny and indeed lose the present and the

analogue moment, which – by definition - will never be repeated. This choice has been made so that an often trivial and pointless message can be read. The loss of concentration in an actual context – often described as multitasking – is not only significant for education and employment, with lost minutes and hours each day reducing productivity and efficiency, but results in shadowy commitments, attention and allegiances. Andrew Goodwin developed a title – if not an argument or content – to capture this transformation: Dancing in the Distraction Factory.[6] This is a text messaging twilight zone where information literacy is subsumed, denied or delayed. The urgent and quick is a chameleon for the significant and important. Yet receiving and answering these text messages is not about importance. Most text messages are trivial. Many are opt in or opt out advertising or push notifications from social media. It is not the content that determines value. The speed of their arrival connotes importance. Real time and real space are lost, flitting into a displaced time and a displaced space.

To consider the impact of speed on culture, including food, it is necessary to explore the emerging theories of accelerated modernity. The first maxim to consider is that the popularity of a cultural phenomenon is defined by the speed of its production and dissemination. Steve Redhead argued that,

> popular culture is characterized not by content but increasingly by the speed by which its products become outdated and recycled. Or the speed by which the underground becomes overground.[7]

Redhead is suggesting that there is nothing in a particular song, food, fashion or behaviour that makes it intrinsically part of popular culture. It is the speed of movement between texts that creates pop.[8] Therefore, popular culture is – by definition – about movement, change and transformation. It is distinct from other cultural forms because of its mobility. Popular culture is therefore integral to understandings of globalization, industrialization, modernity and speed. Particularly since September 11, celebrity chefs and the proliferation of food programming bounces from television to newspapers and magazines to blogs, through to Twitter and geosocial networking sites such as Foursquare.

Media and popular culture are based upon not only speed, but the speed of the movement in ideas.[9] Newspapers required the telegraph and railways to become the dominant media for an era. Certainly, ideas on paper have moved through space and time before the proliferation of digitized text and images.[10] But railways increased the rapidity and distance by which ideas can move. Similarly television became the dominant medium via satellites. The internet was the key example of Redhead's maxim. It entered popular culture and became a powerful channel of ideas – rather than the hobby of a few - as the bandwidth increased, enabling a much more rapid movement of increasingly larger files. Therefore, the speed between diverse sites increased the range and the adaptability of media.

Speed transforms minor media into popular culture. Speed is therefore a characteristic of modernity. That which is modern is fast. While modernity has as many origins as supposed endpoints,[11] it is linked with a series of expansive events, such as the rise of capitalism, socialism, urbanization and democracy, alongside social movements such as feminism, gay rights and black rights. The increasing importance of science and technology - with the attendant ideologies of the empirical and positivist, or indeed empiricism and positivism - offered a secular pathway to truth. The proliferation of education, with an increasing number of people developing competencies in literacy and numeracy, was matched by the professionalization of medicine and law. Yet the greatest sensibility within modernity is movement, particularly of goods, services, money, information and people.[12] In transgressing the local, formal connections between spaces and places via transportation and communication links were forged. Together, these characteristics, attributes, events and sensibilities not only increased the actual speed at which change took place, but also invoked a consciousness of speed and its consequences. Stress, mental and physical illnesses, family disturbances and an imbalance in work and leisure, production and consumption resulted.[13] The archetype and agent for many of these dissonances is the mobile phone and wifi-enabled laptop. Work intrudes into the home, blocking any definitive compartmentalization of 'free time.' One of the causes of stress is the constant fear about the speed of change. By the early twentieth century, a series of disciplines, like psychoanalysis and psychology, emerged to diagnose these changes. By the end of the 20th century, self help via chat shows was medicating a series of crises from the obesity epidemic to 'toxic' workplaces and family dysfunction. Dr Phil and Dr Oz are modern manifestations. Therefore this double problem – the speed of change and a consciousness of that speed - increased through the twentieth century and provided a seed for the slow food movement.

Paul Virilio has a hypothesis to be tested and applied when considering food as a mode of communication. He argues that the speed of an object, idea, event or entity changes its essential nature. Further, he suggests that the entity that is faster will dominate that which is slower.[14] Such arguments are particularly resonant when considering

how speed activates on and through food, alongside the evaluation of the contexts for both fast food and the slow food 'movement.' Richard Wilk realized that the variable of speed has a profound impact on what he described as "the cultural economy of the global food system."[15] The history and sociology of food is intimately tethered to theories of work, leisure, identity, economic development and social justice. Food Studies scholars have instigated a great service by defamiliarizing the patterns of daily life. The reinvestment in the local and regional has added a complexity to the theorization of space, place and food, with scholars such as Sidney Mintz tracking through the "relative immobility of food systems"[16] in history. When food could be refrigerated and transported, tastes and experiences were diversified. Through such scholarship, it is also important to explore the variable of time and its impact on the meaning, purpose and function of eating.

Fast Food: Do You Want Fries with Your Obesity Epidemic?

Fast food activates a range of moral panics in our culture: obesity, fitness, health, packaging-fuelled landfill, ocean-polluting plastic bags, environmental waste, animal cruelty and nutrition.[17] If Virilio is correct, then it is important to explore the propulsive trajectory of fast food before moving to a discussion of slow food, as speed – in and of itself - ensures one will dominate the other. Speed also gives fast food a taken-for-granted quality. It is part of popular culture and is embedded into daily life. Automated decision making about food medicates a lack of ability (and time) to cook.[18] That is why Rob Ford felt free to compare the value of a fast food franchise with librarians, establishing not only parity between eating and reading, but the importance of one over another.[19]

Fast and slow food are a direct – and intimate - manifestation of how time, place, speed and acceleration are operating in our daily lives. They are direct applications of industrialization and connect major historical events to the intimate spaces of food preparation, cars[20] and – indeed – the movement of food from hand to mouth. As Albritton realized,

> the car fitted perfectly with the possessive individualism characteristic of capitalism because it seemed to maximize the freedom of movement for each individual, increasing the speed each of us can move through time and space ... Car ownership promotes a kind of possessive individualism which, while instilling feelings of power, at the same time undermines such power with the total futility that comes with isolation. Because more and more individuals spend more and more time alone, isolated in the steel box that is the car, it would seem that the car has probably promoted social atomism and compromised community involvement.[21]

Therefore it is of no surprise that Albritton reports that 19% of all meals eaten by Americans are eaten in cars. [22] The drive-through captures this process, where the consumer does not even have to make a step out of a vehicle to summon a calorific environment. Also, the time compresses between desiring food and being able to eat it, thereby reducing the capacity to create reflections and consciousness in decision making. Sidney Mintz recommended "food at moderate speeds."[23]

The histories of transportation, masculinity, femininity, class, work, leisure, home and domestic life map over food. When the phrase 'fast food' is deployed, it has many connotations. Firstly it signifies food that can be prepared quickly. Celebrity chefs recognize that the changes to work and family-life means that food must transform in response. For example, Nigella Lawson released a series of programmes titled Nigella Express. Jamie Oliver through his career has focused on the speed at which he can create 'pukka treats.' While the speed of preparation offers one entry into the phrase 'fast food,' as an adjective and noun – and indeed a compound noun – it refers to the cooking of bulk ingredients in fast food restaurants.[24] Often these are franchised operations and heavily standardized. A Tim Hortons in downtown Oshawa in Ontario has an identical menu to the one in Barnaby, British Columbia. In the 19th century in the United Kingdom, fast food referred to meat pies and fried food like fish and chips. Sandwiches were also part of fast food in the UK, therefore providing an historical connection to the Subway franchise.

The speed variable in fast food captures the mode of preparation, service and the act of eating. The modern history of fast food is part of North American history and industrialization, tethered to Fordism. The first fast food restaurant opened in 1912 and it was known as Automat. Their slogan connotes the changes to both femininity and family life: "less work for mother."[25] McDonalds is the largest fast food chain in the world. It is almost synonymous with fast food. It was founded in 1940 and offered a simple menu of hamburgers, French fries, milkshakes, Coke and coffees. The food was served in disposable paper wrapping, without conventional crockery or cutlery. They used

a preparation method that Henry Ford deployed to make cars. Staff learnt one task and did not deviate from that assignment, either making the fries or cooking the burgers. The process of cooking was literally transparent, with food prepared behind glass but in the view of customers. Yet one of the other reasons for the success of fast food was that it was linked with another agent of speed: the automobile. The drive-through service combined food and transportation, meaning food could be eaten, and often with fingers.

The consequence of these methods of production and consumption is that fast food is processed, prepared using fordist cooking and preparation principles and standardized ingredients to ensure uniformity of taste, all delivered in the shortest period of time. While fast food is often synonymous with cheap food, a much more complex relationship emerges between food and agricultural policy. If food is seen as a system, rather than a relationship between producers and consumers, then the injustices and complexity are easier to see, track and evaluate. As Michael Carolan asked,

> How could we let this happen, where one quarter of the world is at risk of dying from eating too much, another quarter at risk of dying from eating too little, and some at risk of dying from both obesity and malnourishment?[26]

The distribution of food is a complex question, made more damning and damaging because individuals who have been characterized as obese are also malnourished. So the quantity of post-nutritional food is revealing a powerful series of consequences. As Carolan confirmed, in low-income areas, the choice of supermarkets and the ability to purchase a diversity of healthy foods is severely retracted:[27] "One of the largest risk factors for obesity is being poor."[28] Besides a lack of available healthy ingredients, the other great difficulty is pricing. It is cheaper to buy soft drink than bottled water. It is cheaper to buy frozen chips than a bag of apples. It is cheaper to buy ice cream than yoghurt. Carolan realized that a form of sick – in the many meanings of that adjective – displacement is taking place, "cost shifting, from one industry (food) to another (healthcare)."[29] But there are wider displacements taking place. Cheap and fast food is based on the widely available and 'free' flowing water supply, an inaccurate adjective, and huge quantities of food waste. This 'waste' displaces materials from the food system and into landfill at worst, and compost at best. This waste is not only expensive for the household and the regional economy but confirms the injustices in the distribution of food internationally.[30]

Subway changed the industry. It marketed itself as a healthy alternative to fast food. In response to their marketing slogan – "Eat Fresh" – and films such as Supersize me, 'healthy options' were added to other corporations' menus. Yet even through these interventions, there are profound criticisms of fast food ingredients, such as the use of transfats, salt, and high-calorie sauces and sweeteners. The hyper-calorific environment created through their consumption is one contributor to obesity. But the pay and working conditions for the frequently young employees has also seen critique.[31]

The other major attack, fuelled by the slow food movement, is that fast food is a globalizing formation, destroying local cuisines and ingredients, narrowing seed diversity, increasing the speed of decline in heritage species of plants and domesticated animals and reducing the food literacy of consumers, resulting in hyper-salty and hyper-sweet processed food. Therefore, slow food and the wider slow movement started to address the ingredients, preparation, gastronomic literacy and relationship between production, consumption and food. However they did not probe the wider contextual relationships between time and food.

The Turn to Slowness

The slow movement is an act of resistance and defiance. It is an act of denial: of speed, fast food and globalized culture. Throughout the last two hundred years, slowness has been a sign of mental weakness or mental retardation. In the last twenty five years, slowness has been transformed in its meaning from a problem or a weakness into a state or attribute of value. There are many origins for this turn to slowness and the slow food movement. Slow food was the first part of the wider portfolio in the turn to slowness. Slow food began in Italy with Carlo Petrini in 1986. He has catalogued the movement through a range of books that has enabled its international growth and development.[32] The slow food movement now includes at least 122 countries.[33] Its local chapters are called convivia, with the head office in Bra near Turin in Italy. This is a fascinating trans-local formation. It signifies the building of bonds and relationships in a non-professional, non-work setting. A space is created to think, speak and eat differently. This localism is a founding principle of the organization, with decentralization a key tenet. Many publications are put out by the group, in many

different languages. Each convivium has a leader who is responsible for promoting local farmers, produce, markets, flavours and events, like wine-tasting, chocolate tasting or cheese tasting. Farmers markets are part of – indeed facilitate - this organization.[34] The history of the entire movement is tracked in a fascinating book by Carl Hanore. This book was called In praise of slow and was published in 2004.[35] A Canadian journalist, he critiques what he calls "the cult of speed." The slow movement has progressed to Slow Retail, Slow Travel, Slow Designs, Slow Cities (Citislow) and the Slow Society, which argues against mobility and flexibility and in favour of sustainability.

The question to pose is why food is the focus of the slow movement. Food has two functions in our lives: it gives us nutrition and pleasure. Food is an item that is ingested to give us energy. Food is also a metaphor for life: bread is the staff of life, food for thought, milk of human kindness.[36] Different places, races,[37] religions and communities prepare food differently, developing into a series of local, regional[38] and national cuisines. Indeed, the phrase "national cuisine" is often a misnomer. Best exhibited by the phrase "Italian cookery," Carol Helstosky showed the major historical and institutional challenges required to build a 'national' cuisine.

> The shape of Italian food habits had its roots in political struggles to encourage some culinary practices and discourage others. What seems peculiar about the Italian case is the nation's self-conscious struggle to improve the dietary standards of the population and the intensity with which this struggle was discussed and debated by the entire population.[39]

When combined, nationalism and food ensures that particular historical moments are frozen and authenticated, forgetting and displacing the struggles, conflicts and deep regional, religious and racial oppressions. Place and taste are commodified. When celebrating the 'Mediterranean cuisine,' the intricate links between northern Africa and the Middle East are marginalized, along with the migration of people. It is easier to enjoy food than to understand the challenges confronted by the citizens of these nations.

Differences between nations and regions are historical, but also behavioural. They occur through particular local cooking processes and practices, different ingredients that are grown and derived from the local agriculture, methods for preparing food and particular ways of manufacturing raw produce. There are two ways in which food is made distinctive. Firstly, there is the selection of ingredients. They can be locally grown, organic, or heavily manufactured with many additives. The second way in which food is distinguished is how it is prepared. Ingredients can be mixed, heated, cooled, fermented or smoked. Food is gathered and prepared for many reasons. Some are to improve the taste. Others are to improve the appearance. Some are to increase the preservation of food so that it does not deteriorate. Some are for the maintenance of cultural identity. In some faiths, animals are killed in particular ways, or particular meats are not eaten at all. Kosher or halal preparations are two examples. But the point of cooking is to transform it by the application of heat or flame. It not only changes its nutritional value, but also its appearance and our responses to it.

Food is now an international business. The key moment in moving local foods to international markets was the arrival of refrigerated shipping. Goods could then be prepared and exported around the world. In response the applications of time and space in relation to food transformed. Because of this innovation – that also presents social and economic costs – a walk through a supermarket will reveal Canadian lobster, Mexican avocados, New Zealand lamb, French cheese, Ethiopian coffee and Germany salami. With the arrival of supermarkets in the twentieth century, a self-service approach to food emerged. Through the economies of scale and refrigeration, good quality food could be delivered at low prices. The consequence of this development for farmers was that supermarkets started to demand lower prices resulting in reduced profit margin for the farmers themselves.

Part of the imperative for the slow food movement was a critique of the corporatization of food and food capitalism, the need for increased payments for farmers and reduced refrigeration. Some of the impact of the slow food movement was to wind back the effect of industrialization on food. However the wider and deeper concern is not refrigeration or even the obesity epidemic. It is the imbalance in food distribution. While some of the world is confronting an obesity 'epidemic' – a glut of food – the rest of the population is confronting starvation and malnutrition. Currently, 815 million people in developing countries are under-nourished.[40] The distribution of food is the key issue, with political, environmental and economic consequences. Therefore, the focus on 'slow' or 'fast' food is, indeed a form of political displacement. As Sidney Mintz realized,

> often enough the choices – for example, fast food versus slow food – are painted in stark terms. At times they even contain an element of nostalgia that does not, of itself, make the problems any clearer. It is worth pondering whether we should invest all of our energies in restoring food to its former importance without tying our hope for better food to programs that raise ethical questions about labor practices, the expansion of cattle herding into crop-poor countries, the dredging of the

> sea, the overuse of water and fossil fuels, and much else. In other words – and of course I write this down only for myself – if we can formulate a food program worth supporting, it must have to do with far more than the foods themselves, where they come from, and how we prepare and eat them.[41]

The excess of consumption – embodied by an array of cooking programmes on Food Network including Diners, Drive-ins and Dives, Meat and Potatoes, Man vs Food[42] and any programme by Nigella Lawson – validate, naturalize and create communities around rituals of extreme eating.

While food is part of popular culture, it is also classed, raced, gendered and aged.[43]Different, classes, races and ages eat differently. Through food, social differences and social changes can be tracked. Slow food is anti-globalization and pro-localism. The slow food movement was founded by Carlo Petrini in Italy to preserve local cuisine and stop a McDonalds opening in his local community.[44] This was the first intervention and step in the slow movement. Slow food is about developing food literacy, fetishizing the specificity and micro-distinctions in flavour, sourcing and taste.[45] Indeed, Melissa Caldwell described the multi-literate and multi-sensory manifestations of food. She recognized "food's capacity to evoke bodily responses in different sensory registers: sight, taste, smell, touch, and sound."[46] Yet this sensory experience is not only created through the food itself. Its sourcing delves into stories about local produce and food communities. Events are held like the biennial cheese event in Bra. It is called – no surprises here – Cheese. There is a Genoan fish festival which is called – there is a pattern forming here – Fish. Culinary tourism is growing, creating relationships between food production, place and bed and breakfasts. In 2004, Slow Food opened up its own institution of higher education: the University of Gastronomic Sciences in Palenzo. It aimed to produce good nutrition. Recognizing the role of learning in this mode of specialized consumption, the goals of slow food are clear. Sustainable seed production through seed banks was a way to preserve local and historical varieties of food within local food systems. But supporters also wanted to develop a taste for a region through the celebration of food and traditions.[47] It was also a way to preserve those local traditions for food production. The goal was to bring back small-scale processing. It was anti-fordist, promoting the traditional smoking of meats and localized baking. It was a celebration of local cuisine. It provided an education to widen food literacy and warn about the problems of fast food and the reduction in variety of food species. It was also a promotion of organic farming and argued against the use of pesticides. It was a way to encourage ethical consumerism and taste.

'Taste' is a word with a similar connotative spectrum of 'culture.' They possess both a neutral and highly pejorative usage. As Michael Carolan realized, "taste is strategic."[48] To summon taste is to transform and translate sensations on the tongue into languages of class, race and religion. Taste confirms a belonging to particular communities, and exclusions from others. It is also a word that transforms a lived experience of food into a knowledge system and literacy that can be deployed to judge and demean others. Theories of speed overlay such structures. Therefore, the environment of purchase seeps into – indeed to change metaphors steeps – the 'taste' of the food. Taste is augmented, channelled and shaped by the narratives that encircle it.

Mobilizing and managing the spaces around consumption practices, the slow food movement has been successful. Promoting local food now seems like a motherhood statement. But there are attendant value-judgments of class, literacy and education that accompany such assumptions. For example, consider Richard Wilk's culinary vision.

> I can see this contrast every Saturday morning in my home town. On my way to the thriving downtown farmer's market, I pass lines of cars stacked up at the take-out windows of McDonalds, Taco Bell, and Burger King. While I am buying organic peaches grown less than ten miles from my house and loading up my cooler chest with grass-fed lamb chops from an Amish farmer, others are on the way to the supermarket for grapes grown in Chile and frozen lamb from New Zealand.[49]

Such a statement is not a description of food gathering processes. It is a value judgment of those who do not share the ideology of localism. It also is a commentary about the role of speed in thinking about food. The adjectives of 'organic,' 'grass-fed' and 'Amish' only add to the effect. While Wilk maintains a 'cooler chest,' the rest of us must manage with a refrigerator. However some powerful critiques of this seemingly self-evident ideology of food and its value have emerged. DeLind offers a clear critique of the locavore, the person who eats local food.[50] The locavore seems to be making a great contribution to reducing the air miles of food and supporting local farmers. But when there is a focus on the local, we are not dealing with sustainability, equality and the building of developing nations and regions through socially-just 'trade not aid' programmes.

Further, the discussion of food miles, the distance between where the food is grown and purchased, is not as clear as a pristine localism discourse may suggest. Carolan, in The real cost of cheap food, shows that agricultural conditions within each local community also require attention.

> Interestingly while energy consumption is comparable to what would be required to ship New Zealand apples to the UK (2030 megajoules per tonne), the carbon footprint of UK-produced apples far exceeds that of New Zealand apples (60.1kg of CO2 per tonne) due to the latter country's more favourable apple-growing conditions.[51]

Carolan confirms that the simple arithmetical determination of distance between producer and consumer is not as valuable as assessing the methods through which the food has been produced, along with storage and preparation.[52] There is a stark reality presented here: we may live in one local environment, but we are all linked in a trans-local economic and social food system. Sustainability is not a local formation. A person may live in Manchester, but they also live in Lancashire, England, Britain, Europe, the Northern Hemisphere and Earth. By attending a local farmers' market and sourcing local produce, there is blinding denial of the deadly injustices in food and economics. If other local cultures – that may just happen to be in other nations – are ignored or demeaned, then there are profound costs. If the bulk of the Ethiopian economy is based on coffee production, should 'we' block Ethiopians the right to develop a sustainable economy so that we can 'choose' local coffee? Sarah Lyon confirmed an alternative argument. She stated that, "A more nuanced analysis demonstrates that emerging alternative markets, such as fair trade coffee, represent the successful combination of both the oppositional characteristics of slow food and the market-driven strategies of fast food."[53] Another option is to choose ethical exporters of Ethiopian coffee, who offer transparency in both the payment to farmers and the cost of the produce.

DeLind offers a strong critique of localism because it focuses on individuals and their choices.[54] Her critique is complex, because it unsettles many of the assumptions of the market economy and indeed slow food. The environmental movement and the locavore/slow food movement are founded on the ideology that individual choices matter. Partly sourced from Al Gore's An inconvenient truth, there is a pervasive argument that when an individual buys environmentally friendly light globes, they are saving the planet from climate-driven catastrophe. If local carrots are bought, rather than those imported from California, then this is an environmentally correct consumerist decision that benefits the planet. DeLind argues that this theory actively denies an understanding of the international food economy.[55] It suggests that everything that is going wrong in the world can be changed through personal choices and behaviour. The reason we want to believe that changing individual choices can change the world is that it is easier than the formulation of social movement to leverage for change. But actually, the locavore is a consumer like any other consumer. They are buying products. This is not political activism. This is shopping. Therefore the adjective and noun of local and the locavore are not as positive as it may appear. DeLind has constructed a deeply powerful critique, made stronger because the assumptions of the Slow Food movement, naturalizing farmer's markets, counting food miles and buying local, have now hooked into popular culture.

The success of 'slow food' is difficult to determine, evaluate or measure. Proxies can be established. But there is no doubt that the movement has had an impact on how food is covered in popular culture. Cooking programmes create narratives around food that are frequently travel stories. A celebrity chef travels to Sicily, Castellorizo, or a small village in France and visits a market, talks to the locals and cooks from the local produce. But also, whenever Jamie Oliver talks about organic chicken or locally sourced vegetables, that is slow food. Whenever Nigella Lawson discusses the importance of food in bringing families and communities together, that is slow food. The problem is that slow food is a middle class movement. It is elitist. It involves middle class consumers feeling better about eating expensive food, while criticising the food habits of other groups and other communities. These affluent consumers can enjoy local consumption and local production, while disempowered communities from the developing world that require the business from industrialized nations in Europe and North America are being stopped because of a commitment to the local. There is also an appropriation of food, practices and stories from agriculture that is giving consumerism greater meaning. To use some specific national examples: if a consumer buys from Fresh Co (Canada), Coles (Australia), New World (New Zealand), Asda (United Kingdom) or instead selects to buy from a farmer's market, then which purchases have the greater credibility and prestige? If food is about stories and narratives, then local food bought in a market provides the content, depth and history for what can be a banal part and practice of daily life. Occasionally it is important to remember that we are only talking about food. Is food selection really the most important issue at the moment? Certainly it is a proxy and – indeed – symptom of many wider fears, injustices and unequal distribution of resources. But there is a difficult question to ask. After terrorism, war, and international recession,[56] why – and why now – has there been a fetishization of food consumption? Why after September 11, xenophobia, fear, the Arab Spring are there so many cooking programmes? What is their political purpose?

In partially answering such a question, the major critique of the slow food movement emerges. It does not explain how and why fast food emerged in the first place and has increased in its presence and currency. Eating fast

food rather than slow food is not 'about' choice. It is about understanding the context in which that choice is made.[57] There are many reasons why people eat fast food. Here are a few examples.

- They work long hours
- They work irregular hours
- They cannot manage stress and self-medicate through food
- Families are less stable and the role of 'cook' is more unstably designated
- Both parents work, reducing time for both careful shopping for produce and preparation time
- Work intrudes on leisure and family life, reducing the available cooking and preparation time

Food is not isolated from the rest of life. Fast food provides a quick fix for the problems with work, leisure and family. A major question remains, can we solve social problems with food or do we add to the social problems through food? However researchers and policy makers answer that question, it is important to acknowledge and manage the economic and social situation that made fast food a necessity. There is no doubt that odd social and personal relationships emerge around food. Obesity, anorexia and bulimia are a few examples. Entire websites and communities emerge around distinctive eating practices and behaviours.[58] The read write web is filled with user generated content that has disintermediated food media and food policy.[59] Even for those not labelled as obese, anorexic of bulimic, a whole range of problems exist around food that are called 'disordered eating.' A bad day at work results in the consumption of three wines and a tub of ice cream. A relationship disappears, and along with it a bottle of vodka and an entire cheesecake. Food is a trigger, assistance and symptom of a range of wider social problems. The key change in any thinking about over-eating or disordered eating is not to blame the food or to pathologize the people eating it. The focus must be on the question of why food is eaten in a particular pattern.

Many explanations for aberrant and disordered food preparation and eating behaviours have their origins in the home and school. Sarah Robert and Marcus Weaver-Hightower explored the relationship between food, politics and health in School Food Politics: The complex ecology of hunger and feeding in schools around the world.[60] The relationship between trans-national food corporations and a range of resistive groups, from animal rights campaigners, the slow food movement and environmentalist groups, creates a distorted, contradictory and changeable array of food policies. Children's food, particularly in schools, activates a dilemma of moral panics, roles and functions, including training future consumers. Therefore future research needs to explore how these interventions in space, time, movement and speed may be foreshadowing changes far beyond the kitchen. Therefore the final part of this article slams food systems together with social systems.

Food In/Justice

> Today we have a truly disturbing situation, with parts of the world having so much food they do not know what to do with it, while nearly half the people in the world suffer malnutrition.[61]
>
> — Robert Albritton

Slow food, like fast food, is not a solution for international inequalities. They are band aids to hide – just for a moment - the deep and deathly consequences of how our food, water, resources, money and power are distributed on this planet. The food system – like all systems in our globalized world - is based on capitalism. That means inequality, injustice and uneven distribution are simply part of the system. The market economy is a competitive economy. But whenever there is competition, there are losers. In the case of food capitalism and the market economy, the losers in the system either eat too much food of poor quality or eat very little of any kind. Albritton's Let them eat junk commences his study with an important question,

> Does it make sense to leave a basic necessity like food to capricious market prices that make food affordable at one place and time and not affordable in the next?[62]

He argues that we need "food regimes"[63] that produce food that is economically and environmentally sustainable, socially just and healthy. While particular nations are dominated – in media discourse at least - by moral panics encircling fat bodies, the size and the prejudice that results from those bodies is only part of the problem. lxiv Certainly 'fatness' and the phobia and oppression of fatness have a history and context. The problem is that

resources are going into producing food that almost inevitably creates a calorific environment. With the proliferation of motor vehicles, desk jobs and a decline in walking, it is almost impossible to balance calorie intake into the body. lxv Yet besides the proliferation of high calorie food and a reduction in opportunities to exercise, there is also an explosion of medical and weight loss practitioners and industries that base their profits on the increasing number of fat people who face oppression and are desperate to remove the weight, at any cost.

Even if citizens in countries such as the United States, United Kingdom, Canada, Australia and New Zealand are not overeaters, bingers, anorexics or bulimics, the result of body size being framed and restricted by the discourses of health and beauty means that a large proportion – indeed perhaps the majority of the population - become disordered eaters. This invisible problem fails to recognize how food is being used as an emotional crutch to manage – via an indirect and often unsuccessful method – social and personal injustices in families and workplaces. Food speaks. Bodies speak. Researchers require effective methods, often involving unobtrusive research methods,lxvi to translate this metaphoric voice.

The task when studying food as a communication system is to ensure that injustices of bodily size are acknowledged and managed, but at the same time, to also ensure that the food regime that pumps some populations with calories and leaves others to starve is called to account. Food matters, but not in the way that the slow food practitioners suggest. The key is to create a system of accountability for food decisions. Eating fresh, local, organic food, may have consequences for the economic system of other nations. Further, some nations and their food are fetishized: Thai and Japanese 'cuisine' are two examples. It is significant how often these fetished foods map over former orientalist and colonial discourses. Similarly, eating fast food means that the speed of eating is blocking a consciousness of the purpose of eating in the first place. The speed becomes more important than the food.

At its most basic, food is a result of the chemical and social transformation of animals, vegetables and minerals into something that is eaten. Food Studies takes this transformation and explores what happens after the food is eaten. These key questions activate studies of the economy, culture, social systems and bodies. Slow food is not a solution. It is a symptom and a proxy for our need to address – rather than market and fetishize – the injustices in the international food regime. In recognizing the social danger in an honest discussion about food, it can be understood why Doug Ford wanted a few more Tim Hortons and a few less libraries.

Endnotes

1. P. Moloney, "Doughnuts vs books? In Ford's Etobicoke, it's 3-1," The Star, July 20, 2011, http://www.thestar.com/news/torontocouncil/article/1027962--doughnuts-vs-books-in-ford-s-etobicoke-it-s-3-1?bn=1

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3. ibid.

4. J. M. Spector, Finding your online voice, (Abington: Routledge, 2007)

5. T. Moog, "Phone stack restaurant game prevents meal time interruptions and could cost you a lot of money," Digital Trends, January 17, 2012, http://www.digitaltrends.com/mobile/phone-stack-restaurant-game-prevents-meal-time-interruptions-and-could-cost-you-a-lot-of-money/

6. A. Goodwin, Dancing in the distraction factory, (University of Minnesota Press, 1992)

7. S. Redhead, Paul Virilio: theorist for an accelerated culture, (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2004), pp. 49-50

8. A sonic presentation of this argument is available. Please refer to T. Brabazon and S. Redhead, "Speed and popular culture," Libsyn, 2011, http://tarabrabazon.libsyn.com/webpage/speed_and_popular_culture

9. I acknowledge the importance of John Urry and the mobility studies paradigm in thinking about movement and speed. For an example of this literature, please refer to K. Hannam, M. Sheller and J. Urry, "Mobilities, immobilities and moorings," Mobilities, Vol. 1, No. 1, 2006, http://publicspace.commons.gc.cuny.edu/files/2011/05/editorial-mobilities.pdf, and M. Sheller and J. Urry, "The new mobilities paradigm," Environment and Planning A , Vol. 38, 2006, pp. 207-226, http://www.ias.uni-bayreuth.de/resources/africa_discussion_forum/ws08-09/new_mobilities_paradigm_sheller_urry.pdf

10. I am influenced in this argument by Harold Innis's The bias of communication, (Toronto: University of

Toronto Press, 2006: 1951). Space-biased media not only move ideas through geographical territories, but at increased speed.

11. I wish to note the scale and scope of the debates encircling terms like critical and capitalist modernities. From Anthony Giddens' The consequences of modernity (Stanford University Press, 1991) through to Peter Drucker's Post-capitalist society (Collins, 1994) and Teresa Brennan's Exhausting Modernity, (London: Routledge, 2000), debates about modernity as an era and project are volatile, exciting and extremely important. While conducting the research for this article, I have been strongly influenced by Zygmunt Bauman, particularly Liquid Modernity, (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2000).

12. J. Urry, Global Complexity, (Cambridge: Polity, 2003)

13. M. Bunting, Willing Slaves, (London: Perennial, 2005)

14. P. Virilio, "Speed and Information: Cyberspace Alarm!," originally published in Le Monde Diplomatique, August 1995, http://scottkleinman.net/495dh/files/2011/09/Virilio.pdf and P.Virilio, "The Third Interval: A Critical Transition," from Re-thinking Technologies, (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1993), http://webstermedia.nl/mobilemedia/readings/virilio-thirdinterval.pdf

15. R. Wilk, Fast food / slow food: the cultural economy of the global food system, (Lanham: Altamira Press, 2006)

16. S. Mintz, "Food at moderate speeds," ibid., p. 4.

17. Robert Albritton makes the point that scientists have never known more about food and human health than in our present. Yet because of the corporatization of food, poor individual and collective choices are being made about consumption practices and behaviours. He stated that, "We have increasingly good knowledge about what is good for human health and environmental health, and yet there is a huge gap between our knowledge and policy, precisely because policy change is tightly constrained by the interests of giant corporations," from Let them eat junk: how capitalism creates hunger and obesity, (Winnipeg: Arbeiter Ring Publishing, 2009), p. 8.

18. Brian Wansink in his Food and Brand Lab at Cornell has studied the impact of a calorific environment and the multiplicity of food choices on the rise of obesity. Please refer to Mindless eating, http://mindlesseating.org/

19. This naturalization of fast food in streets and the patterns of daily life was explored in E. Schlosser, Fast food nation, (London: Penguin, 2002)

20. M. Featherstone, "Automobilities," Theory, Culture & Society, Vol. 21, no. 4/5, 2004, p. 1-24

21. Albritton, op. cit., pp. 72-73

22. ibid., p. 73

23. S. Mintz, "Food at moderate speeds," from R. Wilk (ed.), Fast food / slow food: the cultural economy of the global food system, (Lanham: Altamira Press, 2006), p. 3

24. My argument here is not suggesting that quality is standardized. A fine moment of user generated content that generated a consciousness in the gap between the image of fast food preparation and the actuality of its delivery is present on YouTube: Fast Food: Ads versus reality, http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mbCwi6EeNAE.

25. G. Chud, "Less work for mother," Giselechudphoto.com, October 12, 2012, http://giselechudphoto.com/automat-horn-hardart-baking-company/

26. M. Carolan, The real cost of cheap food, (London: Earthscan, 2011), p. 7

27. I experienced a personal example of this context when working at the University of Ontario Institute of Technology. Deciding not to purchase a car and walk to work, it proved impossible to buy housing within walking distance of the downtown campus. Therefore my husband Professor Steve Redhead and I were left to reside in a bed and breakfast establishment that was twenty five minutes walk from the campus. The entire walk, through the former red light district and discarded General Motors sites, included over twenty fast food restaurants and two Tim Hortons, but only one supermarket. This supermarket captured the reality described by North American scholars when discussing the relationship between food availability, obesity, poverty and inner city decline. The range of food available was limited. Food stocks of particular items frequently ran out, particularly fruit and vegetables. But there was a continual availability of crisps, pre-sliced cheese, sliced deli meats, ice cream, pizza and a huge quantity of frozen goods that were so heavily crumbed and fried that the actual animal from which the meat was derived was uncertain. It was – frankly – impossible to eat in a healthy fashion because of the scarce supply of basic ingredients. We ended up eating yoghurt (if available) and a white bread, ham sandwich with avocado (if available) most days. The consequences of this 'diet' were almost continual nausea, regular bouts of food poisoning, weight loss and profound tiredness. We lifted the level of vitamin supplements, which also had minimal availability locally and ended up being sourced from an online chemist, to avoid deep vitamin deficiencies. The only other options were to move to fast food restaurants, which we declined to do. Therefore, whenever a discussion of obesity in working class communities emerges, it is important to explore the context with care. The lack of ingredients for a healthy meal and life may be one – and perhaps the

major – cause of obesity. Our lived reality in downtown Oshawa explains the emerging relationship between obesity and malnutrition. The constant goods that were available in supermarket were pizzas, ice cream and frozen fried goods.

28. Carolan, op. cit., p. 71

29. ibid., p. 75

30. Carolan stated that, ""The food waste generated in the US alone constitutes sufficient nourishment to pull approximately 200 million people out of hunger," ibid., 129

31. G. Lugo, "New York fast food workers strike over low pay," The Guardian, November 30, 2012, http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2012/nov/30/fast-food-strike-new-york

32. C. Petrini, Slow food: a case for taste, (New York: Columbia University Press, 2001), C. Petrini, Slow food nation, (New York: Rizzoli, 2005), C. Petrini and G. Padovani, Slow food revolution, (New York: Rizzoli, 2005)

33. Slow Food, http://www.slowfood.com/

34. K. Lowitt, "Exploring Connections Between People, Places and Food in Three Nova Scotia Farmers' Markets," Cuizine: The Journal of Canadian Food Cultures, Vol. 2, No. 1, 2009, http://www.erudit.org/revue/cuizine/2009/v2/n1/039514ar.html

35. C. Honore, In praise of slow, (London: Orion, 2004)

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37. R. Slocum, Race in the study of food, http://www.rslocum.com/Slocum_final_PiHG_racefood.pdf

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39. C. Helstosky, Garlic & Oil: Food and politics in Italy, (Oxford: Berg, 2004), p. 5

40. Economic and Social Development Department, The state of food insecurity in the world, (Rome: FAO, 2004), ftp://ftp.fao.org/docrep/fao/007/y5650e/y5650e00.pdf, p. 6.

41. S. Mintz, op. cit., p. 10

42. Man vs Food, http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s8sC7iHMC-M

43. This important area of investigation was described by A. van Otterloo, in The Sociology of Food: Eating, Diet and Culture, (London: Sage, 1992). Please also refer to R. Wood, The Sociology of the Meal, (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1995)

44. C. Petrini, Slow food: a case for taste, (New York: Columbia University Press, 2001)

45. A short piece investigating these micro-distinctions in flavour is A. Trubek, "Maple Syrup: Differences between Vermont and Quebec," Cuizine: The Journal of Canadian Food Cultures, Volume 2, 2010, http://www.erudit.org/revue/cuizine/2010/v2/n2/044354ar.html

46. M. Caldwell, "Tasting the worlds of yesterday and today: culinary tourism and nostalgia foods in post-Soviet Russia," from Wilk, op. cit., p. 100

47. David Balaam and Michael Carey, in Food Politics: the regional conflict, (London: Croom Helm, 1981), stated that, "the regional approach collapses previously separate categories of political and economic issues into a more useful category of the political economy of agriculture in various regions," p. 1

48. M. Carolan, Embodied Food Politics, (Farnham: Ashgate, 2011), p. 19

49. R. Wilk, "From wild weeds to artisanal cheese," from Wilk, op. cit., p. 13

50. L. DeLind, "Are local food and the local food movement taking us where we want to go? Or are we hitching our wagons to the wrong stars?," Agriculture and Human Values, http://www.agroecology.wisc.edu/courses/agroecology-702/materials/9-farm-and-comm-viability/delind-2010.pdf Vol. 28, No. 2, June 2011

51. M. Carolan, The real cost of cheap food, (London: Earthscan, 2011), 117

52. ibid., p. 118

53. S. Lyon, "Just Java: roasting fair trade coffee," from Wilk, op. cit., p. 256

54. DeLind, op. cit.

55. ibid.

56. S. Feldman and V. Marks, Panic Nation, (London: Blake, 2006)

57. E. Schlosser, Fast food nation, (London: Penguin, 2002)

58. K. Whitehead, "'Hunger hurts but starving works:' A case study of gendered practices in the online pro-eating disorder community," Canadian Journal of Sociology, Vol. 35, No. 4, 2010, http://ejournals.library.ualberta.ca/index.php/CJS/article/view/7976/7584

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60. S. Robert and M. Weaver-Hightower (eds.), School food politics: the complex ecology of hunger and feeding in schools around the world, (New York: Peter Lang, 2011)

61. R. Albritton, Let them eat junk: how capitalism creates hunger and obesity, (Winnipeg: Arbeiter Ring Publishing, 2009), p. 3

62. ibid., p. ix

63. ibid., p. 6

64. J. Braziel and K. LeBesco (eds.), Bodies out of Bounds, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001)

65. I am not suggesting here that fatness inhibits fitness. Indeed it is possible to be both fat and fit. However such a realization is inhibited by a too easy cultural convergence of health and a slender body. For example, Antonia Losano and Brenda Risch, in "Resisting Venus: negotiating corpulence in exercise videos" from Braziel and LeBesco, ibid., conducted an analysis of exercise videos. They explored how the bigger body is 'managed' in fitness programming. They showed that the bigger body is used to present 'modifications' to the correct exercise. In other words, the larger women and men complete an easier exercise. This connection between body size and restricted movement reveals profound consequences outside the fitness video discourse.

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Hashing It Over: Green Governmentality and the Political Economy of Food

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The Starter Course: Food and Green Governmentality

This analysis is a cautious provisional exploration of one aspect of the new green economy. At best, it serves as a prelude to more elaborate critiques of today's growing economic inequalities, and their close ties industrial food system and its ecology. The nexus of human food with ecological degradation has been a leitmotif in the contemporary American environmental movement since at least 1962 when Rachel Carson traced some of the detrimental effects of DDT contamination in North America's food chains. Consequently, efforts to trace the ties between "a vibrant food politics" that explores why "what we choose to eat" as well as how "the production, distribution, and consumption of food affords--as individuals, societies, and a species--both power and privilege over others" (Lavin, 2011) is vital for a more complex economic critique of the present. In probing the economies and cultures of industrial food production today, it seems clear "that an increased attention to political economy is the sine qua non for a revived cultural studies" (Smith, 2011: 6). As an exploratory exercise in ecology as critique and self-critique, this study digs into the political economy of food to unearth a handful of its economic inequalities and how environmental activism both can assail and assuage them.

In that spirit, this exploration also surveys a few of the deepening economic and social inequalities that local activists, community agriculture enthusiasts, and neighborhood revitalizers have opposed with a diverse array of policies and practices. By using food ecologies as the spearhead of broader social transformations, these social forces have sought to redirect the production, distribution, and consumption of food. Yet, this analysis also considers how some of today's well-intentioned interventions, which have been aimed at the reform of food policies, could appear to articulate contradictory policy assemblages embedded in the controlling logics of green governmentality (Luke, 1995).

In particular, one must reexamine the mixed record of purportedly alternative, communitarian or emancipatory practices, namely, those tied to attaining more economic autonomy and cultural authenticity in self-produced, locally-distributed and quickly-consumed foods from "locavorist" urban agriculture. Such food stocks are produced by a bevy of loosely organized initiatives from officially endorsed CSA (community supported agriculture) groups to semi-illegal "guerrilla gardening" circles. Often, these popular interventions seem radical, populist or anti-systemic. At the same time, one wonders if these developments can be a marker of how contemporary capitalist modernity's retrograde limits and contradictions oddly can manifest themselves in what are allegedly progressive practices? Indeed, the significance of such developments seems far more mixed and murky than the bright burnish their enthusiasts have given to them (Kennedy, 2011; and, Bane, 2012). Michael Pollan (2006: 10) is now famous for noting, "the way we eat represents our most profound engagement with the natural world," and then setting off in search of ideal examples of ethically self-sourced, cultivated, and/or foraged meals that actualize certain food experiences as authenticity. Something like greater "food justice" (Gottlieb and Joshi, 2010) can develop from such initiatives, but then so too might greater food injustice. While the supporters of heavily authenticated eating economies highlight the bright liberational opportunities for realizing greater nutritional health or personal freedom for all who engage in authentic food-getting activity (Permaculture Activist, 2011), is it just as plausible to see instances of locavore food

politics as the darker necessities of an austerity intent upon coping with broader institutional systemic crises that already have begun (Homer-Dixon with Garrison, 2009)?

Out on the Ground: One Intriguing Intervention

Following these lines of flight in the world economy, a recent news story comes from the Virginia Cooperative Extension (VCE) service as an instructive insight. In reviewing its report, one wonders if its accounts reveal a few of the operators of institutionalized domination, working to support, reinforce, and multiply each other in a blur of green good intentions that ensure how "society must be defended" (Foucault, 1997) today. Facing broken families, obese citizens, underemployed workers, and vacant land, the VCE news release recounts how Henrico County's Board of Supervisors recently approached the Extension Service to deal with high infant mortality, poor nutrition, and family stress in one district of the county. As the VCE horticulture agent in Henrico County observed, "we knew that if we improved the nutrition and physical activity of the people in that district, we might be able to make a difference. Encouraging people to grow their own fruits and vegetables would provide a physical activity that they could do together as a family and provide them with access to fresh and nutritious food" (http://www.vt.edu/spotlight/impact/2011-08-15-local-food/henrico.html.)

Starting with two acres, VCE mobilized seven families to work 12 plots during 2008. In 2010, the acquisition of another near-by property allowed more families to join in this experiment, and now over 20 families are tilling 27 plots in 2011. While the VCE explicitly targets low-income families, anyone can join this community gardening campaign as long as they follow VCE's handbooks, take VCE classes, adhere to VCE rules regarding general safety, personal responsibility, and group activity, and then adopt VCE approaches to organic methods for the cultivation, preservation, and preparation of their family-grown produce. On the one hand, many people appear to be eating differently. And, on the other hand, their changed food practices are articulating a mode of green governmentality through this VCE program for "Gardens Growing Families," which is proving to be quite effective. The VCE horticultural agent reports "77 percent of gardeners indicated that they saved money by growing their own fruits and vegetables in 2010. And 94 percent of the gardeners said their family diet improved as a result of the vegetables or fruit grown in their garden" (http://www.vt.edu/spotlight/impact/2011-08-15-localfood/henrico.html.)

When they were surveyed by VCE experts, the Garden Grown Families indicated that they believed their members cooperated together better as domestic units, cultivated a stronger work ethic, and improved their daily diet, while keeping to a tighter household food budget. The willingness to waste money on the less fresh, less healthy, and less economical products of the fast food industry was sharply curtailed. And, apparently the importance of personal effort and economy became far more evident as moral tasks to the participants when they began tilling the earth.

The VCE concluded, such local urban agricultural initiatives should be embraced and expanded as important new policy practices that put "food on the table and bring families together." This recent effort is only one small experiment. Nevertheless, it proves instructive amidst today's deepening inequalities to the extent that the VCE approach to food as economy perhaps has begun, in turn, to test new tactics by which "society must be defended" by mobilizing, first, the underclass and then, next, other willing participants to re-socialize themselves as cultivators, consumers, and collaborators in a community garden.

Pollan has observed that eating is "an ecological act, and a political act, too. Though much has been done to obscure this simple fact, how and what we eat determines to a great extent the use we make of the world--and what is to become of it" (Pollan, 2006: 11). His criticism of omnivorous humans essentially pivots upon the industrial food chain's massive substitution for renewable carbohydrate energies drawn from plants, and then burned by animals and humans to sustain themselves on complex carbon molecules from photosynthesis, with new toxic and dirty nonrenewable hydrocarbon fossil fuels. That is, "industrial agriculture has supplanted a complete reliance on the sun for our calories with something new under the sun: a food chain that draws much of its energy from fossil fuels instead" (Pollan, 2006: 10). These fossil fueled modes of industrial agrarian life in America are the greatest expression of its population's excessive waste, or general affluenza, or quest for easy money to be spent unwisely (Berry, 2009).

While fossil fuel has generated agricultural abundance in the U.S.A. for America and the world, this newfound plenty is one of immense waste. Every acre of corn takes at least a barrel of oil to produce; each beef cow takes

nearly a barrel of oil to grow, feed, and bring to market with each pound of beef usually taking 7 pounds of corn to grow; and, many fast food lunches for four (usually eaten in a car) take about 1.3 gallons of oil to produce (Pollan, 2006: 45-46, 83-84, 115, 117). Humans are indeed omnivores, but actually those at the top fifth or third of the world chain are, in some real sense, essentially monivorous. Their ultimate food source is oil, making them to a very real extent "petrovores."

Petrocomestibles, however, are the epitome of capital, energy, labor, and material waste. Hence, many of today's new food politicizers, like the VCE or guerrilla gardeners, make it their imperative to bring a new economy of food into being at least for some significant number of people. It is one that depetroleumizes, deruralizes, and perhaps even deindustrializes, the modern food chain by localizing, slowing, and de-diversifying the array of foods available to such omnivorous humans. Indeed, today's most spirited proponents for civic agrarianism see urban agriculture as having a long-term crisis mitigation utility. Consequently, they assert "one of the shortest routes from passive consumer to active food system designer is through the community garden" (Tracey, 2011: 9). With 48 million people ages 18 to 64 in the U.S.A. not working even one week a year in 2010, and 45 million in the same fix during 2009, the community garden perhaps is now part of the new social safety net (Tavernise, 2011b: A1). 15 percent of the entire population, and nearly 25 percent of all children live below the official poverty level (Doughtery, 2011: A4), so becoming "active food system designers" maybe one of the best legal options that many individuals have available to survive everyday life in contemporary America.

To attain this new food economy, however, all must twist down, and then slowly almost turn off, the petropower spigot. Are Henrico County's poor neighborhoods arguably one of its prefigurations? Visiting an organic farm in California, Pollan is shocked that "growing, chilling, washing, packaging, and transporting each box of organic salad to a plate on the East Coast takes more than 4,600 calories of fossil fuel energy, or 57 calories of fossil fuel energy for every calorie of food" (2006: 167). His amazed calculations capture the centrality of the industrial food chain's energy-intensitivity. Nonetheless, if communities move in disgusted awe from this level of wasted fossil fuel calories into a new food economy grounded on more locally-sourced, organism-powered, or personally-grown comestibles, then the world we make around, and out of our food must change radically by returning to small-scale, labor-intensive, and locally-based modes of cultivation.

With world demand for oil rising 25 billion barrels a year, and the American dollar becoming less desirable to price global oil purchases, and oil prices rising in real terms to perhaps $150 a barrel (as they did briefly during 2008-2009) or maybe $200 or $300 a barrel in the near future, the U.S.A. as a whole will not be able to afford $8.00 a gallon gasoline or $300 a barrel crude. Of course, fracking oil and gas reserves captured in certain rock formations across the nation could slightly postpone these dire developments. Postponements, however, are not permanent solutions. Hence, many CSA activists believe "of necessity, Americans will return to a simple way of life....One way this can happen is by having massive unemployment in those sectors of the economy that do not generate exportable goods and services, such as residential construction and real estate. Unemployed people will use less gasoline and buy less stuff at Wal-Mart. Tradewill ultimately balance. The fact is that we can get by on a lot less than we have been" (Worth, 2010: 30).

A new kind of politics, then, is implied by reordering who does what, when, and how when there is a lowering of all fossil fuel caloric inputs into food caloric outputs. It is not shocking, as the VCE indicates, that people with lots of time, energy, and labor to spare will be brought first into the daily routines of "Green Grown Families," if there are no better economic alternatives. Still, without more due deliberation, these shifts undoubtedly could result in new more inequitable arrangements for pushing trends toward "degrowing" big industrial food chains as well as supercharging other smaller upscale postindustrial food markets around today's unequal class divides.

Dilemmas in the Dirt: Omnivores or Petrovores

Does the trope of omnivores "facing the dilemmas" of choosing carnivorousness, herbivorousness or at least less omnivorousness, as Pollan's writings assert, occlude a bigger structural imperative embedded in the industrial food chains? Modern American society's reliance upon a nonrenewable legacy resource drawn from 500 million years of fossilized solar energy in coal, gas, and oil deposits (Homer-Dixon with Garrison, 2009: 65) makes an organic salad from California available in Maryland at everyday low prices as petrovory extremely problematic. While coal and gas along with oil now constitute 85 to 90 percent of human energy use, it still is petroleum that drives much

of today's industrial food chain (Crosby, 2006). Renewable sources of energy have increased during the past 150 years, but the typical global consumer on average uses the same amount of such energy--percentage-wise annually--as one did in 1850. Fossil fuel use, on the other hand, has risen eightfold per capita since 1850 (Homer-Dixon with Garrison, 2009: 66), so typifying this food economy and ecology as one rooted in oil-burning makes analytical sense.

The miracles of modern industrial agriculture rest upon "mining" rather "minding" the Earth's resources -- a depredation that has been clearly recognized by many critics for decades. Pollan and others in the new sustainable food movements of the twenty-first century are only rediscovering worries expressed by the Scott and Helen Nearing in the 1930s, Barry Commoner in the 1960s, or Wendell Berry in the 1980s. Despite decades of criticism, however, petrocomestibility has only grown more elaborate, excessive, and extreme. It is not clear that real change can come now, but many more people are considering it as a more viable option. In its bright promise phase, more locavory appears in the guise of ethical awareness, ecological concern or economical sensibility; but, in fact, its darker realities are very clear. As Pollan suggests, eating is a political act. And, a major element in the politics of this new eating assemblage is adapting large groups of once affluent, but now increasingly impoverished, people to irreversible climate change, worsening economic inequality, collapsing industrial economies, and eroding urban landscapes (Hacker and Pierce, 2010) by keeping them fixed in place as postconsumerist cultivators living in dying automobile suburbs or stressed big cities as their access to oil-burning globovore food ecologies closes.

A few individuals with serious financial means undoubtedly will continue to enjoy the bounty of many diverse and intensive food chains from their specialized niches in the widening two-tiered economy of the present (Vlasic, 2011); but, at the same time, many others will lose out. Food deserts already exist, and their emptiness is spreading. To combat food desertification, the increasingly superfluous or obsolete majorities of most industrial-era factory and farm workers shall be left by necessity and design to live, at least in part, more deeply in new deindustrialized, depetroleumized, deglobalized, denationalized, and demechanized food ecologies. These webs of economy are pushing them in the direction of "Gardens Growing Families," which are tactics to mobilize their labor time, animal energy, and personal property to feed themselves and their neighbors. Rather than advancing slow food, soft energy paths, and simple living as superior forms of human emancipation, as many of their original advocates have stressed during the last forty or fifty years of fossil fueled excess, are these alternative political economies being valorized in today's lingering Great Recession as sensible survival strategies for mitigating economic stagnation or adapting to technological decline as petropowered civilization becomes less sustainable? Arguably, yes. Food transfer payments are one of Washington's highest social welfare expenditures, and anything that can reduce them is welcome news in President Obama's second term

Of course, large-scale global economic disruptions cascade into almost all urban neighborhoods and suburban tracts, and they can cause what their residents experience as "the city's social issues of homelessness, addiction, prostitution, and crime" (Tracey, 2011: 10). When a city lot or a few abandoned homes' backyards are turned into gardens for community supported agriculture where the local residents will do much of the daily work, a very convenient relation of people to things, or people without things to their environment, can come into force. Tracey, for example, comments upon the residents of Vancouver's Downtown Eastside:

> Some did not have homes themselves, which may be why the site turned into a farm that resembled an outdoor living room. All kinds of neighborhood people would drop in. Nurses would visit on breaks from the only legal facility in North America where addicts can use heroin under medical supervision. Sometimes six-trade workers would stroll in to pick up a few raspberries off the vine, perhaps the only fresh organic food they would eat that day. Others would come in just to sit for 20 minutes away from the chaos of the street. Urban agriculture is all about the food, but it can also be about much more than that (Tracey, 2011: 9-10).

CSAs plainly are about much more than the food; they are, as this activist's idyll reveals, about agriculture supporting community. To grow food where people live is significant; but, keeping people where they live no matter how destitute, getting them engaged in productive, rewarding, albeit unpaid, labor to promote healthy survival, and organizing more secure, stable, and safe neighborhoods within the limits of this alternative agrarian commonwealth are decisively useful tactics to cope with the contemporary crisis.

Rather than perhaps creating a true cultural advance through collective social and economic transformation to prefigure another better form of modernity, as their original deep green advocates asked, are these reformist locavores more often than not also picking piecemeal over earlier green radical designs for survivalistic tactics to mitigate the unintended demodernizing consequences of neoliberal financialization? Without justifying what have been, and are, fixed relations of global inequality the collapse of once wealthy national economies (as well as their

more prosperous and stable core cities, neighborhoods, and towns) seems to be reducing many locales to a more peripheralized status plagued by huge brownfields, dead zones or obsolescent areas.

Out of such spaces, the inhabitants of once prosperous states face life up against growing food deserts, service cutbacks, job deserts, security deficits, housing losses, and population migrations as spatiality itself remediates the full spectrum of complex economic and social decline (Brenner, 2002). Too many accounts of "food deserts" focus only on inner-city neighborhoods (Chittum, 2011). In fact, the vast expanses of petropowered agriculture have monoculturalized rural America through petrovory to the point that many farmers also live on monivorous food deserts even more dire than those of inner-city consumers.

Space, as Lefebvre (1991) argues, is more than the naturalized expanses, surfaces, and volumes of ordinary physical matter. It is, more importantly, the material articulation and activation of social relations. The relentless drive to conquer uninhabited, or only sparsely settled, lands and waters in the grand rush to attain economic, industrial, social, and urban development during the Industrial Revolution from 1720s through the 1970s by the West has been called "development." Its waves of modernization occupied and ordered space with the social interactions of modern urbanization, organization, and administration of a commercial world system that reified multiple spatialities in the cruel fusion of statist empires and business emporia, which one might designate as the creatively fused emporium of capital and power. Working around the classic capitalist antinomies of capital/labor, urban/rural, industry/agriculture, city/country, settlement/wilderness, the industrial food chain is one of modernity's most reified spatial articulations (Pollan, 2008). In many ways, petropowered agricultural path dependencies developed out of centuries of struggle over land, labor and capital after World War I. In some places, the apparatus of industrial agriculture will still persist for the few, but its relations of organization, order, and operation plainly have been splintering for the many since the late 1990s and early 2000s (Marazzi, 2011).

When seen in this light, today's diverse celebrations of agro-ecology, green cities, agro-urbanism or community agriculture on a local, small footprint, and frugal scale, which have worked in a variety of once so-called Third or Fourth World settings, are a somewhat mixed blessing. A "plant's eye view of the world" (Pollan, 2002) is only in part one in which a desire for basic botanical skills boosts nutrition, life chances and social capital stocks as much or more than machinic aplomb (Pollan, 2002). The spreading sprawl of these underdeveloped sites also is renowned for its destitution. Other sociological studies fretting about the Earth's future, identify it as the definitive marker of a "planet of slums" (Davis, 2008).

Poorer people can be prepared and equipped to till nearby brownfields to feed themselves and their families. Are what once might have been Liberty Gardens, Victory Gardens or Whip Inflation Now Gardens only unfree patches, defeated plots or deflationary diggings? Of course, each one "draws from Sun and Earth" (Morrison, 2011: 4-5), but with an array of immobile, underpaid and unfree labor practices adopted out of necessity along the way. In some sense, Pollanesque food politics are a new ethical consumerism (Lavin, 2009); but, in other more insidious developments, these clean, lean, or green styles of being also can express a highly re-engineered postconsumerist politics for underemployed cultivators of bankrupt businesses' green space, foreclosed upon homes' front lawns or failed subdivisions' street medians.

Overcooked Economies: Adaptations and Mitigations

The contemporary need for new environmental practices, like sustainable community agriculture, emerges from a specific set of conditions. Those particularities can best be mapped, first, in the recent crises of the Great Recession, and, second, in the systemic decay of economic and social equality in the U.S.A. since the 1970s. Both of these tendencies deserve some extended discussion. An overview of how long-term trends towards economic collapse set the stage for new adaptation and mitigation strategies tied to new food ecologies, therefore, is worth mapping.

A recent report from the Pew Research Center confirms the worrisome significance of these broader trends toward economic inequality by reassessing American household income and wealth. During the recent housing crisis, more and more regions in the U.S.A. seem to be sliding off toward the "planet of slums" after decades of neoliberal policies of dispossession. In 2005, the median household net worth of all American households was $198,894. For white households, this figure stood at $134,992, black households stood at $12,124; Hispanics at $18,259; and Asians at $168,103. Yet, after the Great Recession, the 2009 net household worth figures were severely worse. All

households' net worth had fallen during four years to the figure of $70,000; white households at $113,149; black households at $5,677; Hispanics at $6,235, and Asians at $78,066 (Tavernise, 2011a: A1). These still burning losses have now led to the greatest wealth disparities in the U.S.A. since 25 years ago. Indeed, the median worth of white households is 20 times greater than blacks and 18 times greater than Hispanics (Kochar, Fry, and Taylor, 2011: 1). Hispanics are 16 percent and blacks are 12 percent of the U.S. population, but one-third (35 percent) of all black and Hispanic households (31 percent) had a zero or negative net worth in 2009 as opposed to only 11 percent of white households (Kochar, Fry and Taylor, 2009: 2). While things have improved moderately since 2012, the positive trend lines here are the weakest since 1945.

Over the past generation, one out of every three Americans who grew up in a middle class household has dropped back into the lower classes, and this finding is drawn from data only from 1979 to 2006. Another Pew Charitable Trust study examined teenagers in 1979 that were between 39 and 44 in 2004 and 2006. Remaining in the middle class was marked by steady income in a range between the 30th and 70th deciles of income distribution, or living, for example, in a family of four with $32,900 to $64,000 of income annually in 2010 dollars (Roanoke Times, 2011a: A8). One out of three people experienced downward mobility in the U.S.A., which was marked by falling below the 30th decile of income, or falling 20 percentiles or more than their parent's household income or earning annually 20 percent or more less than their parents (Roanoke Times, 2011a: A8).

Major Fortune 50 firms in the U.S.A have noticed this deterioration in middle class living standards. Procter & Gamble, for instance, in 2011 launched its first dish soap since 1973 for the downmarket "bargain" niche. Because it has products in 98 percent of all U.S. households, and it wants to keep them there, P&G is tracking how the middle class -- or all households in the $50,000 to $140,000 in annual income range – is shrinking overall, while its members endure constant distress every month. P&G's marketing experts have determined the median income in the U.S.A. in 2009 was lower after inflation than in 1998 (Byron, 2011: A16). The big dips in family income came in the 1970s, the early 1990s, and since 2006, which all have left the U.S.A. with a Gini index of 0.468. This coefficient indicates a 20 percent increase in income inequality in the U.S.A. since the end of the Cold War, leaving the United States with about the same Gini index for overall social inequality as Mexico or the Philippines (Byron, 2011: A16). Although it is not a welcome development for P&G executives, they recognize their long post-World War II run of successfully selling more, and gradually more expensive, household products to middle class market segments is ending.

To survive in the U.S.A., the company now targets consumers with systemically "falling" or "stagnating" incomes. As its vice-president for consumer marketing in North America notes, "this has been the most humbling aspect of our jobs. The numbers of middle America have been shrinking because people have been getting hurt so badly economically that they've been falling into lower income" (Byron, 2011: A16). Similarly, Federal Reserve records on household wealth indicate that Americans held about $6.1 trillion in home equity in March 2011. That figure was only half the 2006 level; and, all households' net assets grew only 2.4 percent from 2001 to 2007, only to tumble over 26 percent from 2007 to 2009 (Byron, 2011: A16).

Still, at the other higher end of the income distribution, whites in the top 10 percent of all such households saw their share of wealth increase from 46 percent in 2005 to 51 percent in 2009. Among Hispanics, this disparity is even greater as this figure rose from 56 percent in 2005 to 72 percent in 2009 (Kochar, Fry, and Taylor, 2011: 8). For 90 percent of American households, however, falling net worth, increasing amounts of free time, and the wasting opportunity of unused land in many cities and towns all combine as an opportune conjuncture to adapt many communities to these systemic crises by going all green out in the garden.

Petrovorous living obviously reshaped urban space, and this shift in the overall social context is crucial for understanding these food politics. In 1920, about 50 percent of the U.S. population lived in rural areas on a farm or ranch, and only seven percent of the nation's population lived in the suburbs. By 1950, after waves of automobility, two-thirds of Americans lived in cities or suburbs, and this figure hit 75 percent by 1970 as suburban populations eclipsed the number of inner-city residents (Florida, 2010: 35). For example, the "Motor City," or Detroit, expanded in area from 40 square miles in 1910 to 139 square miles in 1950 as its boundaries filled with workers and factories making all of the automotive apparatuses of petropowered prosperity (Florida, 2010: 34).

Yet, as the percentage of its industrial workforce fell from over 39 percent in 1951 to less than 19 percent of total population in 2010, Detroit crashed (Florida, 2010: 72). It has devolved into a vast capital, food, jobs, and technology desert. A million people left the city from 1950 to 2000; and, by 2009, 44,000 of its 65,000 homes that were in foreclosure were vacant, the unemployment rate was officially near 30 percent; and, 62,000 vacant lots or abandoned properties littered its landscapes (Florida, 2010: 72-74). Just the vacant land in Detroit amounts to an area almost equal in size to Boston, but Detroit still is the eleventh largest metropolitan region in the nation. It is,

however, also full of many underemployed, less skilled, and dispossessed people. Now a test-case for "the shrinking city" (Lanks, 2006), Detroit is bulldozing down many of its vacant abandoned buildings. In turn, "acre upon acre of once useless vacant lots are being turned into vibrant urban farms" (Florida, 2010: 80). Such recultivated lands are, in turn, now occupied differently. Working the soil there is more typically depetroleumized, highly localized, and essentially deindustrialized as it pulls underemployed residents into a new agrarianism amidst industrial ruination. By substituting bigger amounts of time spent on small plots to grow food for hours of paid labor to manufacture industrial goods or provide complex services in big lots for collective benefit, the larger social and spatial relations of the population are experiencing and expressing major changes spatially.

Coevolving with these dismal realities of structural economic stagnation, one finds strangely cheerful hopes for "the third sector" of non-governmental organizations tied to urban agro-ecology. The belief is that they can rescue most people trapped in essentially hopeless conditions of economic collapse now manifest in these complicated spatial deformations. Urban agriculture, because it is not unlike the leisure activities of home gardening, is an easy sell, because it promises people better food, greater health, household improvement, ecological virtue or food security. Some will be saved, but can everyone improve their lot by community gardening?

Left underemployed, facing foreclosure, and needing to survive, people must look to their neighborhoods for solutions. Frequently, the houses there have some spare outside square footage and/or neighborhoods of these homes have vacant lots of sufficient size to make cultivating the Earth a viable proposition for cash-starved, if not truly undernourished, homeowners and tenants. Returning to the private plot, community garden or city lot to grow food is not a grand vision of an ever-more powerful modern society; but, these options can put food on the table that otherwise would not be there. Moreover, some cities now pay people with cash internships, minimum wage jobs or monetary incentives to adapt to economic stagnation through such microscale reagrarianization schemes.

Tracey suggests with regard to community gardens that they are local sites for normative engagement, but they also serve as points of organized normalization. That is,

> A community garden is not just about vegetables. It can be a farm, a playground, a school, a temple, a gym, a stage, a refuge, a wildlife habitat, and more—all on the same day. At best, it derives its strength from and serves as a model for the community around it. Community gardens teach and celebrate values we cherish, including cooperation, volunteering, appreciation for diversity, and ecological awareness (Tracey, 2011: 9).

Certainly, these virtues are worth preserving. With their preservation and the level of home foreclosures in 2011 exceeding 2010's record levels (Roanoke Times, 2011B: A8), one also sees strategies for protecting housing stock, bank capital, and private equity simply by people cooperating to feed each other beyond the conventional cash nexus.

In a Stew: Eating as Authenticity or Austerity

Again, the purpose of this preliminary study is to question cautiously the new politics of food in an era of considerable scarcity. Celebrants of the third sector, like Rifkin (2000) see such efforts to enhance the everyday economies of food as the best path out of "a commodified future in which all of life becomes a series of paid for performances, entertainments, and fantasies" and into an alternative green order with "emphases on connectivity, embeddedness, and relatedness. . . punctuated by a newfound sense of oneness and participation with others" (Rifkin, 2000: 212). Since it is not clear that the choices before the denizens of the planet's degraded urban sprawl are this certain, one must worry about why such fabulations for authenticity and food are also being presented to the underemployed, underpaid or even unemployed residents of areas that once were the so-called First World (Pollan, 2008).

As Virginia's Cooperative Extension service teaches, using food to anchor a new moral, political, and urban economy is indeed an exciting new recipe for enforcing social order. And, it points toward a two-tiered economy anchored by two unequal poles. One smaller tier will have high-paying secure careers, and the other much larger tier will feature mostly low pay/no pay unstable jobs (Vlasic, 2011; and, Rampell, 2011). For those less affluent citizens with a more hunter-gatherer disposition than an agrarian one, it is possible for those in the declining tiers of fixed, fallen, or fractionalized incomes to forage successfully on already in place urban landscapes, plots of random wild growth or just what appear to be weeds.

Kaplan, for example, notes, "in my small city, fruit literally hangs off of the trees and onto the streets. Some

people harvest their backyard trees, but many people let the fruit fall and rot....foraging and gleaning are ways to eat local, save money, and practice our resourceful relation to place" (2011: 38). Noting many people have fruit trees; but, with no time for or interest in harvesting their crop, the enterprising forager can pick that fruit, leave a good measure on the owners' porches, and glean a surplus. Tons of food that would otherwise go to waste thereby becomes, once again, agriculture supporting community.

Similarly, civic agrarians point out how edible plants on public property can be mapped for personal and group foraging sessions. Such produce certainly will be wasted unless it is gleaned, so new urban agrarians would do well to identity, inventory, and then intercept this usufruct lest it go to waste. Gathering such crops is important, whether they are found on private property or public lands, to manage "food insecurity" inasmuch as foods "which otherwise would have gone to waste and rotted on people's lawns, was foraged and distributed to people who need it" (Kaplan, 2011: 38). The truly inventive new urban agrarian also can exploit the never obliterated biodiversity of naturally occurring perennial plants, or "weeds," that grow almost anywhere all the time. Knowing what parts are edible, where weeds will (or will not) get sprayed with herbicides as well as if they grow on private property is important. Yet, once those facts have been determined, foraging wild and weedy food stocks, from blackberries, burdock, chickweed, chicory, dandelion to mint, mustard, nasturtium, raspberries, sorrel, "is a most essential and beautiful skill to cultivate however you choose to practice it" (Kaplan, 2011: 39).

At the other end of the class continuum, however, property developers are recalibrating suburbia's designs for a shrinking top tier with good solid incomes. That is, "in a movement propelled by environmental concern, nostalgia for a simpler life and a dollop of marketing savvy, developers are increasingly laying out their cul-de-sacs around organic farms, cattle ranches, vineyards and other agricultural ventures" (Simon, 2011: R3). Edible landscaping, community orchards, along with zoning in cattle ranchettes, organic farms or boutique vineyards instead of strip malls, 24 hour minimarkets or tennis courts, are key ingredients of this new twist in mobilizing food as economy. To sell up-market suburban homes, the key amenity no longer are golf greens beyond the rear fence--it is salad greens in the backyard (Simon, 2011: R3).

These ideas weakly echo the aesthetics and economics of William Morris or Paul Goodman as their proponents anchor new conceptions for the townscape in visions of what Quint Redmond "calls "agriburbia," where suburbs aren't just built around a farm; they support food production at every turn" (Simon, 2011: R3). Where the underclass is left to forage from the lawns of the remaining affluent, inner city, home-owner; Redmond's design would plant almond, apple or avocado trees along all the agriburbia's streets. He would embed kale, corn or grains in golf course roughs. He will seed shrubbery beds with cabbage, carrots or currants, and edge lawns when they are necessary with chives or herbs (Simon, 2011: R3). Some in the up-market demographic may remain disinterested in this potential, but such new homes with their solar panels, super insulation, or embedded efficiencies also could spark other agriburban economies. "Mr. Redmond maintains," for those buyers seeking CSA-oriented attractions, "that many homeowners could earn half their mortgage payment by converting lawns into gardens and selling the bounty to restaurants or at farmer's markets. "Organic basil is like growing gold," he says. "You can net $26,000 an acre"" (Simon, 2011: R3)

Globalization in its financialized neoliberal forms today is devalorizing key links in world commodity chains. This move is leaving some populations, regions, and settlements behind with no reliable source of continued growth, while preserving the energy-intensive traditional order for the up-scale end of the class hierarchy. In various households and neighborhoods along within certain towns and cities, alternatives for the maintenance of everyday life must be found--even if it leads to towards gradual deindustrialization, demechanization, and depetroleumization where foraging for free weeds or waste fruit is cast as a beautiful essential skill for liberation.

Community agriculture is a plausible response for people living in "food deserts," or low-income census tracts where a major fraction of the population is a mile away from its nearest supermarket in an urban setting or 10 miles away in a rural area, but it is crucial to see how and why accessible food-buying outlets deserted them. Low-income spaces indicate that there also are job deficits, housing degradation, income deserts, health deterioration, and skill declines sweeping across major concentrations of these same populations. The increasing degree of precarious living in all these registers reveals a new hollowed-out spatiality. Pushing this initiative is an intervention in favor of building a material alternative in which the dispossessed "build real wealth, increase food and energy security, reduce the need for income, create a home-based livelihood" (Permaculture Activist, 2011: inside front cover). The great cost and scarcity of oil already is tracing its constricting effects in such urban-industrial desertification (Ruppert, 2009). The waning of public goods and services is both mystified and made obvious by the mapping of food deserts. One must ask if the state is left only to go about mapping its food deserts, then what can it do about such economic

desertification? Apparently, Proctor & Gamble will identify these zip codes, track them as they become more like Mexico or the Philippines, and then develop more "bargain" downmarket goods to sell their residents.

Green critiques of modern industrial society have had highly progressive agro-ecological elements at their strategic core for decades as the potentially liberating basis for new cultural alternatives. Whether it is home-based solar power, collective neighborhood gardens or autonomous "off-the-grid" homes, like New Mexico's "Earth Ship" houses, once revolutionary designs to reorder everyday life in Fordist or post-Fordist urban industrial economies from the 1960s through the 1990s, have been essentially ignored. Yet, after being neglected for all this time, they are being (re)discovered as remediations of green governmentality (Luke, 1997). As they are discovered, bits and pieces of them are also repurposed as adaptive interventions for coping minimally with the aftermath of the same excessive patterns of helter-skelter urban industrialization at the center of those same green critiques. Rather than grounding some major transformational experiment for more emancipatory human existences, green populist agro-ecologies are being hashed over for measured expedients needed to adapt to economic decline and ecological degradation, which have been engineered by cognitive capitalism to aid the reproduction of plenty for the few and destitution in the dirt for the many?

Eating now is clearly, and even more ironically, a very political act. Warm green mythologies about getting back to the garden will have a hard time legitimating food authenticity alone as the path to a truly progressive future. Too many serious questions remain unanswered, because eating as authenticity can cloak hard new command, control, and communication campaigns for enforcing more austerity in the regimen of green governmentality. Is this new green economics being imposed in the ruins to sustain spirit of a society that must be defended, but only after it has been roundly defrauded?

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Vegans who Run

Ben Agger

Body politics has been on the radar at least since feminists noticed that fat is a feminist issue. Earlier, Merleau-Ponty and Beauvoir contested the Cartesian splitting of mind and body. Their compatriot, Sartre, hung with them at Deux Magots in Paris, where existentialism, stressing personal agency, was born. Even philosophers have to eat.

Susie Orbach (1978) penned Fat is a Feminist Issue at a time when the women's movement was differentiating itself from, although borne of, the male New Left. Feminist theory and practice recognized that the personal is political. The so-called private sphere concealed very public and political matters such as who does housework and childcare, how sexuality is transacted, birth control, career primacy, and the objectification and self-objectification of women's bodies. There is by now a vast literature (e.g., Bordo 1993; Hesse-Biber 1996) on the specific issue of women's weight and self-esteem.

Feminist studies sprang from feminist practice, beginning with Suffrage. Feminist scholarship was always in service of a personal politics, which helped women negotiate various gender troubles, from sexuality to children to dealing with men. The empowering of sixties women led to legal, economic and cultural changes that, together, have shrunk the income gap, left women as the majority of college students, and led to women's participation in politics and sports.

In 1967, Katherine Switzer (2007), who loved to run, crashed the male-only Boston Marathon, leading to Title IX in 1972 and, eventually, to the first women's Olympic marathon in 1984. The race director, Jock Semple, tried unsuccessfully to throw Switzer off the course. (Boston had been completed covertly by a "bandit" runner, Roberta Gibb, in 1966, when she ran the very quick time of 3:21. And Merry Lepper reportedly completed the 1963 Culver City marathon, running unofficially.) The delirious applause awaiting the Olympic winner, Joan Benoit, as she ran into the Los Angeles Coliseum signaled that women had begun to turn their objectified bodies into powerful subjects. Maybe Joanie did not think in these terms, having grown up efficacious in Maine and perhaps not having taken women's studies courses at Bowdoin. Nevertheless, a straight line can be drawn from Switzer, Gibb and Lepper to Benoit (1987) to the massive participation of women today in 5Ks, half marathons, marathons, mud runs, triathlons and nearly every other venue of athletic participation. Showing my age, I marvel at the fact that most of my women college students never knew a world before Title IX. For them, soccer, volleyball, softball and track are unproblematic options.

When Switzer blazed the way for women in sports, Gatorade was two years old. McDonald's had not yet opened a franchise in my hometown of Eugene, Oregon, where the Bill Bowerman-coached Oregon track teams were winning national titles and Olympic medals. Bowerman returned five years earlier from a visit to New Zealand, where he met Arthur Lydiard (Lydiard and Gilmore 1978), the father of modern endurance training theory, about whom I will speak later.

We had not yet become fast-food nation (Schlosser 2012), with rampant body problems, stemming from inactivity, too many sugar and fat calories, processed food, factory farmed vegetables and meat, fried food. The worst of these body problems include heart disease, cancer, diabetes, autoimmune disorders and obesity. We medicalize and commercialize body problems, giving rise to body industries such as mainstream health care, big pharmaceutical companies, gyms, fad diet plans and drugs, cosmetic and bariatric surgery. The "western diet" makes people sick and then they are healed, for profit.

And so, just as patriarchy triggered a feminist politics of the personal, making the private public and political,

which in turn spurred a feminist paradigm of theory and scholarship, so a fast-food nation has triggered a personal food and body politics. I argue here that this food and exercise practice has generated a new interdisciplinary framework perhaps best called Critical Food and Exercise Studies. Here, I weave the disparate threads of this paradigm, and also argue for an appreciation of endurance veganism as a personal politics tying together food and exercise.

I discuss four literatures that congeal into Critical Food and Exercise Studies: critical food theory (Pollan [2007, 2008], Schlosser, Petrini [2003]), plant-based epidemiology and cardiology (Esselstyn [2008], Ornish [1990], Campbell [Campbell et al. 2006]), running/endurance theory (Lydiard, Bowerman), and running veganism (Jurek [2013], Roll [2012], VanOrden [2013]). Synthesizing the four literatures above, I argue for endurance veganism as a personal politics appropriate to fast-food nation.

Critical Food Theory

Pollan, Schlosser, Petrini and Moss address food Fordism in post-WWII America, which has become a global model. From within sociology, Ritzer [(2012) and Glassner (2007) contribute to this perspective, although without the focus on political economy. Schlosser's Fast Food Nation and a series of films and videos, including the cult classics, "Super Size Me," "Forks Over Knives," "King Corn," and "Food, Inc." bring this argument into the mainstream, especially for young people.

Schlosser and Pollan argue that the commodification of protein, fat and carbohydrates produce an abundance of inexpensive calories. Even though the official food pyramid has been replaced by the food plate, somewhat decentering meat, critical food theorists focus on the centrality of meat, dairy products and grains, especially white flour, in the American diet. At issue are (a) factory-like farming and meatpacking, which drive out local independent producers, and (b) the poor nutritional quality of fatty, sugary, meaty foods that produce cravings and dependency. Critical food theorists link these trends to the overall development of capitalism, which is now going global, reflected in the proliferation of McDonald's franchises in the PRC and in other non-western countries.

And so these food theorists link the logic of capital with the disastrous health consequences for consumers of the western fast-food based diet, which produces all sorts of health deficits, such as obesity, metabolic syndrome, heart disease, diabetes and cancer. Schlosser links the rise of fast food with the development of the interstate highway system, both of which have grave environmental consequences. Critical food theory is, in effect, an application of a critique of capitalism to food and farming.

Plant-Based Epidemiology and Cardiology

Tony Gonzalez, now playing for the Atlanta Falcons, is arguably the greatest tight end of all time. His teammates have nicknamed him "China Study," for his eating habits. He is nearly a vegan, avoiding most meat and all dairy. China Study is one of the most famous epidemiological studies, tracking the eating habits and patterns of heart disease and cancer among more than 6,000 people in China. Colin Campbell, formerly at Cornell, is the American name often associated with this voluminous study undertaken by American and Chinese health scientists. Campbell and his colleagues find strong correlations between eating meat and illness, inspiring generations of Americans to give up meat and even fish and dairy.

Gonzalez is living proof that one can be healthy and avoid meat and dairy. Tight ends are big, strong and fast. The China study is perhaps the most important inspiration of a plant-based epidemiology and cardiology. "Forks over Knives" explores the methodology and findings of the China study, and also highlights the clinical work of Caldwell Esselstyn, of the Cleveland Clinic. The plot line of the movie is the struggle of two fat and illness-prone guys to lose weight and eat healthier by embarking on a diet of juiced vegetables.

Esselstyn was a general surgeon at the Cleveland Clinic, where heart bypass surgery was pioneered. Esselstyn, who won a gold medal in rowing at the 1956 Olympics, lamented the fact that people's chests were being opened up for heart bypasses, preferring prevention to dangerous and costly surgery. Instead, he took 18 very sick cardiac patients and put them on strict vegan diets (and low doses of statin drugs). Astonishingly, in almost all cases, their

heart disease was slowed and even reversed, suggesting that the western diet is the cause of much heart disease—exactly the point made by Campbell and his colleagues.

Dean Ornish, a cardiologist from California, did similar research and came up with the nearly identical conclusion that a vegan diet and exercise could prevent, retard and reverse heart disease. Both Esselstyn and Ornish derive from the pioneering work of Nathan Pritikin, a heart patient himself, who championed low-fat diets in the 1970s and 1980s. Esselstyn's son, Rip (R. Esselstyn 2009), an all-American swimmer at Texas and later a national-caliber triathlete, and now a firefighter in Austin, Texas, has popularized his dad's diet in books and videos. Rip prefers the term "plant-strong" to describe the diets of his firefighter colleagues and many others who went vegan, lost weight and improved their cholesterol and blood-pressure profiles. Perhaps predictably, his branded food is now available at Whole Foods.

Running/Endurance Theory

Switzer got American women running, drawing on the legacies of Arthur Lydiard and Bill Bowerman. As noted earlier, Bowerman traveled with his track team and brought home a revolutionary approach to running and training theory, based on the work of Arthur Lydiard. Lydiard first found fame by coaching New Zealand athletes such as Peter Snell to Olympic gold in the half mile and mile using a method of training emphasizing long, steady miles run in order to build an aerobic base, followed by strength and speed work that would sharpen the athlete for races all the way from the half mile to the marathon. Lydiard trained Snell to run marathons, thus providing him a base of cardiac fitness that would enable him to run not only one fast lap (quarter mile) but four or more laps. Before Lydiard, speedy milers such as Roger Bannister and John Landy only ran fast quarter-mile "intervals," for the most part neglecting longer, slower runs that would build endurance. Now, world-class Kenyan, Ethopian and other world athletes use one or another version of Lydiard's pioneering approach to base building followed by sharpening and then peaking. Neo-Lydiardists include Bowerman (Moore 2006), Jack Daniels (2005), Mark Wetmore (Lear 2003), Brad Hudson (2008), the Hanson brothers (Humphrey 2012) and Renato Canova (Davis 2012).

So, how far did Lydiard want his base-building runners to run? Fully 100 or more miles a week, in double daily workouts! Hard and long days would be followed by easy, recovery days, a hard/easy pattern developed by Bowerman at Oregon. But Bowerman brought back to Eugene another very powerful idea, which is, I believe, the real legacy of Lydiard: He exposed Americans to Lydiard's contention that anyone can run a marathon, anyone can become an athlete, if they proceed patiently, developing full aerobic capacity (Bowerman and Harris 1967). Not long after he returned from New Zealand, the streets of Eugene were filled with "joggers," sheer amateurs who ran alongside the elite 'men of Oregon.'

Bowerman helped found Nike, which introduced the Cortez and Waffle trainers and thus nearly single-handedly started the first running revolution during the 1970s and 1980s. By now, at the height of the second running revolution, races have expanded to include women, walkers and people struggling to get into shape and lose weight. Kenneth Cooper (1977), a Dallas cardiologist, converged with Lydiard and Bowerman in his classic self-help treatise, Aerobics, in which he argues that people can achieve substantial fitness by doing half an hour of cardiac work at least three times a week. It is perhaps inevitable that Nike began with running shoes sold out of the back of a VW to serious runners at local races, and emerged as a global corporation that sells expensive apparel to non-athletes.

Running Veganism

As road running evolved from its early 1970s/1980s edginess—think of Oregon's iconic runner Steve Prefontaine, a rebel without a cause—to a more corporate and commodity version today, with high-fashion gear and for-profit races, rebellious runners moved away from short road races, such as 5 and 10Ks, to off-road trail races that are frequently much longer than 26.2 miles, the marathon distance. Ultra runners are often hippies who live off the grid, subsisting on meager income and the occasional shoe-company contract. The Boulder-based Tony Krupicka comes to mind. Some ultra runners, such as Charlie Engle and Marshall Ulrich (2011), embark on journey runs, from city to city and across whole continents. James Shapiro (1982) chronicled his own solo "transcon" (across the United

States) in Meditations from the Breakdown Lane: Running Across America. And a Herculean 4,000 mile run across Africa was captured in the stirring movie Running the Sahara. A tamer, off-beat 197-mile relay from Mt. Hood to the Oregon coast is chronicled in the film Hood to Coast.

Scott Jurek, America's greatest ultramarathoner, grew up in the meat-eating wilds of Minnesota and discovered his distance-running talent. Eventually, he shifted to plants and gave up meat and dairy altogether, as he discussed in Eat & Run. When Jurek went vegan, he became a great runner, and won the fabled Western States 100-miler from Squaw Valley to Auburn, California seven times in a row. Tim VanOrden and Rich Roll are also ultramarathoners who follow a vegan diet. As they abandoned the western diet, and derived life-giving protein, carbs and fat from plants, their performances improved, they became leaner, and they recovered from effort more quickly. They were endurance vegans, supremely fit, Lydiard-trained athletes who reject factory food, fast food, refined food as they strike a balance with nature by running lightly through it. For these runners, running, fueled by a vegan diet, was a form of critique and liberation, a politics of the personal.

A body politics, stressing non-western, plant-based diets and endurance exercise, gives people control over their own health, including their relationship to nature and animals. But it is also playful activity not done for instrumental reasons, such as achieving a certain body mass index (BMI) or getting a promotion. Kant talked of freedom as purposive purposelessness, which is very much the argument made by George Sheehan, a running cardiologist. The philosopher and poet of running, Sheehan (1978) in Running and Being speaks of running, a meaningless activity, as the key to meaning, which is achieved when the mind and body mesh and move fluidly. In my (Agger 2011) writing about bodies and runners, I address the experience of flow, which involves breathing and rhythmic movement (also see Csikszentmihaly 1990).

Vegans who run protest capitalist food, transportation technologies based on the internal combustion engine, the commodification of exercise. They resist alienated labor by spending their own sweet time on the road or trail. Sheehan argued that we are most fully human when we exercise, and now reporters on exercise-brain science such as Chris Bergland (2007) trace this to the production of endorphins, serotonin and endocannabinoids during endurance activity, which produce what he calls bliss. This from a guy who sweated through the cruel 135-mile Badwater run across Death Valley in the summer! I rarely have a runner's high, perhaps because in my running life I teeter on the edge of overtraining. Running blunts anger and alienation, and, matched with a plant-based diet, insulates one against the toxins of the western diet and mainstream medicine, which picks up the pieces. It is difficult to be at cross-purposes with oneself when one runs 35 to 40 miles a week or more.

This is not a jeremiad against meat or dairy. Meat is not just meat; free range is vastly different from factory fed and fattened. Vegans need B-12, which may come in the form of a supplement. Pritikin and the rural Chinese view meat as a condiment. Rigidity derives from dogma. But there is no denying that non-western cultures such as that of the Tarahumara Indians enjoy freedom from disease, longevity and the vitality of their native trail runners. Chris McDougall (2011), who gained entrée to the Tarahumara through mystic-hippie runner Micah True ("Caballa Blanco"), introduces readers in Born toRun to minimally-shod trail running. Ironically, True, on a long run in Utah, died at 58 of cardiac disease. He was running alone in the wilderness he loved. Running doesn't convey immortality, as other running gurus discovered. Jim Fixx (1977), who wrote The Complete Book ofRunning, died, while running, at 52, while George Sheehan died at 78 of prostate cancer, discovered during a routine exam at the Cooper Clinic in Dallas. Bill Rodgers (2013), the draft-avoiding New England marathoner who won many Bostons and New Yorks, is beating back prostate cancer. It does not need to be said that runners are not immortal, but one notices here that heart disease and cancer are inflected by the western diet. A physician who ran, Sheehan felt invulnerable and avoided prostate exams until it was too late.

As soon as one writes the word "runner," one imagines training schedules, shoes, running groups, VO2 max (oxygen uptake) testing—running reduced to dreary science and consumer goods. One can spend $1000 a year on race entry fees if one races a lot. Races dot the bucket lists of many, who abandon the sport once they have the 13.1 sticker on their gasoline cars. By the same token, vegans often seem cultic and Puritanical, and they regard less sturdy souls as morally inferior. Gyms resemble factories with work stations.

Runners, prone to compulsiveness, readily invest their—our!--avocation with metaphysical importance. Meanwhile, our bodies break down. The female athlete's triad syndrome combines eating disorders such as anorexia, osteoporosis and amenorrhea. Some Division-I track teams have both male and female athletes keeping calorie diaries. No one is immune. I rationalize owning a Garmin Forerunner (GPS watch), and I run Veronique Billat's (2013) trendy vVO2 workouts. ('V' doesn't stand for vegan.) It is easy to become too invested.

Running teaches one not to be attached to the inessential. Marcuse (1964) writes of false needs. Running

vegans are minimalists. Shoes, beans, broccoli and tortillas are a runner's basic needs. Like Shapiro, I am attracted to distance because enduring distance requires one to confront oneself. It is the hard path. Haraki Murakami (2009) writes of this in What I Talk about When I Talk about Running, suggesting a convergence among Zen-oriented runners and the classic 1970s treatment by Pirsig, Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance.You can't tell yourself lies when the glycogen is nearly gone and you are running on fumes.

My favorite running writer remains Jim Shapiro, who wrote about his transcon and about an earlier six-day go-as-you-please race in England. That essay, "Swifts on the Wing," borrowed the metaphor of the swift, a bird which never touches ground. By Shapiro's telling, only the crazy few, committed to distance for its own sake, would run endless laps of a track, piling up 60 or more miles a day for six days. Few in the mainstream media tracked Charlie Engle and Marsh Ulrich's 2008 attempt to set a land speed record across America, captured in their film Running America. One of them couldn't finish and they didn't remain friends, showing that remorseless endurance activities don't guarantee the endurance of relationships.

It is challenging to pierce the thin boundary between personal politics and a more public kind, involving social movements, institutions, power. As the sixties fizzled out and a long siege of reaction set in, connecting Nixon/Hoover to Reagan/Bush Jr./Rove, former activists grew dispirited and turned toward personal growth, communes and organic farming. Jacoby (1975) lamented a politics (purely) of subjectivity and Lasch (1979) warned of a culture of narcissism. This is tricky, because feminists aptly demonstrated the connection between bedroom and boardroom, body politics and a more public kind.

Marcuse (1969) in Essay on Liberation argued that radical change must pass through, and affect, the self. It must be chosen, desired. But in Counterrevolution and Revolt (1972) he tracked the descent of progressive personal politics of early SDS into the authoritarianism of the Weather Underground. Feminists were perhaps more adept than the male Left at joining personal politics and legislative and political-economic agendas. Endurance veganism is inadequate unless it leads to critiques and transformations of agribusiness, school lunch programs, federal farm subsidies, mainstream nutrition and health care. Perhaps swimming upstream in a carnivorous state, the University of North Texas opened a vegan cafeteria. Courses in aerobic activities, such as running and walking, should be part of every curriculum, from K to 12 and beyond. Attention deficits are the body's responses to the microphysics of school desks and inactivity as well as the stress produced by hectoring adults. It is a national tragedy that discipline has become pharmacological as we medicate restless young bodies.

Vegans who run have the same problems as the rest of the world, except for meat, dairy, sugar, processed food, heart disease, certain cancers, diabetes, hypertension, and the stressful rat-race of alienated labor. But, as we learned during the sixties and seventies, personal politics matter, even if they are concealed by patriarchs who wanted to keep them invisible and now by big food, medicine and pharma. Food and body politics call forth endurance veganism as a lifestyle and political stance. Critical food and exercise studies track these interesting developments, expanding sociology into exotic realms such as clinical cardiology, nutrition, agricultural political economy and training theory. Sociologists have to eat.

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The Spirit of the Trail: Culture, Popularity and Prize Money in Ultramarathoning

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ltramarathon running, which involves covering distances of beyond the 26.2 miles of a traditional marathon, has undergone tremendous growth within the last decade. Starting as a relatively fringe activity, ultrarunning (especially on trails and in remote locations) is becoming more mainstream as participation rates grow and the number of races increase. This growth also is reflected in the increasing commercialization of ultramarathon running, as witnessed in the sales of books, gear related to ultrarunning, and nutritional products meant to fuel ultra-distance efforts.

With growth comes change, and ultrarunning is at a crossroads regarding what it is, wants to be, and fears it will become. Prize money was formerly nonexistent in ultrarunning, a fact still reflected in some of its biggest races. The Grand Slam of Ultrarunning, comprised of competing in the Western States Endurance Run 100, Vermont 100, Leadville 100, and Wasatch 100, has no prize money for top finishers. At the same time, prize money is beginning to seep into the sport through some high profile races, an event that is causing some level of consternation regarding what it means for ultra direction and development. Larger fields can create more anonymity among its participants, where people do not know one other and field size can interfere with building familiarity. Corporate sponsors are challenging the original grassroots nature of the activity as well. Finally, increasing cost of marquee races, and the challenge of entry brought on by greater participation, is resulting in questions of whether race directors are just into it "for the money." This has created concern among some long-time participants that ultrarunning is undergoing permanent transformation brought on by increased population and commercialization.

This raises the question of, "What is the culture of ultramarathon running?", or as we call it the spirit of the trail. Not much has been done to understand and identify the culture of ultramarathoning. "Little is known about the individuals who voluntarily choose to undertake an endeavor as challenging as running 161 km [100 miles]" (Hoffman and Fogard 2012:60). This paper explores this topic of ultramarathon culture through a broader demographic analysis, attitudinal questions, and questions about training and identity. The results yield an interesting view into the contemporary ultrarunner community, their training and racing habits, and their general attitudes about their sport and themselves. Finally, it explores the impact of the growing commercialization of ultrarunning on the community, its culture, and ultra identity.

The Growth of Ultra Running

No single governing authority exists that has defined what distance a course must cover in order for it to be classified as an 'ultra.' At its simplest, an ultramarathon is any race that covers beyond the standard marathon distance of 26.2 miles (or 42.2 kms). In theory, then, a race of 27 miles could be defined as an ultra, but typically is not, revealing more to the notion of what constitutes an ultra. As ultramarathon writer (and runner) John Morelock (2013:2) notes, there are "purists who insist an ultramarathon is at least 50 miles (≈80 kilometers)." The Western States Endurance Run is thought of as the first 100 mile race, when in 1974 Gordy Ainsleigh completed an event that was originally for horses and riders.[1] Some ultra events are defined by time (6 hours, 24 hours, and more), while others involve great distances. This can include crossing the United States, or even repeated circuits around one city

block in Queens, NY as with the Self-Transcendence Race which involves covering 3100 miles (5649 laps) over 52 days. More conventionally, over 31.1 miles (or 50 kms) is the general course distance required.

However, it can be a bit of an oversimplification to think about ultrarunning solely in terms of distance. More generally, the notion of traversing and/or navigating terrain and distance that goes beyond the more typical course distance and types, thus requiring greater effort than what might be associated with those more routine (road) running experiences. In this way, the ultrarunner often is looking for an experience that extends past mainstream running experiences. Primarily the competition can turn more inward. "During foot races over distances longer than the traditional marathon length, the experience of competing with one's self, the weather or the distance surpasses the experience of competing against the opponents" (Nowak 2010:37). Ultimately your chief rival is the voice in your head telling you that you cannot finish, cannot cover the distance, and in fact should not even try.

Distance running (and running in general) has undergone numerous running "booms" over the last 50 years. Agger (2010) notes the first running revolution starting in the 1960s to 1970s, spearheaded partly by the 'jogging' model provided by elite coach Arthur Lydiard and University of Oregon coach Bill Bowerman, as well as the performance of Frank Shorter in the 1972 Munich Olympic Marathon. This blossomed through the 1980s second running boom with large increases in marathon participation. (Chase 2008). Today, Agger identifies a second running revolution, which includes cross training and triathlons. Thus running may not be an end in and of itself, but a component of a larger complex of physical activity. A recent study by Active.com, a major online community and resource for race registration, found that from 2008 to 2010 "there has been a 203% increase in marathon race participation", with half marathon participation increasing by 154%, 10k events by 155%, and 5k events by 144% (2011). In general, "more than 403,000 road marathon finishes were recorded in the USA in 2007-an increase of over 100,000 since 2000" (Graubins 2008:1).

Another part of this revolution can be seen in going longer, and doing so on the trails. The growing interesting in ultra was sparked not just by the greater participation in running, but an increased awareness in ultrarunning as an activity. A major moment in the growing popularity of ultrarunning came with the publication of two books. The first book was Ultramarathon Man: Confessions of an All-Night Runner (2005) by Dean Karnazes. The public reception of the book catapulted the author into being the face of ultrarunning. As a New York Times book review noted, "From the cover of Runner's World magazine to a spread in Time and a scheduled appearance Wednesday night on 'Late Show With David Letterman,' ultramarathoning has probably never had such exposure" (Johnson 2005:1).

The second book was Born to Run (2009) by Christopher McDougall, which not only further increased the visibility of ultrarunning but also can be said to have revolutionized the shoe industry through the introduction of the minimalist shoe movement. "Ever since Christopher McDougall's book Born to Run hit the bestseller lists in 2009, Zappos, an online shoe retailer, has struggled to keep up with demand for minimalist footwear" (The Economist 2011). The articles goes on to report that Vibram, the company that markets and sells the quasi-barefoot shoe Five Fingers, had sales jump from $470,000 in 2006 to $50m in 2010. The book is also credited for the jump in chia seed sales (Sax 2012). Taken together, both books have contributed much to the entry of ultrarunning into the public consciousness, influencing many to participate in them, as well as influencing the products seen as necessary to participate in such events.

The popularity of ultrarunning is currently reflected through more frequent stories in mainstream media publications like The Independent (Mesure 2010), Slate.com (Palmer 2013), The Guardian (Greenwood 2012), The Telegraph (Carlyle 2011), Washington Post (Seiss 2012), the New York Times (Seminara 2013; Solomon 2013), and the Los Angeles Times (Erskine 2013). Ultraunning content was even found on the television show Jeopardy in the category "The Race is to the Strong" (November 12, 2013). "Participation in the sport has surged over the past five years; the number of those who compete has doubled. An estimated 70,000 people run ultramarathons in North America" (Palmer 2013). Hoffman, Ong and Wang (2012) found a total of 32,352 161km finishers from 1977 to 2008, with the numbers of finishers as well as events exponentially increased during that time. As they summarize, "over the past 33 years, there has been increasing participation among older runners, greater participation among women, and growth in the average number of annual finishes for each individual finisher" (Hoffman, Ong and Wang 2012:1879). This growth has continued since 2008. Ultrarunning Magazine, which chronicles and publishes race results, has indicated that "by the end of 2009, Ultrarunning had reached 36,106 individual finishers. By the end of 2010, over 46,280 individuals had ever reportedly finished an ultra marathon" (Lacroix 2012).

Evidence for this growth can be found in the number of races offered as well. "In 1996, there were 17 trail 100-milers in the United States. In 2008, there were 59, with more rumored to be in the works" (Graubins 2008:1).

This has resulted in lottery systems, wait lists, and registering six months before a race is set to take place, outcomes that are very recent in ultrarunning. "According to the American Trail Running Association (ATRA), the number of trail races has more than tripled since 2000 (to 2012) to 2,400….[U]ltramarathon trail running has grown as much in the last four years as it did in its first 27" (Seiss 2012). Based on the number of races on the race calendar provided by ultrarunning.com, there are 882 scheduled ultras for 2013, with 87 of them being 100 milers (as of June 2013).

The result of this rise in endurance activities has created more of an "Anyone can do it" attitude, thus reinforcing the continued increase. This is perhaps ironic given that ultrarunning has long been populated by what can be considered ordinary people doing extraordinary things. By this we mean ultramarathoning has not been dominated by the professional athlete, a person whose athletic abilities allows him or her to make their living from a sport. While this is changing in contemporary ultrarunning to some extent, it continues to be the case that "Ultras are for everyday people, and they're not wired differently. What they share is a desire to push boundaries" (Greenwood 2012).

The growth of ultrarunning also can be observed in the product lines dedicated to trail running and ultrarunning, as shoe manufacturers provide multiple models aimed directly at this market. "Over the past couple of years, competitive trail running in the USA has gone from an underground community of extreme athletes to an immensely popular extreme sports venue," ranking as the sixth most popular extreme sport in the US (Burgunder 2010). The article continues, "investing in trail running and the amazing athletes that make up this sport is a great marketing strategy for any business," a sentiment shared in other analyses of the trail and ultrarunning market (Dzierzak 2009; Running Insight 2012). Thus in a relatively short span of time, ultrarunners and trail runners have gone from having few gear options to having numerous product lines and marketing campaigns targeted specifically at them.

Ultrarunning is a changing culture. The growth and transformation of ultrarunning is not a necessarily welcomed event for those who are part of the "old school" of ultrarunning, those used to smaller fields, less attention, and no concerns over prize money. These changes are resulting in an expanded community in which there is less familiarity with the person standing next to you at the starting line. Furthermore, as with societies that undergo cultural change as the result of increased immigration, there can be a challenge in maintaining the practices and ideologies that are said to define "who we are as a people." Increased size comes with increased challenges of socialization and indoctrination into how things are supposed to be done, and a shared sense of self and practice is no longer safely assumed. This can all have the effect of making the very familiar into the almost alien, turning what was known and reliable into unknown and uncertain. This paper is aimed at providing an initial exploration into the nature and culture of ultramarathon running, along with an examination of the changes being brought by increasing sponsorship, popularity and professionalization.

Methodology

The data for this project is part of a larger ethnographic project on the culture of ultrarunning. The primary author has been participating in ultrarunning events for over year, and endurance events for over 10 years. This has involved running in ultra events (up to 50 miles), and attending three 100 mile events in the role as pacer (a person who runs with a participant to help him or her complete the event). The primary author also has been a regular participant on an ultrarunning podcast2, providing the opportunity to engage the broader ultrarunning community in a discussion of ultra culture. Additionally, the primary author has been observing interactions on an ultrarunning listserv for over a year. The second author has been involved in endurance activities primarily related to triathlons, and has trained with elite triathletes for a number of years.

The survey data collected and analyzed are part of a larger ethnographic project on the culture of ultrarunner. As part of the Bentley UltraRunning Project (BURP3), the Bentley UltraRunning Project Survey (or BURPS) is one of the first attempts to initiate a broad-scale data collection of those who self-describe and identify as ultrarunners. The survey was developed with three goals in mind. First, the researchers wanted to gather demographic information on ultrarunners as a population. Second, the researchers were looking to identify racing and training habits of this community. This included past athletic event participation, race frequency, structured nature of training (or lack thereof), and past ultrarunning experience. Third, the researchers were trying to identify ultrarunning attitudes toward ultra events, the level of competition and camaraderie within the race fields, and the level of self-perceived uniqueness as compared to other types of runners (e.g. road marathoners, triathletes, shorter distance participants).

The survey questions were generated from a variety of sources. Along with standard demographic questions,

survey content was derived through the authors' collective experiences as endurance athletes (marathons and long-distance triathlons), exposure to the running industry, networks within the ultrarunning community, mainstream books and magazine by and about ultrarunners, and social media sources (e.g. podcasts, discussion lists). After a draft of the survey was completed, it was shared with individuals in the ultrarunning community who are engaged in covering and participating in ultras at elite levels. Finally, the survey was pilot tested through a New England-based trail running club whose membership exceeds two thousand persons. A pilot of 18 was conducted (based on volunteers), who provided feedback about the questions and their experience in taking the survey.

The survey was submitted to and approved by the Bentley University Institutional Review Board. All participation was anonymous and responses confidential. The front page of the survey provided information on the purposes of the survey and how responses were to be used. All participation was voluntary, and respondents had the option to skip over questions that they did not want to answer for whatever reason.

The survey was 'live' for two months from February 19 to April 16, 2013, using Qualitrics online survey application. The survey was advertised through a variety of ultrarunning websites, listservs, podcasts, elite runner blogs, and other social media outlets. Over 882 persons opened the link to the survey. Total responses varied between questions, with a high of over 700 responses for the demographic questions at the beginning of the survey to a low of 439 responses for a question on what personal mantra(s) do you use while ultrarunning. In total, 525 respondents completed the entire survey, meaning that these persons went through all the survey pages presented online. Respondents were primarily from the United States (87%). However the data provided here is from the entire sample of respondents.

Who Runs Ultras?

Research on ultrarunning has focused more on physical impacts (Murray and Costa, 2012; Kim et al 2012), with little attention paid to the demographics of ultrarunners (Hoffman and Wegelin 2009). Additional research has been done on the self-perception and cultural construction of the ultrarunner (Hanold 2010; Chase 2008; Tulle 2008), as well as more recently their exercise habits (Hoffman and Krishnan 2013). In terms of demographics, past studies generally have not delved beyond age, gender, education and marital status (see Hoffman and Wegelin 2010; Hoffman and Fogard 2012). Their findings indicated participants that had a mean age of 44.1 years (±9.7 years), an education level of 5.3 years beyond high school (±2.9 years), 70.1% married, and predominantly male. The results from the BURP survey confirmed these results, indicating that the respondents for the survey were representative based on past findings.

Additionally, we explored other demographic attributes, which yielded interesting findings. Primary among them was the lack of racial diversity in survey respondents, as indicated in Table 1.

Table 1. Self-Reported Racial Classification of Survey Respondents

Racial Classification	Respondents	Percentage
White/Caucasion	675	90%
African American	1	0%
Hispanic	26	3%
Asian	17	2%
Native American	4	1%
Pacific Highlander	4	1%
Other	19	3%
	746	100%

Discussions with persons within the ultrarunning community (as participants, elite runners, and race promoters) do indicate that this is reflective of ultrarunning participation, anecdotal evidence and experience through participant/observation data collection supports this finding. In short, people who can be identified and self-identify as 'Black'

do not participant in ultrarunning to any great extent. Additionally, they do not participant in distance running in numbers that are close to other racial groups. In fact, the organization National Black Marathoner Association (NBMA) has tried to directly address this disparity by encouraging distance running participation among Black Americans. It should be noted that some of the "Other" responses included 'mixed race' self-identification, which was predominantly a mixture of "Asian" and "Hispanic" with "White," and would not further add to the number of African-Americans. Despite this, it is a pretty stark indication that ultrarunning is a predominantly White activity.

Another demographic point generated by the BURP survey was self-report annual personal income. Figure 1 indicates that income distribution of survey respondents to the 2010 U.S. earning data. The figure demonstrates that on the whole survey respondents earned more than the U.S. population. It is difficult to make judgments about what the purchasing power of respondents, but it does show that ultrarunners do tend to come from relatively more stable financial situations in terms of income.

Finally, survey respondents, as with the demographics of ultrarunning participants skewed heavily male. 73% of respondents were male, and 27% female. As a point of comparison, we examined 2012 race results (realendurance.com) from a select number of prominent 100 mile races representing different US regions. From this, we can see that to varying degrees ultrarunning is a predominantly male activity.

Table 2. Percentage of Men and Women in Select 100 mile races (2012)

Race Name	Total Runners	Male Participants	Female Participants
Western States 100 (CA)	381	312 (82%)	69 (18%)
Leadville 100 (CO)	795	658 (83%)	137 (17%)
Vermont 100	306	239 (78%)	67 (22%)
Rocky Racoon 100 (TX)	229	167 (73%)	62 (27%)
Umstead 100 (NC)	150	96 (64%)	54 (36%)

Thus we arrive at a general composite of the ultrarunner being a predominantly male, with a higher than average income, in their 40s, married, and white. Of course, this is just a snapshot, as ultrarunning popularity and participation continues to increase. Furthermore, while these demographics provide some sense of the types of demographics involved in the sport, it does not get to the attitudes, behaviors and habits of those who run ultras. In the next section, we explore these elements through attitudinal and other questions asked on the survey.

Competition and Cameraderie in Ultra

In order to gauge attitudes toward various aspects of ultrarunning, we asked forty-four six-point Likert-styled questions (Strongly Disagree=1, Strongly Agree=6). We used a six-point scale in order to remove a neutral option from the responses, forcing respondents who answered the question to indicate the extent to which they either agreed or disagreed with the provided statement. The order of questions was randomized through the survey software program. We also modified the wording of questions so that a respondent would not be more likely to agree to disagree with all the forty-four statements.

For the purposes of analysis, the questions were grouped into 8 categories: 1) Social Aspects; 2) Personal Transformation; 3) Personal Challenge; 4) Group Identity; 5) Pain and Suffering; 6) Nature; 7) Competition; and 8) Elite Runners. The focus of our analysis here is on those elements related to competition, camaraderie, and identity in ultrarunning culture. Nowak (2012:38) raises the point that "It is not clear whether an ultramarathon can be explicitly classified as a competitive sport event or extreme recreation." This sentiment is apparent in the survey results, and supported by the experiences of the primary author participating in ultrarunning events.

Compared to other endurance events, like marathon or Ironman, there would seem to be less of a competitive element in ultras. That does not mean there is no competition, but that competition is not necessarily the point. Responses to the following statements demonstrate this:

Table 3. Scores for Competition Survey Questions

	Mean Score (and n)	Standard Deviation
If another competitor needed water during a race, I would give that person mine to help them out.	5.46 (504)	0.67
If another competitor needed food during a race, I would give that person mine.	5.15 (502)	0.83
It is important for me to finish as high in the results as possible.	3.39 (502)	1.44
I would give up my race to help another competitor	4.41 (501)	1.09
I don't care where I finish as long as I meet my personal goals.	4.47 (502)	1.18

One of the questions which yielded the most agreement was "If another competitor needed water during a race, I would give that person mine to help them out," with the mean being 5.46 (±0.68), with relatively strong agreement among respondents. We asked the same question, but about food, and the mean for that was 5.15 (±0.82). This is interesting because one could rationalize that a competitor without food or water is not much of a competitor, and would be easier to beat. It would seem counterintuitive from a competition perspective. Additionally, regarding the question "I would give up my race to help another competitor," the mean response was 4.41 (±1.09). Furthermore, to the question "I don't care where I finish as long as I meet my personal goals," the mean was 4.47 (±1.19), indicating some variance but still general agreeing with that statement. We might be able to then say that competitiveness per se is not an overriding factor in ultrarunning culture.

The importance of experience versus outcome can be seen in statements related to personal challenge and transformation.

Table 4. Score for Personal Challenge and Transformation Survey Questions

	Mean Score (and n)	Standard Deviation
Training for and competing in an ultra gives me the chance to become a better person.	4.70 (504)	1.06
Running ultras gets me in touch with who I am	4.76 (500)	1.08
Finishing an ultra is like finishing any other kind of running event.	2.34 (503)	1.19
If I do not meet my race goal, then I would consider the race a failure.	2.46 (504)	1.08
The ultrarunning experience is more important than the outcome.	4.73 (504)	1.07
I'd rather run on a fast course than a challenging course.	2.41 (504)	1.06
If an event is not challenging enough, it's not worth doing.	2.67 (502)	1.21

Generally speaking, the emphasis on becoming a better person and having a unique experience that facilitates that transformation is given higher priority than outcome and meeting a personal goal. In fact, it is interesting to note that there was very strong disagreement with the statement "If I do not meet my race goal, then I would consider

the race a failure" (mean score 2.46, ±1.08). Obviously it would depend on what the goal was, which can go from "just finish" to finishing under a certain time goal. It is not uncommon to hear the important lessons people derived from failure, and to hear people swapping stories of failure with more frequency than stories of success. In other words, everyone who does enough ultras will have bad races, and they will likely have races where they cannot finish. This extends from the amateur to elite level. Less of a premium can be placed on speed and finishing time, even though fast times can be admired. The point here is that these elements are not given priority. What is given priority is sentiments such as "Running ultras gets me in touch with whom I am" (mean score 4.76, ±1.08).

When looking at the interactions that take place on ultrarunning social media sites, as well as those interactions during trail runs and ultramarathon events, there can be a high amount of conversation that takes place. It might seem counterintuitive to expect frequent conversation during a race, but it must be remembered that the pace at which people are moving is conversational ("conversational pace" a term that is used to describe as a way of monitoring effort) and they can be spending many hours on the trail together in relatively or extremely isolated environments. In fact, during a 2013 endurance event in which one of the authors participated, another participant said to the author at the start of the race (which took over 8 hours to complete), "If I can't talk about the (New York) Knicks, I'm running too fast."

At the same time, the social aspect of ultrarunning did not register extraordinarily high in terms of responses:

Table 5. Scores for Social Aspects of Ultrarunning Survey Questions

	Mean Score (and n)	Standard Deviation
The hardest thing about not being able to run is missing my training partners.	2.65 (502)	1.31
The majority of my friends are runners	3.40 (501)	1.46
I run ultras for the social experience of being around other ultrarunners.	3.80 (502)	1.22
I feel like I'm part of an ultrarunning community.	4.60 (504)	1.09
I'd rather not talk to anyone else during an ultra.	2.33 (502)	1.15

There was strong agreement with the statement "I feel like I'm part of an ultrarunning community" (mean score 4.60, ±1.09). Similarly, there was strong disagreement with the statement "I'd rather not talk to anyone else during an ultra" (mean score 2.33, ±1.15). There was more moderate sentiment regarding running ultras for the social experience. This might be due to the fact that the personal challenge is such a strong component. It then could be that in comparison the social element is less important, but not unimportant. This is likely the case given the importance put on being part of an ultrarunning community.

The nature of the uniqueness of the community and identity, and its importance to respondents, can be seen in the sentiments toward group identity statements:

Table 6. Scores for Ultrarunning Group Identity Survey Questions

	Mean Score (and n)	Standard Deviation
I am an ultrarunner	5.10 (503)	1.01
I am a trail runner	5.25 (497)	1.04
The longer the distance, the more of an ultrarunner you become.	3.54 (498)	1.36
Ultrarunners are a different breed of person.	4.58 (503)	1.13

Ultrarunners are just like any other group of runners.	2.57 (502)	1.14
Ultrarunning is more of a life-style than a sport.	4.34 (502)	1.19
To be an ultrarunner, all one has to do is complete an ultra distance event.	3.77 (499)	1.30

It was not surprising that people have strong agreement with the statements "I am an ultrarunner" and "I am a trail runner," again demonstrated a close alignment between the two. Likewise, there was some strong agreement with the statement "Ultrarunners are a different breed of person," a question which was asked to explore how unique ultrarunners saw themselves to be in terms of their group and personal characteristics. It starts to become clear that while anyone can potentially become an ultrarunner, just running long distances is not enough to join this group.

In fact, there was tepid agreement with the statement "To be an ultrarunner, all one has to do is complete an ultra distance event" (mean score 3.77, ±1.30). This is a potentially important point in terms of indicating an identity which is complex. Obviously completing an ultra would qualify for the category of 'ultrarunner,' just as being able to swim might qualify a person as being one who can swim. But simply being part of the category does not automatically make one part of the group. Almost anyone can 'run' as a physical activity, even if it is just running into the other room to answer the phone. Many run for physical exercise on a casual basis over what can be considered, especially in comparison, very short distances. In fact, a person who competes in the mile on a track does necessarily run long distances (although the weekly volume might be high). There are then these additional elements which one must possess in order to be seeable as an ultrarunner. So then to the question of 'what is ultrarunning,' the overly simplistic answer is running longer than a marathon. The culture of ultrarunning, or 'the spirit of the trail,' would involve more than just completion of distance; it would involve possession of an ethos and culture that is unique to that activity.

Elites

4 And The Role of Money in Ultra

One of the most notable changes in ultramarathon has been the increasing presence of prize money in ultras. Major prize money has been a part of distance running for some time. Chase (2008) briefly discusses the commodification of the New York Marathon, with increased participation numbers as well as increased corporate sponsors. As Cooper (1992), Fred Lebow's takeover of the NYC Marathon resulted in the transformation of the major marathon, which "served the purposes of managerial capitalism, the 'visible hand,' which, in this case, used capital and technology to meet a demand that was as much created by road racing administrators and sponsors as determined by the market" (p.244). While elites had long been part, if not exclusively part, of long-distance events, it was the opportunity to race as professional runners that was a major change in the sport.

Today, winning a major road marathon can result in major prize money. Male and female winners of the 2013 Boston Marathon won $150,000 each, with the New York City Marathon awarding winners $130,000, Chicago Marathon $100,000, and the London Marathon $55,000. There are other time-based incentives, course record incentives, and where applicable (based on course certification) world record incentives. This also does not include appearance fees, sponsor bonuses, and other opportunities (for instance speaking engagements). Wins (or good results) would yield more in additional fees after the race and in the upcoming year's race calendar. All of this is made possible through corporate sponsorships of events, allowing for the development of packages that attract the best runners to run the fastest times. Money in marathon has gotten to the point that "marathons are luring runners from other disciplines - the 10,000 meters, cross country - to the point that those events are in decline" (Vigneron 2013).

By and large this situation does not exist in ultrarunning. In fact, it is more common to find that no prize money is offered for winning an ultramarathon. For instance, the Grand Slam of Ultrarunning involves four 100 mile races: the Western States Endurance Run, Vermont 100, Leadville 100, and Wasatch 100. No prize money is awarded for winning any of those races. In fact, there is no prize money associated with winning the Grand Slam, accomplished

by accumulating the lowest total time running all four in one year. These are not exceptions. What's more, "[f]or many elites, the modest payoffs don't even cover travel costs to an event" (Seiss 2012). In other words, it costs more to do them than they get for winning. In conversations with elite ultrarunners, it is not uncommon for them to lose money on racing, spending more than they win or make through sponsorships. Additionally, there is very rarely any appearance fee money, and it can even be rare to have complimentary entry to an ultramarathon due to one's elite status. In fact, there are races such as the Hardrock 100 which does not give any preferential treatment to elite runners in terms of getting into the race. Elites have to enter through a lottery like all other runners. Elites may be separate based on their results, but not in their treatment.

There are of course exceptions to this. The North Face Endurance Challenge Championship (in San Francisco) offers a total prize purse of $30,000 ($10,000 for first place). The Cayuga Trails 50m ultra (Ithaca, NY) offered a $10,000 prize purse ($2,500 for first place). The Run Rabbit Run 100 (Steamboat Springs, CO) offers $10,000 for first place. The Ultra Race of Champions (or UROC) 100km race has a $20,000 prize purse ($5,000 for first place), which is intended to draw the best ultrarunners to compete head to head. As the UROC website states, "The Ultra Race of Champions 'UROC' will provide additional incentives to encourage the best ultra runners in the world to compete" (ultraoc.com).

Clearly there is a difference between marathons and ultramarathons. This is magnified to a greater extent if one considers the money per mile and hour earned by winners. The winner of the Boston Marathon would earn $5,725.19 per mile, while the winner of the Run Rabbit Run would earn $100 per mile. The winner of the 2013 Boston Marathon for the men's race Lelisa Desisa ran in a time of 2:10:22, making $69,036.05 per hour (or $1,150.60 per minute). Rob Krar won the 2013 UROC 100k in a time of 9:29:00. Being roughly 62 miles long, this earned him $80.65 per mile. In terms of his finishing time, he earned $527.24 per hour (or $8.79 per minute). Jason Schlarb won the 2013 Run Rabbit Run in 17:15:20, earning him $579.60 per hour (or $9.66 per minute).

There are other ways for elites to make money through ultrarunning, primarily in the form of sponsorships. For elites, sponsorships might be the only way they can afford to race at all. An example of this is Mike Morton, who is one of the best American ultrarunners, and who holds the American 24 hour record of 172.45 miles. A local community paper published the story "Ultramarathon Runner ready to Defend World Championship Title, Seeks Community Support" (Mondovics 2013), in which his wife relates "We are trying to get sponsorship from local companies for Mike's upcoming races." Additionally, she states, "Mike will happily promote any business that would like to sponsor him as well as donate funds to the Special operations Warrior Foundation and Team Red, White, and Blue." Mike Morton is a Master Sergeant in the US Army, having forgone ultrarunning for 14 years during deployments and military training. The fact that such an accomplished ultrarunner, including world championship wins and being named USATF Men's Ultra Runner of the Year in 2012, is depending on local companies is interesting when compared to the compensation that other elite marathon distance runners can receive. Furthermore, it is extraordinarily rare that even sponsored athletes receive financial compensation. Rather, they are more likely to receive free products in exchange for endorsing the product, perhaps assistance in the form of race entry fee reimbursement and perhaps some race travel stipend.

This might create the appearance that more prize money should be added to ultramarathons to more adequately (or fairly) compensate the winners when compared to the winners of 'shorter' distance races like marathons. It is rarely the case that elite ultrarunners can make "a living" solely by running. Karl Meltzer, the record holder for the most 100m victories, states "Am I making money running races? No. Even if you win them all, you would still only be making about $30,000 a year" (Seiss 2012). It is of course not possible to win them all, and winning (let alone finishing) is always an open question. In fact, the vast majority of ultrarunners that can be termed 'elites' have full-time jobs that they rely on for their livelihood. The aforementioned Rob Krar for instance is a pharmacist. In that way, elites are like the amateurs, trying to balance work, family, friends and training. This can be an important element in the identity of the ultrarunning community, and speaks to part of the more egalitarian ethos that permeates. The elites are just like us, only faster.

In the BURP survey, we asked about the presence of elites at races, and the impact elites have ultramarathons.

Table 7. Scores for Ultrarunning Group Identity Survey Questions

	Mean Score (and n)	Standard Deviation
Elite runners deserve preferential treatment for entering marque events.	3.24 (504)	1.43

More prize money is needed to help the development of ultras.	2.48 (501)	1.31
The presence of elites should have no impact on the prestige of an event.	4.24 (499)	1.30
The presence of elite runners makes a race more exciting.	3.80 (503)	1.40
The more well-known professionals are in the mainstream, the better it will be for ultrarunning in general.	3.38 (502)	1.29

From the responses, we can see that attitudes did not indicate a strong preference or endorsement for the presence of elites in races. Keeping in mind that a score of "3" would indicate "Somewhat Disagree" and "4" "Somewhat Agree," attitudes seem to show that people only mildly agree or disagree with these statements. The highest score was for "The presences of elites should have no impact on the prestige of an event." The lowest score (and thus strongest disagreement) was for the statement "More prize money is needed to help the development of ultras." This would indicate that ultrarunners, while they admire the physical capabilities of elites, do not place a premium on their participation to define what ultrarunning is.

We asked another question of "If you are NOT an elite runner, does the presence of elite runners in the field make you more likely to want to participant in that event?" 69% of respondents (n=375) said "No", with only 28% (n=152) saying "Yes." To find out what draws runners to different events, we ask respondents to rank 16 factors in order of their importance, with a placement of first being the most importance and sixteenth being the least important. The top three reasons that a race was chosen included "Scenic nature of the course" (mean score 4.09), "Close to home" (mean score 4.14), and "Easy to travel to" (mean score 4.91). The least important of the provided factors included "Amount of prize money available" (mean score 13.61), "Part of a [sponsored] series" (mean score 12.25), and "Highly competitive field" (mean score 11.57).

Taken together, for respondents elites do not factor as an important element when choosing a race, and should not be given preferential treatment. This latter element is important given that many ultras have strict entry limitations given they are run on federal and state land, requiring permits that dictate how many can participate. Also, larger fields can have greater environmental impacts on the trails, and create greater challenges for race directors (especially over greater distances in remote areas). For example, the Hardrock Endurance Run 100 mile event is run in the San Juan Mountains, starting in Silverton, Colorado. The course record for men is 23:23:30, and for women 27:18:24. It is considered one of the most challenging and sought after races for many ultrarunners, the pinnacle of achievement due to its total elevation change of 67,984 feet and average elevation of 11,186 feet. The finishing time cut-off is 48 hours. 140 persons are allowed into the race every year. For the 2014 edition, 1133 persons applied for the race lottery, all of whom had to complete a qualifying event. Elites are given no preferential treatment for entry, and no prize money is given for first place.

In discussing what he calls "the politics of prize money," elite runner Geoff Roes writes, "One can argue for or against big prize money in ultrarunning for hours, but one thing that is undeniable is that prize money brings runners out to events." Regarding newer races that have prize money and larger fields, he continues "Not only are each of these races going to be hyper competitive at the front of the field, but they are all going to have unprecedented field sizes for the age of their races" (Roes 2012). Another elite runner Andy Jones-Wilkins divides the argument over prize money between "purists" and "pragmatists." The purists, he states, "argue that the introduction of prize money to ultramarathon running would only serve to corrupt our otherwise clean sport and could lead to such unsavory things as cheating, performance enhancing drug use, and corporate greed." The pragmatists, on the other hand, "suggest that the addition of prize money would increase competition, bring increased attention to the sport, and add an air of professionalism to a sport that has been rather loosely organized and administered for over 30 years." He asks in his article, "What happens if the ethic of the sport changes and the product outpaces the process? If that indeed happens, I'll be worried" (Jones-Wilkins 2011). His worry is shared by many ultrarunners. The calculus of more prize money leads to more elites, faster times, more attention to ultra, and a growth in the sport is not universally shared as a goal. In fact, there are many who would say this is exactly the wrong way to go, and that growth in the sport is degrading its essence.

Perhaps nowhere was this more evident than in the 2013 Leadville 100, where the primary author was a pacer. The Leadville 100 was started as a way of stimulating the economy of Leadville, Colorado whose economy was dependent on mining. Started in 1983 with 45 runners, the "Race across the Sky" has become another pinnacle of ultrarunning. The entire Leadville Race Series (comprised of running and mountain biking events) was bought by Lifetime Fitness in 2010, a publically traded company that had revenues in 2010 of $912.8 million who self-describes that it "helps organizations, communities and individuals achieve their total health objectives, athletic aspirations and fitness goals" (lifetimefitness.com). According to the website realendurance.com, the race enjoyed a gradual increase during the time of its existence, with more substantial increase in the 2002 of 616 participants. 2010, the year it was bought, witnessed another jump to 706 participants. In 2013, there were 1028 registered participants. To enter the race costs $285, with no previous ultramarathon experience necessary. Literally any adult can sign up for the Leadville 100 (and minors with parental consent).

The 2013 edition of Leadville has been highlighted as what is becoming wrong about ultrarunning, an event that is increasingly attracting the inexperienced who are merely seeking to do an ultra to say they did an ultra (or what can be called "buckle listers5" in reference to the belt buckle one can get upon finishing under a certain time). The large number of runners, seemingly little organization, crews and traffic jams, pacers, lack of aid station supplies, frustration with race director responsiveness to complaints and problems, and the presence of a multi-million dollar corporate sponsor have made the Leadville 100 emblematic for the corporatization of ultrarunning6. This led to many blog posts and on-line discussions in public forums regarding people's positive and negative experience at Leadville.

One blogger wrote that "From the throngs of people, cars, and racers, to the gross disorganization and ubiquitous stench of port-a-johns, this felt more like a dirty, overcrowded music festival than a prestigious trail race - the epic scenery of the Sawatch eclipsed by traffic jams, cranky volunteers, and a constant plume of dust from too many tires on the dirt roads" (Misiak 2013). Another blogger attributes the problems to Lifetime's corporate identity, and that "It doesn't make sense for a chain of gyms to get involved in ultrarunning and try to run one of the world's most storied 100 milers, especially when a small town's very livelihood is at stake" (Hornsby 2013). Ultrarunner Rod Bien (2013), who has many ultra wins and was there to pace a friend, described one scene:

> I was pacing from Fish Hatchery (mile 75ish) on the way back. My runner had fallen off pace and was closer to the back of the pack at this point. When I arrived to Fish Hatchery in the early morning hours of Sunday, it literally felt like a scene from Apocalypse now. There seemed to be no one really having any control of the aid station. Yes, the runners were chipped but they were coming and going without any real notice or checking in or out. The entire aid station was littered with trash. Garbage cans had long since overflowed and folks simply were putting garbage on the ground. It was a very bizarre scene.

This is not meant to give the impression that this was everyone's experience, and that everyone who attended and participated in Leadville had the same view. There are those who would profess that they had no (or few) problems with the race7. Furthermore, there is a general sentiment that people want the race to go well. In this way, the race has the feel of a local business, the community store that while privately owned still feels like it is part of the fabric of all who live there. No one in the community may profit financially from the business, but the livelihood of the business says something about the community's vitality, and the relationships built over time between residents and workers creates an intimate and emotional relationship. For many, it feels like the local store has been bought out by a chain.

The outcry was enough that the Hardrock 100 removed Leadville as a qualifier for their event, stating that "the 2013 Leadville 100 ignored other traits of importance to [Hardrock]: environmental responsibility, support of the hosting community, and having a positive impact on the health of our sport", and thus would not be included as a qualifying invent for 2015 and beyond (http://hardrock100.com/hardrock-qualify.php). Stan Jensen, who runs the website run100s.com, which serves as a vast repository of information and data on the history of ultramarathon events, posted on November 11, 2013, "Sorry, but I'm removing the Leadville 100 from my web site. They're no longer a part of the sport of ultrarunning, but simply a business venture" (run100s.com/whatsnew.htm). Thus, you cannot find any mention or reference to the Leadville 100 on his site.

The Leadville 100 recently broke silence on the issue, despite various requests for commentary, to provide "Improvements Planned for 2014 Leadville Trail 100 Run." This is to include reduced participation numbers, changes to aid station access, better trash management, more staff and volunteers, all to demonstrate that they are "committed to contribute positively to the future of Ultra running." It should also be noted that an economic impact study conducted by researchers at Colorado Mountain College (located in Leadville) stated that the race

series contributes $15 million to the local economy. This was determined through surveying participants, and their spending habits associated with the various races and training activities that take place in Leadville. It also added in additional monies earned by local employees during race activities. Without getting into the specifics of how much is made, and how accurate these numbers are, it is clear from anyone who has been to Leadville that these events do bring in money to the community. If that is the goal, then that is accomplished, and likely will continue to be accomplished as more ultrarunners and mountain bikers get into these sports. However, if the goal is to maintain the spirit of these events, and the sports they represent, then there is a growing concern of whether it is possible in this model of race-for-profit and corporate sponsorship. Finally, as more sponsorship and attention is given to ultrarunning, there is the concern of whether more and more races will go the way of Leadville, and whether the price of popularity is worth the cost of culture.

Conclusions: The Trail Ahead

By your endurance you will gain your souls

(Luke 21:19 New Revised Standard Version)

In Ancient Greece, the concept of agon related to contest, competition, struggle and challenge, especially pertaining to the development of the Olympic Games. It not only relates to an external struggle against an opponent, but an inward struggle of the soul. Within struggle there is hope that through perseverance, that by enduring external and internal challenges, one will come through transformed with a renewed sense of self and a removal of limitations. Endurance is the thing, and learning to endure is the skill needed to be acquired. Likewise the quote above taken from Luke was uttered as a foretelling of the persecution that the Apostles would encounter through their following of Jesus, and that by enduring that persecution they would achieve an eternal life. As a metaphor, one can see direct application to the world of ultrarunning, where struggle and endurance is viewed as a gateway to self-discovery that is accomplished by going into a realm that today's modern society is constructed to actively avoid. Within ultra comes a kind of purity of existence in that moment, where all of the things that can plague us every day are stripped away and focus is turned toward just keeping moving forward. In recalling her participation in the Iditarod mountain bike race, Jill Homer (2008:Ch.1) relates, "What we seek is the truth. Not the truth shaped by human knowledge, but the Truth: harsh, unwritten and startingly real."

To run is to engage in one of the simplest human activities. Shortly after crawling and walking comes running. The freedom of moving 'fast' equates to the ability to cover greater distance, expanding range and opportunities. More research is examining how human beings evolved as long-distance runners. "Considering all the evidence together, it is reasonable to hypothesize that Homo evolved to travel long distances by both walking and running" (Bramble and Lieberman 2004:351). Today, as Bernd Heinrich (2009:131) observes, "Running is not just biological destiny. Rather it is a biological capacity that is now largely a cultural phenomenon." The question then becomes what kind of culture is it, and how is it changing. What was primal has become popular, and what is popular will eventually become marketed. It is in this final step that ultrarunning is finding itself today, as the point between what it has been and is becoming.

On the question about commodification and standardization of ultrarunning, one ultrarunning participant (and commentator) gave the following assessment on his blog: "Competitive Running will continue toward homogeneity. As sponsors invest more and more money into athletes and races, they will expect those athletes and races to produce more and more money. This will be accomplished not by bringing the average person onto the trail, but by bringing trail running into the average person's living room via television and internet" (Vaughan, 2013). Is the taming of ultra for the "average person" something needed, desired, or necessary? The question still remains whether this is something that ultrarunners want to see happen. More specifically, we could ask if there are now different parts of the ultrarunning community that want different outcomes, and in the process is a bifurcation of ultrarunning beginning.

At the same time, this concern might be much ado about nothing. For every high profile event you can likely find more community oriented 'Fat Ass' events, where no awards are given, no places won, timing may not be kept, aid tables are pot lucks, and entry fees non-existent or minimal. Graubin (2008:2) explains, "Fat Ass events, completely

informal and often non-competitive runs, have become a fun alternative to the intense environments of the big-time, high-demand races." The 'old school' ultra experience is still there to be had, and not likely to go away. For instance, a new race called the Twin States 50m has just emerged, for which there is no entry fee, no aid stations, and registration involves basically an RSVP to the race director. Unlike other Fat Ass races, however, there will be awards, which include, "Top overall male and female will win one item from my pantry, or some other random object. Things in my pantry include canned rabbit, mushrooms, tomato sauce, creamed corn or any variety of things8." As elite ultramarathoner Anton Krupicka states, "I think the sport is big enough to accommodate both kids of races: those with large fields, media, prize money, and a focus on the sharp end and those that are more low-key and grassroots with no fanfare" (Seiss 2012).

The question could be asked, then, why the fuss? Why should there be concern over the growth of the sport in one direction when it seems likely that it can retain its roots? Part of this may lie in those fearful that ultra is becoming the thing that it originally rejected. Is it possible to find yourself in the midst of adversity when much is done to ensure your success? If you are not allowed to find your limits, how can you go past them? Ultrarunners might look toward mountain biking, which went from a fringe outsider oriented activity in the woods, and turned into looped courses for better viewing, televising, marketing, and eventually inclusion in the Olympics. Making ultra more accessible is not only a concern about field sizes, but also removing the essence of what makes it important as a way to explore personal limits (or struggle) and then find what one is capable of.

The Barkley Marathons is one of the hardest ultramarathons in the world. Competitors must finish the 100 mile event (the course is likely longer than this) in 60 hours. Held in various versions since 1986, the 100 miler course (5 loops) came into being in 1995. Since that time, only 14 people have successfully completed the course before the cutoff. Race Director and race creator Gary Cantrell said, "The Barkley is a problem. All the other big races are set up for you to succeed. The Barkley is set up for your to fail" (Seminara 2013). There are no aid stations or marked trail. It is difficult to find out how to enter the race, and it costs $1.61 for first timers to enter. Only around 40 people can participate a year due to park rules. There have been attempts to pay up to $1,000 to enter, and they have been turned down.

While undoubtedly people would like to finish, and there are the very few that do, finishing is not always the point. Multiple time Ironman World Champion Chrissie Wellington in her autobiography states, "You will remain the same person before, during and after the race, so the result, however important, will not define you. The journey is what matters" (Ch.10). The journey does not begin at the starting line, but in the course of training, immersing oneself in the day-to-day struggle to even approach the starting line with a sense of preparedness. Or, as ultrarunning great Scott Jurek (2012:Ch.12) has found, "The point was living with grace, decency, and attention to the world, and breaking free of the artificial constructs in your own life. I know all that now. I sensed it then."

It often is in struggle that people can unite for a common purpose, allowing difference to be shed for a shared goal and experience. Fiona Wilson in commenting on the nature of ultrarunners states, "There's a camaraderie from knowing you're all going through the same thing. When you spend six hours running with someone, it's an intense relationship and I've ended up revealing quite intimate details to complete strangers" (Carlyle 201). As was shown in the survey results, community and identity are important elements of the ultrarunning culture. As author Bill McKibben (2010:45) recalled this most memorable piece of advice in his own foray into cross-country ski racing, "At every endurance event, there comes a time when you'll say, 'What the fuck am I doing here?' And you'll say, 'This is what I do'."

In "This is what I do" lies "This is who I am", and more generally "This is who we all are who participate in this same activity." It is this part that raises concern as the growth and commercialization stand to change what the sport is to those who take part, and what the sport appears to be to those on the outside looking in. Ellie Greenwood, a professional ultrarunner, provides the following on the issue of change, "Let's support the competitive element in ultrarunning by allowing competitive runners to make a good income, but let's not close our eyes to the challenges and changes this may cause to our sport" (Greenwood 2012). The concern now is whether the growth and increased commercialization of the sport possess a threat to the spirit of the trail, and the ethos that became established in ultra.

The goal of this paper was to provide a deeper understanding on ultramarathoning participation, identity, culture and growth. As ultrarunning continues to grow in terms of race size and market share, more will be needed to be done to examine whether it can achieve a model of economic, environmental, and cultural sustainability. There is much to be written on ultramarathon, and more to be explored. It is in many ways a fundamentally simple activity involving nothing more than (typically) a trail and a desire to see how far one can go. It would seem that ultimately

people want to see that simplicity retained. The question then becomes whether simplicity can be achieved with popularity and profitability. That question has yet to be decided in the world of ultramarathoning. As it unfolds, it will provide an interesting avenue to explore how cultural change and resistance function in a world where the certainty of the finish line is almost always in question and the experience of the moment all that can be guaranteed.

Endnotes

1. For a recounting of this event, see the movie Unbreakable : The Western States 100 (2011).

2. Elevation Trail, elevationtrail.com

3. This acronym was chosen intentionally. One aspect of ultrarunning culture is the irreverence with which bodily functions are treated. Vomiting can be seen as a race-day strategy to help with completion of the event. Discussions of urination and defecation are commonplace among and between men and women. During longer distance ultras, it is not uncommon for people to change clothes in view of others. As one runner said to another runner as she urinated off to the side of the trail during the Leadville 100 (and in view of one of the authors who was 'pacing' another runner), "There is no shame in ultrarunning."

4. The concept of what defines an "elite" runner is a very tricky one for which there is no definite answer. A 'professional' runner might be defined as a person who makes their living from running. This is very rare in ultrarunning, with perhaps only a few exceptions. The use of the word 'elite' is referring to those who are in positions to win prize money and finish at the front and/or win races. They are acknowledged by others in the field as being the top of ultra performance, and thus given that title of 'elite.' It might be the case that they themselves would not call themselves elite, or feel uncomfortable when the term was applied to them. Nevertheless, their performances and often sponsorships puts them in a different category from other ultrarunners as it pertains to the importance of compensation for ultrarunning.

5. This is a play on the term "bucket lister" which refers to people who have a list of things they want to achieve. When something is achieved, it is crossed off the list in order to move onto the next thing.

6. The primary author was part of a podcast on Elevation Trail discussing the corporatization of ultra and the Leadville 100, as the podcast host was a participant in the event as well. http://elevationtrail.wordpress.com/2013/08/19/leadville-100-and-corporate-manhandling-of-ultrarunning/

7. An online search on the 2013 Leadville 100 run would yield more points for consideration. For instance, perusing the 166 comments at the irunfar.com discussion of the race and results would give more indication of the sentiments that have been expressed. http://www.irunfar.com/2013/08/2013-leadville-100-mile-run-results.html

8. https://sites.google.com/site/twinstate50/home

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Critical Internet Privacy Studies

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1. Introduction

There is much public talk about privacy. The following collected news clips indicate this development:

- "Google Faces More Inquiries in Europe Over Privacy Policy. Instead of facing one European investigation into its privacy policy, Google now has to contend with at least six of them" (The New York Times, April 2, 2013).
- "I don't Likes — Facebook boss Zuckerberg's sister's anger over photo: Web nerd's sister is tripped up by the social network's complicated privacy settings" (The Sun, December 27, 2012).
- "Guidelines help China to take step forward in data privacy" (South China Morning Post, April 17, 2013).

These examples point out how important the topic of privacy has become for the media and for our daily lives. The media often alert that privacy seems to be under attack and vanishing especially caused by the emergence of new information and communication technologies such as the Internet. For instance, Web 2.0 activities such as creating profiles and sharing ideas on Facebook, announcing personal messages on Twitter, uploading or watching videos on YouTube, and writing personal entries on Blogger, enable the collection, analyses, and sale of personal data by commercial web platforms. Nevertheless, what is actually meant with the term Internet privacy? Although there is much public talk about privacy, it seems that there is no definite answer; rather, ambiguous concepts of what online privacy is and what indeed privacy in peril is.

The overall aim of this paper is to clarify how Internet privacy is defined in the academic literature, what the different concepts of privacy have in common, what distinguish them from one another, and what advantages and disadvantages such definitions have in order to clarify if there is a gap in the existing literature. For doing so, section two, three, and four contain a systematic discussion of the state of the art of online privacy studies by establishing a typology of existing privacy definitions and discussing commonalties and differences. For analysing the literature on a more abstract level and identifying advantages and disadvantages, it is essential to discuss commonalties and differences and to find certain typologies. Finally, section five gives a summary and makes some propositions for a critical contribution to Internet privacy studies.

Several privacy studies scholars have provided classifications of privacy definitions. Schoeman (1984: 2-3) for instance distinguishes between three groups of privacy approaches, namely privacy as a claim or entitlement, privacy as the measure of control an individual has over oneself, and privacy as a state or condition of limited access to a person. Solove (2002: 1099-1123) discerns six conceptions of privacy, that is privacy as (1) the right to be let alone, (2) limited access to the self, (Marx) secrecy, (4) control over personal information, (5) personhood (this includes individuality, dignity, autonomy, and antitotalitarianism), and (6) intimacy. Solove (2006: 489) additionally develops a taxonomy of privacy and lists four basic groups: information collection, information processing, information dissemination, and invasion. According to Tavani (2011: 137), there are three different views of privacy: accessibility privacy, decisional privacy, and informational privacy. Gormley (1992: 1337-1338) sees four different cluster definitions in the privacy literature, namely privacy as (1) an expression of one's personality or personhood, (2) autonomy, (Marx) ability to regulate information about oneself, and (4) multidimensional approach. These typologies of different privacy approaches are arbitrary and stated without a theoretical criterion for a certain typology. There are no theoretical

foundations given for the categories and the suggested definitions. A theoretical criterion is missing that is used for discerning different privacy approaches. A theoretically founded typology of defining privacy is important in order to undertake a theoretical analysis of privacy in modern society. Providing such an analysis is a meta-theoretical task.

"Privacy is a social relation" (Lyon 1994: 184) and therefore a social phenomenon. In order to establish a typology of privacy definitions, it makes sense to make use of social theory. Social theories can be classified according to how they deal with the relationship of social structures and social actors (Giddens 1981: 64; Bourdieu 1977: 4; Fuchs 2008: 40): Individualistic and subjectivistic theorists such as Weber, Mead, and Habermas argue that society is constituted by social actors. Structuralistic and functionalistic theorists such as Durkheim, Merton, Parsons, and Luhmann highlight the constraints of social structure (institutionalized relationships) on the individual. Subjective social theories underestimate the constraining effects of social structures and objective social theories do not consider agencies in an appropriate way (Giddens 1981: 15-17; Bourdieu 1977: 3-4). Therefore, it is crucial to elaborate an integrative approach in order to solve the foundational problem of sociology of how social structures and actors are related (Giddens 1981: 64). An integrative approach considers the relationship of society (object) and individual (subject) as mutual in order to bridge the gap between subjective and objective social theories. Integrative (object/subject) approaches " escape from the ritual either/or choice between objectivism and subjectivism in which the social sciences have so far allowed themselves to be trapped" (Bourdieu 1977: 4). Regardless whether someone agrees with this approach or not, this treatment indicates that social theories deal either with objects, or/and with subjects.

These findings allow distinguishing objective, subjective, and integrative (objective/subjective) approaches of defining online privacy that can be used for constructing a typology of the existing Internet privacy literature:

Objective definitions of Internet privacy understand privacy as a specific social structure, a moral or legal right, which is used to enable someone's ability to limit or restrict others from access to persons or information (restricted access definition of privacy). Objective definitions of online privacy make one or more of the following assumptions:

- Privacy is a (moral and/or legal) right (rights-based conception of privacy).
- Privacy includes the freedom from unwarranted intrusion (non-intrusion).
- Privacy should be protected; for example, by law or certain "zones".
- Restrictions of privacy are violations.
- Privacy should be defined in a normative way.
- Full privacy can only be reached if there is no contact to other social actors.

To a certain extent, objective definitions of Internet privacy suggests that the more access to people or information is limited or restricted by a social structure such as the law, the more privacy people have.

In comparison, subjective approaches of defining online privacy focus on the individual and understand privacy as control over information about oneself (limited control definition of privacy). Subjective theories primarily understand privacy as self-determination and focuses on individual behaviour. Subjective definitions of Internet privacy make one or more of the following assumptions:

- Privacy is a personal interest (interest-based conception of privacy).
- Privacy includes the freedom from external interference in one's personal choices, decisions, and plans (non-interference).
- The degree of personal choice indicates how much privacy an individual has.
- Restrictions of privacy are losses.
- Privacy should be defined in a descriptive way.
- Full privacy is reached as long as the individual is able to choose which personalities should be disclosed.

Subjective definitions of Internet privacy suggest that the more the individual has control over his/her information, the more privacy s/he enjoys. Subjective theories primarily understand privacy as self-determination and focuses on individual behaviour.

Finally, integrative approaches of defining online privacy try to combine subjective and objective notions into one concept. Integrative definitions do not only understand privacy as a worth protecting right, they also treat individual control as an important aspect (restricted access/limited control definition of privacy).

Objective, subjective, and integrative (subjective/objective) approaches of Internet privacy will be outlined. The following three sections are therefore structured according to this distinction. The task of these sections is to give a representative, but still eclectic overview about different Internet privacy theories.

2. Objective Theories of Internet Privacy

Camp and Floridi have provided important objective approaches of privacy in the context of new technologies such as the Internet. Camp (1999) wants to know if Internet users are able to protect their privacy online and offers answers to these questions from the American legal tradition. The American legal tradition focuses on a right to privacy, rather than on an European claim for a need for data protection: "The American tradition of concern for privacy varies from the European approach. The European Community and Canada have principles of data protection, whereas the American tradition revolves around privacy. American considerations are based on common law tradition and a constitutional right, rather than on the more practical approach implied by data protection" (Camp 1999: 252).

For Floridi (1999: 53), "privacy is nothing less than the defence of the personal integrity of a packet of information" and informational privacy "a form of aggression towards one's personal identity" (Floridi 2005: 194). He considers the protection of personal identity as a "fundamental and inalienable right" (Floridi 2005: 195) and a right to informational privacy as "a right to personal immunity from unknown, undesired or unintentional changes in one's own identity as an informational entity" (Floridi 2005: 195). Camp's and Floridi's notion can be classified into objective approaches of defining privacy, because they have developed a rights-based conception of privacy.

Objective definitions of Internet privacy understand privacy as a specific social structure, a moral or legal right, which is used to enable someone's ability to limit or restrict others from access to persons or information (restricted access definition of privacy). Now, we move on to subjective approaches of studying online privacy.

3. Subjective Theories of Internet Privacy

Subjective approaches of defining Internet privacy focus on the individual and understand privacy as control over information about oneself. In the context of information privacy on the Internet, Clarke (1999: 60) states that " privacy is often thought of as a moral right or a legal right. But it's often more useful to perceive privacy as the interest that individuals have in sustaining a personal space, free from interference by other people and organizations". For Clarke (1998: 62), information technologies such as the Internet have dramatically increased the surveillance threats to personal data and personal identity. He furthermore claims that "the individual must be able to exercise a substantial degree of control over that data and its use" (Clarke 1998: 62). Agre (1997) studies privacy in the context of new information and communication technologies. He argues that the pervasive spread of computer networks has made it much easier to merge databases. Databases of personal information have thereby intensified and extensified on a global level (Agre 1997: 3). Following Clarke, for Agre (1997: 7), informational privacy can be understood as control over personal information and as "control over an aspect of the identity one projects to the world". This concept of defining privacy in the context of new technologies such as the Internet is considered as advantageously for several reasons: "It goes well beyond the static conception of privacy as a right to seclusion or secrecy, it explains why people wish to control personal information, and it promises detailed guidance about what kinds of control they might wish to have" (Agre 1997: 7-8). Because Clarke and Agre advance the idea that individuals require control over information about themselves, their notions can be classified as subjective definitions of Internet privacy.

In "Database Nation", Garfinkel (2000: 4) understands "privacy in the 21st century" in the context of self-possession, autonomy, and integrity. Privacy is "the right of people to control what details about their lives stay inside their own houses and what leaks to the outside. … It's about the woman who's afraid to use the Internet to organize her community against a proposed toxic dump – afraid because the dump's investors are sure to dig through her past if she becomes too much of a nuisance. … It's about good, upstanding citizens who are now refusing to enter public service because they don't want a bloodthirsty press rummaging through their old school reports, computerized medical records, and email" (Garfinkel 2000: 4). As mentioned above, subjective concepts of Internet privacy understand privacy as control over individual-specific information by the individual himself/herself. Therefore, when Garfinkel states that online privacy occurs on the initiative of its possessors (woman who's afraid to use the Internet, citizens who are refusing to enter public service), it becomes clear that his notion can be seen in the context of subjective approaches of Internet privacy.

Similar to Clarke, Agre, and Garfinkel, Solove focuses on individual behaviour and understands online privacy as

self-determination and control over information about oneself: "Privacy involves the ability to avoid the powerlessness of having others control information that can affect whether an individual gets a job, becomes licensed to practice in a profession, or obtains a critical loan. It involves the ability to avoid the collection and circulation of such powerful information in one's life without having any say in the process, without knowing who has what information, what purposes or motives those entities have, or what will be done with that information in the future. Privacy involves the power to refuse to be treated with bureaucratic indifference when one complains about errors or when one wants certain data expunged. It is not merely the collection of data that is the problem—it is our complete lack of control over the ways it is used or may be used in the future. … What people want when they demand privacy with regard to their personal information is the ability to ensure that the information about them will be used only for the purposes they desire." (Solove 2004: 43, 51)

To sum up: Subjective definitions of Internet privacy assume that privacy is a personal interest, or/and privacy includes the freedom from external interference in one's personal choices, decisions, and plans, or/and the degree of personal choice indicates how much privacy an individual has, or/and restrictions of privacy are losses, or/and privacy should be defined in a descriptive way, or/and full privacy is reached as long as the individual is able to choose which personalities should be disclosed. In the following section, integrative approaches of studying online privacy (a combination of subjective and objective approaches) will be treated.

4. Integrative (Objective/Subjective) Theories of Internet Privacy

Many authors have advanced an integrative approach of Internet privacy by combining rights-based ideas with individual control conceptions: For example, Ess (2009: 58) argues that "at least in those contexts and spaces where I can legitimately expect privacy, I should also be able to control the information about my behaviors in those spaces. That is, if I have a right to accessibility privacy – a sense that others cannot legitimately intrude upon me and perhaps others in certain contexts – then it would seem that I have a right to informational privacy as well". Lessig (2006) claims that with the rise of the Internet there are new challenges for privacy and that new privacy threats have emerged. He understands Internet privacy as a right and as individual control: "Individuals should be able to control information about themselves. We should be eager to help them protect that information by giving them the structures and the rights to do so" (Lessig 2006: 231). Miller and Weckert (2000: 256) assume that "the notion of privacy has both a descriptive and a normative dimension. On the one hand privacy consists of not being interfered with, or having some power to exclude, and on the other privacy is held to be a moral right, or at least an important good. … Naturally the normative and the descriptive dimensions interconnect".

Moor (1997: 31) combines objective and subjective notions in his "control/restricted access conception of privacy". For Moor (1997: 30-32), the term privacy should be used "to designate a situation in which people are protected from intrusion or observation by natural or physical circumstances" on the one hand and to "give individuals as much personal choice as possible" on the other hand. Moor (1997: 32) furthermore argues that it is important to study privacy in terms of a control/restricted access theory of privacy, "because this conception encourages informed consent as much as possible and fosters the development of practical, fine grained, and sensitive policies for protecting privacy when it is not". Tavani (2007; 2008) criticizes both objective and subjective notions of privacy. Based on Moor's concept of privacy, Tavani (2008: 144) mentions in his restricted access/limited control theory (RALC) "the importance of setting up zones that enable individuals to limit or restrict others from accessing their personal information" on the one hand and identifies "the important role that individual control plays in privacy theory" on the other hand. Tavani's notion does not only understand privacy as a legal right, which should be protected, it also treats individual control as an important aspect. In Tavani's (2007: 19) understanding, the restricted access/limited control theory, "in differentiating normative from descriptive aspects of privacy, enabled us to distinguish between the condition of privacy and a right to privacy and between a loss of privacy (in a descriptive sense) and a violation or invasion of privacy (in a normative sense)".

In addition, Introna (1997: 264) underlines that "to claim privacy is to claim the right to limit access or control access to my personal or private domain" and "to claim privacy is to claim the right to a (personal) domain of immunity against the judgments of others". Spinello (2003: 143) argues that informational privacy "concerns the collection, use, and dissemination of information about individuals. The right to informational privacy is the right to control the disclosure of and access to one's personal information". Because Introna and Spinello connect restricted

access and limited control definitions of privacy, it can be argued that there approaches provide a combination of objective and subjective notions of privacy.

Nissenbaum (2010) links adequate privacy protection to norms of specific contexts. Her framework requires that the processes of controlling and accessing information are appropriate to a particular context (Nissenbaum 2010: 147). She understands privacy as contextual integrity. Contextual integrity is a decision heuristic that focuses on changes of information processes in certain contexts such as education, health care, and psychoanalysis (Nissenbaum 2010: 169-176). The idea of contextual integrity is neither solely a subjective nor exclusively an objective approach of defining privacy in the information age: " The framework of contextual integrity reveals why we do not need to choose between them; instead, it recognizes a place for each. The idea that privacy implies a limitation of access by others overlaps, generally, with the idea of an informational norm. … Control, too, remains important in the framework of contextual integrity" (Nissenbaum 2010: 147-148). Privacy control may change the degree of access in specific social contexts.

In summary, integrative definitions of Internet privacy try to combine subjective and objective notions into one concept. Integrative definitions consider both privacy as a right that should be protected and as form of individual control. The next section provides a discussion of the existing Internet privacy theories and argues for the need of a critical Internet privacy studies approach.

5. Critical Internet Privacy Studies

The overall aim of the previous sections was to clarify how online privacy is defined in the academic literature, what the different concepts of privacy have in common, and what distinguish them from one another. For doing so, section two, three, and four contained a systematic overview of the state of the art of how to define privacy by establishing a typology of the existing literature. The following table summarizes the results.

Table 1: Foundations of Internet Privacy Studies

Foundations of Internet Privacy Studies				
		Objective Theories of Internet Privacy	Subjective Theories of Internet Privacy	Integrative (Objective/ Subjective) Theories of Internet Privacy
Objective Theories of Internet Privacy	Objective approaches of defining Internet privacy understand privacy as a specific social structure, a moral or legal right, which is used to enable someone's ability to limit or restrict others from access to persons or information (restricted access definition of privacy).	Camp (1999), Floridi (1999)		
Subjective Theories of Internet Privacy	Subjective approaches of defining Internet privacy focus on the individual and understand privacy as control over information about oneself (limited control definition of privacy).		Clarke (1999: 60), Agre (1997), Garfinkel (2000), Solove (2004)	

Integrative (Objective/ Subjective) Theories of Internet Privacy		Integrative approaches of defining Internet privacy try to combine subjective and objective notions into one concept. Integrative approaches consider both privacy as a right that should be protected and as individual control of personal information (restricted access/limited control definition of privacy).		Ess (2009), Lessig (2006), Miller and Weckert (2000), Moor (1997) Tavani (2007; 2008), Introna (1997), Spinello (2003), Nissenbaum (2010)

Objective definitions of Internet privacy understand privacy as a specific social structure, a moral or legal right, which is used to enable someone's ability to limit or restrict others from access to persons or information; for instance, they are represented by Camp and Floridi. In contrast, subjective definitions of Internet privacy focus on the individual and understand privacy as control over information about oneself; for example, representatives are Clarke, Agre, Solove. Finally, integrative approaches of studying Internet privacy try to combine subjective and objective notions into one concept; for instance, they are represented by Ess, Tavani, Nissenbaum.

To a certain extent, objective definitions suggests that the more access to persons or information is limited or restricted by a social structure such as the law, the more privacy people have. In other words: These approaches state that the more an individual information can be kept secret, the more privacy is fulfilled. On the Internet, especially Web 2.0 activities such as creating profiles, sharing ideas, announcing personal messages, uploading or watching videos, and writing personal entries on social networking sites are based on information, sharing, and attention. Regardless whether individuals are able to decide which personal information is available on the Internet and regardless whether individuals are able to choose for whom these information is available, for representatives of an objective approach, these forms of information sharing are always restrictions of privacy and therefore should be avoided. For example, I want to upload some photos on my profile on a non-profit and non-commercial social networking platform such as Kaioo (owned by the non-profit organization OpenNetworX) in order to share them with my friends, have fun, and deepen our friendship. Furthermore in this example, I decide which photos should be shared, I choose with whom, and what my friends are able to do with these photos. In an objective understanding, this is still a restriction and violation of privacy, which should be questioned and struggled against, because the more my information is kept secret, the more privacy is attained. Therefore, these approaches tend to underestimate the individual role of control and choice, which is also required for enjoying privacy (Tavani 2007: 9; Tavani 2008: 142). These approaches do not take into account that individuals can limit or restrict their access, because individuals are able to control the flow of personal information to a certain extent (Moor 1997: 31; Fried 1968: 482). In addition, individuals should be able to control the flow of personal information by themselves, because "different people may be given different levels of access for different kinds of information at different times" (Moor 1997: 31).

Subjective definitions suggest that the more the individual has control over her/his information, the more privacy he/she enjoys. This includes that if a person is not able to control his/her information anymore, but some other people or organisation may do so, privacy is restricted. While social media allow people to make new friends, share information, videos, music, or images, discuss with others, and stay in touch with friends, relatives, and other contacts, they also provide a vast amount of personal(ly) (identifiable) information. If I want to share information on commercial social networking sites, I do not have control over my information anymore, because web platforms are allowed to use my information as well in order to generate profit. From a subjective point of view of Internet privacy, the most effective way of controlling information about oneself is not to share it in the first place. Therefore, in a subjective understanding, the only opportunity to keep control over his/her information and to enjoy privacy, is not using such web platforms. This view ignores that it might cause new problems, because it could result in less fun, less social contacts, less satisfaction, a deepening of information inequality, and social exclusion (Fuchs 2009: 13). My point of view is that one opportunity for users having control over their personal information on such platforms is to foster international data protection regulations in order to hinder the collection, analyses, and sale of personal

data by commercial web platforms. Subjective privacy definitions tend to underestimate the constraining effects of social structures, which restrict the individual control over information (Tavani 2007: 9; Tavani 2008: 143). These approaches do not take into account that having full control over personal information cannot be reached in modern society (Moor 1997: 31) and that enclosing information might create new problems.

On the one hand, integrative concepts recognize the constraining effects of social structures, which restrict the individual control over information. On the other hand, they also consider the individual role of control and choice, which is also required for having privacy. Integrative notions take into account that having full control over personal information cannot be reached, but that individuals can limit or restrict their access because they are able to control the flow of personal information to a certain extent. In short, integrative approaches of studying privacy try to avoid objective and subjective pitfalls. Nevertheless, many authors have advanced critique of the concept of privacy in general (Gouldner 1976: 103; Lyon 1994: 179-198; Lyon 2001: 20-23; Lyon 2007: 174-176; Gilliom 2001: 121-125; Etzioni 1999: 183-215; Bennett and Raab 2006: 14-17; Ogura 2006: 277-280; Fuchs 2010: 174-175; Neocleous 2002: 85-110). Privacy is a modern concept of liberal democracy and is used in order to justify liberty from public intervention (Lyon 1994: 185). In the liberal understanding of privacy, the sovereign individual should have freedom to seek his/her own interests without interference and those interests are primarily interpreted as property interests and private ownership rights (Fuchs 2010: 174; Lyon 1994: 186-188). Therefore, the concept of privacy fits neatly into the concept of private property (Fuchs 2010: 174; Lyon 1994: 186; Ogura 2006: 278). The debate of privacy advances the idea of possessive and self-protective individualism (Gouldner 1976: 103; Lyon 2001: 21). Possessive individualism means that the individual is proprietor of his/her own person, capabilities, potentialities, and capacities (Macpherson 1990: 3). In the understanding of possessive individualism, the nature of human is that everyone is the owner of himself/herself and that the individual is not part of a larger social whole. The human essence is considered as being the proprietorship of himself/herself and the overall aim of society in liberal democracy is considered as being the protection of this property (Macpherson 1990: 3). In addition, individuals are seen as being related as proprietors and therefore society is considered as consisting of relations of proprietors. The actual outcome of such an understanding in reality is a competitive and possessive market society (Macpherson 1990: 271). The idea of possessive individualism can be summarized with the following propositions:

> (i) What makes a man human is freedom from dependence on the wills of others.
>
> (ii) Freedom from dependence on others means freedom from any relations with others except those relations which the individual enters voluntarily with a view to his own interest.
>
> (iii) The individual is essentially the proprietor of his own person and capacities, for which he owes nothing to society. ...
>
> (iv) Although the individual cannot alienate the whole of his property in his own person, he may alienate his capacity to labour.
>
> (v) Human society consists of a series of market relations. ...
>
> (vi) Since freedom from the wills of others is what makes a man human, each individual's freedom can rightfully be limited only by such obligations and rules as are necessary to secure the same freedom for others.
>
> (vii) Political society is a human contrivance for the protection of the individual's property in his person and goods, and (therefore) for the maintenance of orderly relations of exchange between individuals regarded as proprietors of themselves." (Macpherson 1990: 263-264)

Privacy concepts advance the idea of possessive individualism in order to define the private individual embedded in a system of a competitive market society (Gouldner 1976: 103; Lyon 2007: 174). In a market society, primarily economic and political actors are a threat to privacy, undertake surveillance and, exercise violence in order to control certain behaviours of people (Castells 2001: 173-174; Turow 2006: 118; Andrejevic 2007: 242-243). Corporations control the economic behaviour of people and coerce individuals in order to make them produce or buy specific commodities for accumulating profit and for guaranteeing the production of surplus value.

For illustration, the example of Google and DoubleClick can be outlined: According to the top sites of the web by Alexa Internet (2011), Google has the second most visits on the Internet. Google uses a wide range of methods in order to collect data on its users, namely click tracking (to log clicks of users), log files (to store server requests), JavaScript and web bugs (to check users visits), as well as cookies (to record individual actions) (Stalder and Mayer

2009: 102). DoubleClick is one of the main projects of Google (Google 2008). It is a global leader in ad serving and has developed sophisticated methods in order to collect, analyse, and assess huge amounts of users' data on the Internet (Campbell and Carlson 2002: 596-597). Google acquired DoubleClick in 2008 for US$ 3.1 billion (Google 2007; Google 2008). DoubleClick is headquartered in New York City. It was found in 1996 and works for leading digital publishers, marketers, and agencies around the world such as About, Durex, Ford, Friendster, Optimedia, Scripps, and MTV (DoubleClick). Ad serving companies such as DoubleClick use methods by placing advertisements on websites and analysing their efficiency. DoubleClick develops and provides Internet ad serving services that are sold primarily to advertisers and publishers. DoubleClick collects personal data on many websites, sells this data, and supports targeted advertising. DoubleClick's main product is known as DART (Dynamic Advertising, Reporting, and Targeting). DART is an ad serving programme working with a complex algorithm and is primarily developed for publishers and advertisers and is sold as product, which ensures that "you get the right message, to the right person, at the right time, on the right device" (DoubleClick). This example can be seen as a threat to online users' privacy, because Google and DoubleClick collect invisible personal information of online users and undertake analyses of individual behaviour on the Internet. The collection of personal information and the analyses of individual behaviour includes; for instance, which websites users visit immediately before and after the analysed site, how long and how often users are on this site, where users are located, as well as what users do on this site.

Corporations and state institutions are the most powerful actors in society and are able to undertake mass-surveillance extensively and intensively, because available resources decide surveillance dimensions. In the modern production process, primarily electronic surveillance is used to document and control workers' behaviour and communication for guaranteeing the production of surplus value. The commodification of privacy is important for enabling targeted advertising that is used for accumulating profit. State institutions have intensified and extended state surveillance of citizens in order to combat the threat of terrorism (Gandy 2003: 26-41; Lyon 2003). Therefore, one can assume that corporations and state institutions are the main actors in modern surveillance societies and surveillance is a crucial element for modern societies.

In conclusion, integrative definitions claim that privacy is an important value for modern society. These privacy concepts advance the idea of possessive individualism in order to define the private individual embedded in a system of a competitive market society. In a market society, the commodification of privacy is important in order to enable targeted advertising that is used for accumulating profit. Hence, economic actors undertake surveillance in order to threaten privacy. In modern society, there is a contradiction between privacy on the one hand and surveillance on the other hand (Fuchs 2010: 175). Therefore, the privacy ideal of integrative definitions comes into conflict with surveillance actions. These privacy concepts claim privacy as a crucial value within a society that is not able to fulfil this value.

To sum up, objective definitions of privacy tend to underestimate the individual role of control and choice. In contrast, subjective approaches of defining privacy tend to underestimate the constraining effects of social structures. Although integrative approaches of studying privacy try to avoid objective and subjective pitfalls, these concepts do not recognize the contradiction between privacy and surveillance in modern society and do not give answers to this foundational problem. The existing approaches of privacy seem to be not fruitful for studying privacy on the Internet. Therefore, the following treatment makes some propositions for a critical contribution to Internet privacy studies that ought to be outlined more in detail in further research:

- Similar to integrative approaches, a critical (Horkheimer 1937: 245-294; Horkheimer and Marcuse 1937: 625-647) contribution to Internet privacy studies is interested in combining individualistic and structuralistic notions, but does not want to advance the ideas of liberal democracy, private ownership, and possessive individualism.
- A critical notion of Internet privacy strives for the development of theoretical and empirical research methods in order to focus on online privacy in the context of domination, asymmetrical power relations, resource control, social struggles, and exploitation.
- It asks who can obtain privacy in cyberspace and who benefits from the contradiction between privacy and surveillance in modern society. It critically analyses (a) the threats of privacy as important aspects for guaranteeing the production of surplus value and for accumulating profit on the one hand and (b) privacy protection of income inequality, property interests, as well as power and ownership structures on the other hand.
- A critical notion of Internet privacy wants to overcome (a) privacy threats as well as (b) entrepreneurial privacy protection and privacy protection for other powerful actors in society in order to establish political processes and social transformations towards a participatory society.

For instance, a critical contribution to Internet privacy studies makes an effort to the individual role of control

and choice as well as to the constraining effects of social structures on Web 2.0 platforms and social networking sites such as Facebook, Twitter, Myspace, YouTube, and Blogger. (a) It furthermore investigates the principle of web 2.0 platforms, that is the massive provision and storage of personal(ly) (identifiable) data that are systematically evaluated, marketed, and used for targeted advertising. Web 2.0 applications and social software sites collect personal behaviour, preferences, and interests with the help of systematic and automated computer processes and sell these data to advertising agencies in order to guarantee the production of surplus value and to accumulate profit. A critical approach of privacy studies wants to deepen the knowledge of such privacy threats by its user. (b) In addition, to whom personal information are sold by commercial web platforms and how much these corporations such as Twitter earn with targeted advertising and the sale of data is not known to the public, because such transactions are treated as an aspect of corporation's privacy. One can assume that Twitter's business model is very successful and the company earns a lot of money with the sale of users data, because Twitter is expected to make 1 billion USD in revenue in 2013 (The New York Times 2012). A critical contribution to Internet privacy studies strives to analyse such cases and wants to make them more public in order to deepen the knowledge of social inequality and property interests. A critical notion of Internet privacy wants to put (a) privacy threats and (b) ownership structures of such commercial platforms into the larger context of societal problems in public discourse in order to establish political processes and social transformations towards a participatory society.

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Mondialisation and Critiques of Capitalism

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Globalisation and Mondialisation

Although academics have a penchant for interpreting the present as a "high point" (Foucault 1988: 35), recent analyses of globalisation suggest they might be right. If globalisation initially gestured at interconnectedness, with others so "involved in our lives, as we in theirs," that Marshall McLuhan's (1964: 5) metaphor of a "global village" quickly entered the vernacular, today's more nuanced interpretations of globalisation include hyper-industrialisation, surveillance society, consumerism or hybridisation. Yet the content of concepts is never shorn of context. Beyond Europe and the USA, high points not only concern mutations of global capitalism and the democratic credentials of state power, but also the feasibility of technological projects when the hidden face of progress – the "global [tsunami] accident" (Virilio 1999: 92) – claims its wages. The times we live in, therefore, are "interesting ... [and need] to be … broken down" (Foucault 1988: 36), and if the task of philosophy is to describe the present and who we are therein, then it is to such an endeavour that this article contributes.

To begin with, and following Peter Sloterdijk's argument in Le palais de cristal: à l'intérieur du capitalisme planétaire,[1] analyses of globalisation are rarely philosophical. An example is the haphazard use of history by "faculty experts" (Agger and Luke 2012) to understand globalisation in a linear fashion, which accounts for notions of rupture in the present that Foucault encourages us to avoid. In the age of the "wired hyperbubble" (Sloterdijk 1997: 57), where we tend to define ourselves in terms of access to networks, we require a spatial approach to globalisation. Reason unfolds in place, not ahistorical space, which explains Sloterdijk's (2006: 1) view of philosophy as the activity that "grasps its place in thought."

Similarly, critique is missing from most non-philosophical debates. Even Sloterdijk (2006: 216), for whom "[c]ontesting globalisation is also part of globalisation itself," only considers terrorism as a by-product of the burgeoning "global imaginary" (Steger 2009: 10). Other criticisms of this hue abound, but it is rare to see authors stand back and reflect upon how to criticise globalisation. One recent exception is Benjamin Noys (2010). In his article, "'Grey in Grey': Crisis, Critique, Change," he highlights the aporia of vitalist critiques of capitalism. In refusing to acknowledge how capitalism weathers its crises and creatively consumes its contradictions, they fail to understand how it intellectually disarms them, too. Yet while Noys draws our attention to the need for a critique of global capitalism, he does not articulate the form it might take.

The aim here is to suggest one in the shape of critical history, which necessitates factoring the role of technology into the power relations at the heart of globalisation.[2] Precisely because of the capacity of power in tandem with technology to constitute the practices in which our everyday experiences are played out, we introduce the concepts of technoglobalism and power/technoscience. These allow us to account for the ethico-political effects of globalisation. Further, an eclectic interdisciplinary approach is adopted in which we treat theory and books as strategic tools.[3] While partly warranted by the complexity of the phenomenon of globalisation, it is justified by the need to develop a critique that fosters mondialisation.

In this respect, globalisation to date has been a Westernised process of discovery and appropriation. The result, Jean-Luc Nancy (2007: 34) argues, is that we have lost the ability to "'form a world'" and instead become adept at

"proliferating … the 'unworld'."[4] In this sense, globalisation is "the name for a crisis" (Nowotny 2003) bought about by the "common [global] administration" of capitalism (Tassin 2003). It suffocates the globe, or makes it into nothing other than its double, a "glomus."[5] Mondialisation is a philosophical response to globalisation's "dehumanisation through [despatialised] planetarisation" (Teilhard de Chardin quoted in Capdepuy 2011).[6] As Eric Tassin (2003) argues, we need a world in which "[p]olitics begins with the establishment of a relation to what is outside [the economy]." On this understanding, mondialisation is an attempt to recreate the world, such that "one finds oneself … [and] can be in it with 'everyone'" (Nancy 2007: 41).[7] As an open-ended process, Jacques Derrida (1998) suggests mondialisation is a work-in-progress of "humanisation." In contradistinction to the actual of the globe, cosmos or universe, the "worldwidisation of the world" is a virtual and ongoing task for critique, which seeks to instantiate mondialisation, or our "becoming-worldly" (Derrida 1998).

In short, if globalisation leaves nothing outside of itself and subjugates local spaces to an abstract, global logic of markets, technologies and homogenising modes of human interaction – hence the feeling of "being globalised" (Bauman 1998: 59) in a "run-away world" of anonymous forces (Giddens 1999) – then critique can offer the hope of a world "in which there is room for everyone" (Nancy 2007: 42). As Paul Valery wrote in Regards sur le monde actuel (1931), "[t]he time of a finite world is beginning," and critique can create the conceptual landscape for its manifestation as mondialisation.

Globalisation and The Question of Power

Popularised – but not invented (Feder 2006) – by Theodore Levitt (1983), globalisation has become the academic buzzword in a litany of controversies, from climate change and deregulated financial markets to quadrennial sports events. Following Levitt, globalisation still concerns various economic phenomena, yet their social and ethico-political impact has increased with the spatio-temporal shrinkage of the world by new information and communication technologies (NICT).[8] Indeed, "global" is now indicative of the worldwide diffusion of common cultural experiences and ethico-political forms of subjectivation, from social networking and ubiquitous brands to repetitive patterns of consumption and historical events, whether 9/11 and 7/7, or 3/11(/04) and 3/11(/11).[9]

Building on David Held's and Anthony McGrew's analytical categories, we can discern the globalist, the sceptic and the mondialist.[10] These distinctions are useful for pinpointing the ethico-political problem of globalisation as "a process which universalises technology, economy, politics, and even civilisation and culture[, yet] … remains somewhat empty [because, as Kostas Axelos (2005: 27) argues, t]he world as an opening is missing."

The globalist highlights economic indicators to produce league tables of the world's most globalised states. Pride of place is reserved for Singapore, Hong Kong and The Netherlands, with the wooden spoon shared between Brazil, India and Iran (Kearney/Foreign Policy 2007). In a similar vein, the globalist earmarks failed states. Sudan, the Democratic Republic of Congo or Ivory Coast miss out on globalisation's economic fruits because of protectionism, pre-modern socio-economic structures and anti-Western sentiments (Fund for Peace 2006). There are more nuanced indices of globalisation, notably the KOF Index of Globalisation, which treats globalisation as a historical "process of creating networks … [and] complex relations of mutual interdependence" (Dreher 2006). Still, with the globalist we end up with a definition of globalisation as an evolutionary, hence necessary, economic and political rupture.

Because the globalist views globalisation through a politico-economic lens that discerns progressive epochs in the history of capitalism, it soon engenders the wrath of the sceptic. From this perspective, globalisation implores action subsequent to a moral reflection upon the economic consequences of its enforced peace, whether at the local, regional, national or international level.[11] Amongst other concerns about "market globalism['s]" (Steger 2009: 20) ideology of a "New World Order" (Steingard and Fitzgibbons 1996), there is unease about the shift of power from nation-states to international organisations and multinational corporations; the pooling of sovereignty by nation-states in supranational institutions, with the European Union perhaps the best example;[12] and a neo-liberal orthodoxy that equates progress with economic growth and the extension of the free market (Bauman 2008: 3-9).

The worry for the sceptic is that, in a sleight of ideological hand that forces us to embrace the contingent as necessary, TINA (There Is No Alternative) comes to define our politico-moral horizons (Bauman 2001: 6-8).[13] The increasingly global conditions of our possibility are rendered sacred with any act to profane them seen as "leading straight to the gulag" (Bauman 1999: 4). Rephrasing Marx's insight that people make history, though not under conditions they choose, Zygmunt Bauman (2001: 7) detects the ethical cost of "individuals by decree," or a form of

subjectivity where the object of government is oneself. Yet for the "self-entrepreneur" (Gorz 2003: 24-26) solipsistic government is not under conditions of her choice. Self-policing politicians of everyday life cannot at the same time be members of a polity, which although historically concerned with the fine-tuning of these conditions, now focuses on controlling those citizens that refuse the decree to be individual.[14]

For the sceptic, therefore, globalisation is a double-edged sword. On the one edge, there is an intra-state impasse. Individuals are incited to practice freedom without limits, or licence, which is mirrored by the absence of political will to transgress the limits of the TINA neo-liberal global order. These, in turn, are distinctly off-limits to criticism. On the other edge, the extra-state predicament is that we are confronted with markets striving to become global, while the institutions that oversee them remain national (Rodrik 2000: 348). Under such conditions, Joseph Stiglitz (2002) aptly notes, we end up in a situation characterised by global (economic) governance without global government.[15] Further, as José Gabriel Palma (2009: 830) points out, a demon is required for these conditions to be accepted as ideal, and in the case of neo-liberalism's efficient capital market theory it is governments that are exogenous to the model. In short, power beyond sanction takes leave of the democratically legitimated power to sanction. As Bauman (2003: 15, italics in the original) argues, "power rules because it … is able … to flow away. Power superiority, domination, consist these days in the capacity of disengaging."

Our brief excursus suggests that, if we want to bring critique to bear on globalisation, we need to think beyond the stalemate between the globalist and sceptic. The former celebrates globalisation qua liberalisation and internationalisation, which explain the economic ruptures wrought by neo-liberalism, together with its taming of government (Scholte 2000). For the sceptic, however, the focus is on globalisation as the high point of the long-run political and cultural processes of modernisation and universalisation, respectively (Hirst and Thompson 1996).[16] As such, the globalist versus sceptic dispute is arguably one between the fraternal enemies of Right and Left, or a first way driven by capital that is inherently proactive and a second way destined to be reactive in the name of the ontological diremption the former causes.

An alternative perspective of the mondialist is therefore necessary. The mondialist does not, pace the globalist, reduce globalisation to an economic logic, but instead sees it as an historical process that, contra the sceptic, has unique and distinctive attributes in the present. These are "the spatial re-organization and re-articulation of economic, political, military and cultural power" (Scholte 2000: 46), or deterritorialisation. By transforming the scale of human togetherness, globalisation "extends the reach of power relations across the world … [to such an extent that] globalisation ought primarily to be about the question of power: its modalities, instrumentalities, organisation and distribution" (Held and McGrew 2001).[17]

Technoglobalism and Neo-Schumpeterian Economics

In this light, the first question for the mondialist concerns how technology impacts upon power, as well as how, in tandem, they shape our modes of self-formation? The challenge is to understand globalisation as an ethico-political problem and to push it towards a resolution in mondialisation. To this end, we must first deepen the insight of power as the crux of the issue by outlining a primarily technological conceptualisation of globalisation.

Daniel Archibugi and Jonathan Mitchie have coined the term "technoglobalism" to capture some of the main trajectories of technology at the planetary level today. By technoglobalism, Archibugi and Mitchie (1995: 121) mean "the phenomenon of 'globalisation' experienced by the world of invention and innovation."[18] From the perspective of economics, Archibugi and Iammarino (2002: 99) assume this phenomenon is uncomplicated, because "technological knowledge transmission among peoples … [meets] less resistance than occurred in the cases of cultural, religious, social and political habits." This is not to say that the diffusion of technology takes place in a barrier free world, as problems of tacit knowledge, access to technology, learning how to use it and paying for that privilege remain (Archibugi and Pietrobelli 2003: 862-864).[19] Rather, technoglobalism implies technology is the driving force behind globalisation, both in terms of its NICT driven space-time conflation and the impotence of any barriers to it, such as the nation-state, whether in its sovereign moment (Edgerton 2007) or role as regulator (Florida 1995).[20]

Technoglobalism brings technology to the fore as one of globalisation's conditions of possibility. Yet it makes no allusion to the socio-economic and political framework that facilitates the diffusion of technology, which is necessary to comprehend how technoglobalism engenders a "complexity of new ways of interaction … between

the socialites composing the planet" (Mattelart 2006: 548). In order to account for technology's socio-economic and political moments, we examine the theoretical insights of evolutionary, neo-Schumpeterian economics.

The obvious point of departure here is Joseph Schumpeter, who also anticipates the aporia of vitalistic critiques of capitalism. To make the political point that the internal dynamics of capitalism are impervious to revolution, Schumpeter focuses on endogenous changes. He challenges the orthodox (Keynesian) explanation of exogenous business cycles, which suggests government can reverse externally generated declines in aggregate demand by using public investment to tweak the economy back to a state of equilibrium (Dehejia and Rowe 1998).[21] For Schumpeter, however, the boom-bust nature of the business cycle is inherent to capitalism. In the evolutionary approach to economics, disequilibrium is the rule, not the exception.[22] Cycles depend on radical, discontinuous innovations, which arise due to the "unremitting efforts of people to improve … upon their productive and commercial methods" (Schumpeter 1935: 4). Manifest at the micro-level as new products, processes and forms of organisation (Schumpeter 1927: 295), radical innovations both destroy existing industries and, via the entrepreneur in search of monopoly profits, give birth to new sectors of economic activity (McCraw 2006: 239ff.; Salomon et al. 1994, ch. 13).[23] At the macro-level, radical innovations have a cumulative effect on economic growth through a "kind of wave-like movement" (Schumpeter 1935: 4).

Schumpeter's main focus is technological innovation, especially radical innovations that cause the creative destruction of industries and firms. These in turn explain long-run economic cycles of up to fifty years or more.[24] Aligning themselves with the theory of technological change in capitalist economies, scholars at Science and Technology Policy Research (SPRU) extend Schumpeter's analysis through a dynamic model of the diffusion of technological innovation.[25] The SPRU's neo-Schumpeterian claim is that both incremental and radical innovations give rise to new "technology systems" (Perez 2002). These have far-reaching effects on the "behaviour of the entire economy" (Freeman and Perez 1988: 47). During these paradigmatic moments of change, in which technological "styles" (Tylecote 1991: 36) have a Kuhnian "exclusion effect" on alternatives (Dosi 1982: 153), the economic system and socio-institutional framework are both transformed and constitutive. Technology driven change is not solely determined from the bottom-up by science qua explanation and technology qua application,[26] but from the top-down, too, via historically specific socio-economic conditions. These establish a context conducive to the diffusion of technology and channels through which conflict can be managed (Perez 2004).

Power/Technoscience and The Ethico-political

Despite its relevance to an explanation of the place of technology in globalisation, the notion of technoglobalism and the SPRU's neo-Schumpeterianism embody a common approach. For a start, technology is treated as a transparent means of exchange for phenomena as diverse as information or culture. Its only noteworthy analytical point is the way in which it facilitates a spatio-temporal flattening. Secondly, technology is presumed to engender change in socio-economic and political institutions only. Akin to a neutral, extra-human medium that ensures the message in Peking is mirrored in Paris, the effects of technology are limited to the capacity for economic systems and political institutions to facilitate change. Finally, technoglobalism encapsulates the progressivism that is at the heart of liberal democratic societies, where individuals differ about their ends but concur in believing that (objective) technical means are central to (subjective) self-fulfilment (Borgmann 1984: 10-11).

By assuming human beings are ontologically separate from technology, technoglobalism overlooks its influence upon our ontological conditions (Winner 1997). Indeed, this is why our failure to address its ethical aspects might mean the future does not need us.[27] From this ethico-political perspective, technoglobalism's methodological hotspot is its rearticulation of relations of power. These are inescapably ethical via their impact on modes of subjectivation, or the agent producing "procedure by which one obtains the constitution of a … subjectivity" (Foucault 1988: 253). A critique of globalisation must reveal that technology is not a priori to power, but intertwined with it, as it is this nexus that produces new ethico-political forms.

The import of the analysis is that power relations are subject to transformation by transcontinental flows and interregional networks of technologically driven interaction. Globalisation involves the extra-territorial rearticulation of locally articulated power, which though it has always been everywhere, really now comes from everywhere, too. Power that flows from the bottom-up and the top-down, as well as across the border and over territory, should not be conceived merely as "an institution, [nor] a structure [or] a certain strength we are endowed with;" instead,

Foucault (1990: 93) continues, power "is the name one attributes to a complex strategical situation." This is not to deny the existence of forms of power that dominate through physical or symbolic violence. Rather, it is to argue that power relations are constitutive of free subjects, which means opening up the ontological to a critique of "the way in which reality is instituted … as a political process" (Oksala 2010: 447). Such a critique proceeds by making the will to know, here in its guise of the technology that powers globalisation, conscious of itself as a problem, particularly its transformative effects on our ontological conditions.

We can better understand technoglobalism's impact upon the ethico-political by reconceiving the Foucauldian concept "power/knowledge" as "power/technoscience." One reason to substitute technoscience for knowledge is the shift in epistemological justification from a simple curiosity to know, or "mode 1", to "mode 2" and its quasi-private, instrumental form of knowing (Gibbons et al. 1994; Nowotny, Scott and Gibbons 2001). On this basis, Gilbert Hottois' (1984) original definition of technoscience is useful, which locates science within a technological milieu that is driven by practical considerations. We must cease treating science and technology as separate endeavours, as well as dispel the image of technology as applied science. Rather, technoscience shows how science and technology are tinkering, ordering activities in which defining nature and society are contingent upon the politics of doing technoscience. The "heterogeneous engineer" (Law 1987) develops ever larger networks through acts of translating meaning and enrolling entities to accommodate the interests and strategies of actors. Once achieved, the black boxing of this politics of ontological meaning gives the impression of science and technology as ready-made solutions to pre-existing problems (Latour 1987; Callon 1999). Technoscience shifts us beyond such idealism towards a better approximation of the practice of science and technology.

Finally, to bring us back to technoglobalism's relation to capitalism, technoscience depicts a coalition that personifies the logic of the free market. If the capacity of science to represent things is supported by private capital on condition that the knowledge it produces can be translated into technological innovations, the means through which science achieves its ends is technology (Rabinow 1996: 93). Science represents and technology orders. In the words of Ian Hacking (1983: 146), technoscience represents our world in order to intervene upon reality.[28] The effects for those of us who inhabit this world are obvious because, as Donna Haraway (1997: 51) argues, technoscience shapes "subjectivity and objectivity,... [and] is about worldly, materialized, signifying and significant power."

The Death of The Vitalist Critique of Capitalism

Technoglobalism's relations of power/technoscience enclose our ways of being in the homogeneity of the glomus, such that the "thing that is called globalisation is a kind of mondialisation without the world" (Axelos 2005: 27). A case in point is NICT media. Driven by profit and deploying techniques of retention, they alter power relations by synchronising the plurality of the subject's diachronic identity with that of the glomus. It reduces the spatio-temporal distance between the agent and structure, which is essential for the self-formation of difference (Stiegler 2009: 75-79). A critique of technoglobal capitalism is therefore urgent, yet the question is what form such a critique should take? Below, we first consider Noys' argument. Although he describes the conundrum that any critique of globalisation must address, he outlines in no more than skeletal form the type of critique that can overcome it. The aim in the final section is to put some flesh on it.

The background to Noys' (2011: 46) intervention is the 2008 financial crisis, which destabilises "the classical coordination of crisis, critique, and change." Despite the urgency of critique, neither the strategic elements that link critique to change, nor the agency necessary to actually make it, are available. The reason is that the strategic elements historically uniting critique with change have relied on vital powers external to capitalism. Noys has several paradigmatic vitalist critiques in mind here. These include the socio-economic conditions of capitalism itself, which Marx envisaged; the productive powers of Michael Hardt's and Antonio Negri's multitude; or Fredric Jameson's metaphysics of time as flux and revaluated ends. In addition, Noys alludes to George Bataille's economy of the excremental, or Alain Badiou's concept of life, as sources of affirmation against capitalism.

Historically, these outsides and excesses have been beyond the grasp of capitalism and so apt to fight its dynamism. However, they now find themselves impotent in the face of an inert capitalism that has run out of steam. Fighting fire with fire is no longer an option. We face, Noys (2011: 55) argues, an aporia in that "neither the radicalisation of the productive forces, nor the resort to anti-production seems able to grasp or escape the

bewitchment of capitalism as a system of crisis and creative destruction."

Once the anti-capitalist's weapon of critique dies with the beast of dynamic capitalism, what are the alternatives? As Bernard Stiegler (2009: 74) similarly asks, how can we undertake a critique that is radical yet "prohibits itself from diabolising the adversary?" For Noys, the solution is a critique that can grasp the enigmas of the present crisis of capitalism. Noysian critique apprehends our world as it recedes from experience precisely because, at the level of the imaginary, it returns to envelope us as the ontological horizons that constitute our experience. In post-structural parlance, Noys' "grey on grey" of the actuel passé shifts the focus of critique from the epistemological to the ontological level. It ushers the subject back into the picture, though not as the agent of change, but in terms of depicting capitalism's "ecologies of the milieus of spirit" (Stiegler 2009: 75). The strategic elements to hand are an understanding of the structural determinations that often "overwhelm the subject by being cast as potential sources of liberation," together with an account of the potential for individual autonomy, which derives from a mode of critique that "strategically think[s] forms and conditions of resistance against a devalorising and decelerating capitalism" (Noys 2011: 57).

Like Schumpeter, Noys highlights the urgency of a non-vitalist critique that refuses to draw its energy from a realm beyond or outside of capitalism itself. This requires a shift in perspective from an external viewpoint to a position within capitalism that can afford an understanding of its ontological mechanisms. To borrow Sloterdijk's metaphor, we are trapped in our self-styled crystal palace and, even if people in glasshouses should not throw stones, critique commences therein on behalf of those kept outside and disarmed by the processes of "DIP (deregulation, individualization, privatization)" (Bauman and Rovirosa-Madrazo 2010: 52).[29] Unfortunately, Noys does not elaborate further on an internal critique of capitalism. He simply leaves it there, or perhaps as a task to be accomplished.

Foucauldian Critical History

"Critical history" meets Noys' challenge by linking the strategic elements of experience painted grey with the agent that transforms the world.[30] It also avoids any notion of rupture being discerned from the discredited vitalistic outside, as its "transgressive limit-attitude" (Foucault 1984: 47) puts critique in the service of autonomy by targeting the systems of thought in which the historicity of how we experience ourselves resides.

Critical history can be contrasted with both philosophical critique and the immanent critique of the Frankfurt School. Although critical history is indebted to Kantian philosophical critique, Foucault follows Nietzsche by grounding reason in practices of power. Once the Kantian transcendental standpoint and the possibility of an explicit judgement premised on an analytic of truth are jettisoned, critical history proceeds by making the will to know conscious of itself as a problem. It hereby implores from those implicated critique's concrete, political moment of transformation. Instead of being transcendental and concerned with the possibility of metaphysics, critical history is archaeological and concerned with a genealogy that etches out spaces of freedom. Rather than a formal critique undertaken to necessarily limit the remit of reason, critical history is a practical critique preoccupied with the possibility of transgressing those limits – such as today's glomus – by showing their contingency (Foucault 1984: 45-47).

Insofar as critical theory is concerned, Foucault does not entertain a privileged, transcendental perspective for truth. The critical historian is situated inside practice and thus unable to speak on behalf of others from an outside perspective (Foucault 1977: 209). Further, the domain of the political is as much intra- as extra-state, not least because Foucault is analysing, firstly, the sovereign power targeted by the critical theorist, as well as its inextricable relation to knowledge; and, secondly, the biopower that critical history reveals to be coterminous with its sovereign sibling. As we can see, both these aspects coincide with Noy's call for a critique that can no longer defer to vitalistic resources from a position outside of capitalism for its strategy, while the conception of power that flows under as well as over borders allows us to expand the domain of the political to incorporate the global, too.

In this guise, philosophy makes the insatiable human appetite for technoscience aware of the concomitant forms of domination its politics engenders. Having become nothing short of a duty in today's technology powered global economy, this tradition can be traced back to Friedrich Nietzsche (1899: 220) who, in the Genealogy of Morals, anticipates the day when the "will to truth has become conscious of itself as a problem." Foucault's contribution is to bridge the will to power with the will to knowledge through his concept of the apparatuses of (what we have

expanded to) power/technoscience. In his move beyond Kant and Nietzsche, Foucault's critical history gives the will to know a consciousness of itself as a problem in terms of the limits these apparatuses establish for subjects.

On this understanding, Foucault offers a transformative critique that has two interrelated moments of ideal criticism and real transformation, or the potential to bridge critique and change to which Noys draws our attention. Ideal critique is less a question of denouncing what is wrong than excavating on "what kinds of … unchallenged modes of thought the practices we accept rest" (Foucault 1988: 154). It allows us to pursue mondialisation by giving sense and meaning to everyday experience. As "the means to think the world as it is and as it could be" (Wacquant 2004: 98; italics in the original), critique avoids "human possibilities worth pursuing … from being foreclosed" (Bauman 2001: 12). It seeks to make "facile gestures difficult," with ideal critique succeeding to the extent that it leads to the second moment of real transformation, for "as soon as one can no longer think things as one formerly thought them, transformation becomes ... quite possible" (Foucault 1988: 154).

Conclusion: Critique and The Ethico-political Effects of Globalisation

If, for the mondialist, events from distant places diffuse as strategies of power/technoscience that constitute ontological contexts in far away spaces, what this critical excursus into technoglobal capitalism reveals is the absence in debates about globalisation of a politics of technology. Langdon Winner (1989: 20-22) and others (Feenberg 1999; Hess 1995) have talked of the need for a "theory of technological politics," which asks not only how artefacts and socio-technical systems change, but also how they impact upon individuals and their social world.[31] Such an endeavour would complement studies of technological systems by examining the social and ethical repercussions of technoglobalism. Part of this project would be an understanding of technology's inextricable relation to power, henceforth to be thought of as relations of power/technoscience. A critique of globalisation, such as that called for by Noys in respect of capitalism's crisis of stasis that disables vitalistic modes of criticism, must illuminate this silence by articulating the strategic elements that link certain forms of power to specific technological systems so that (ideal) critique can provide the fuel for resistance and (concrete) change.

Needless to say, a critical history of globalisation that heeds this call is neither technophobe nor technophile. Rather, the cue is an acceptance of technology's burgeoning role in repositioning finitude's horizon, while the spur is a scepticism that seeks to counter-balance the optimism of globalisation's adept academics – the globalists – and spaced out elites, who remain deliberately out of place. Unlike the sceptic, the mondialist's critique is methodologically agnostic about technology: because it is omnipresent, "as much in the real as in the imaginary[, … f]riendship towards technology … is a present and future task" (Axelos 2005: 28).

To this end, we must begin once again to interpret the world, because if we want to make a difference through choices that come from apprehending and seeking to change the changes, it "cannot take place other than through a critique of what in the process [viz. technoglobalism] condemns the process itself" (Stiegler 2009: 72). In any case, as Günther Anders realised, the world changes, mostly without our effort and often due to technology. The task is to grasp "these changes so we in turn can change the changes, so that the world doesn't go on changing without us – and not ultimately become a world without us" (Anders quoted in Schraube 2005: 78). In this sense of technoglobal capitalism as a process to be understood rather than a puzzle to be pieced together, critique is wager against globalisation and for mondialisation. The challenge for critical history is to complement what until now has been mostly "'negative' globalization … by its 'positive' counterpart (as, for instance, globalization of political representation, law and jurisdiction)" (Bauman 2010: 204). Mondialisation, or a world to which we belong and in which we want to be, is arguably the condition for these positive counterparts.

Endnotes

1. We keep the French title of Peter Sloterdijk's 2005 book, Im Weltinnenraum des Kapitals. Für eine philosophische Theorie der Globalisierung, as the metaphor of a "crystal palace" comes in handy later (all translations of this and other French texts are my own).

2. For the purposes of this article, "technology" refers to a socio-technical system of manufacture

(or organisation) and use (individual and social) that extends human capacities.

3. Foucault (1994: 523) requests that others treat (his) books as a toolbox to "rummage through." The tools of thought "must be useful [and] ... function." (Deleuze quoted in Foucault 1977: 208), such that we deploy texts as our "pair of glasses directed to the outside" (Marcel Proust cited by Deleuze, quoted in Foucault 1977: 208) world of globalisation and thought as our "screwdriver or spanner to short-circuit [and] discredit [its] systems of power" (Foucault 2004).

4. Nowotny (2003) distils three interrelated components of "world" from the thought of Nancy: it is a "resonance space" in which we come into existence; it is our habitat, or where we have our place and participate; finally, "world" is where meaning is to be found and, indeed, it is radically immanent to it.

5. "In such a glomus, we see the conjunction of an indefinite growth of techno-science, ... of a worsening of inequalities ... – economic, biological, and cultural – and of the dissipation of the certainties, images, and identities of what the world was with its parts and humanity with its characteristics" (Nancy 2007: 34).

6. See Capdepuy (2011), whose archaeology of mondialisation reveals its chequered career as, initially, a concept of Eurocentric progressivism and, since the 1990s, as a synonym for globalisation and (as we deploy it here) a potential critical alternative to it.

7. Devisch (2006) argues Nancy is a philosopher of sense-seeking, singular plural being (Being as Being-with), which makes him a thinker of the "way in which we are [inescapably part of the] world". Nancy's "world" signifies a Heideggerian background in which the subject is always already ontologically and symbolically a being-with others. What globalisation does is to expand our horizons of sense, such that we are thrown into a situation of becoming-worldwide through our sudden and radical exposure to new modes of being and symbolic vistas (Devisch 2006; also see Meurs, Note and Aerts 2009).

8. NICT are distinguished by digitalisation, which has transformed both communication and society into despatialised "informational" (Lash 2002), "networked" (Castells 2004) phenomena that are characterised by the "death of distance" (Cairncross 1997).

9. Just how global our experience is remains a question of perspective. If most readers are familiar with 9/11 and, to a lesser degree, 7/7, 3/11 no doubt means very different things in Spain and Japan. We should also note the extent to which the American month-day-year date format has come to dominate our imaginary since 9/11: had the 7/7 bombings occurred a day earlier in London, for instance, would we today speak of 6/7 or 7/6?

10. Held and McGrew (2001) first distinguished hyperglobalisers, sceptics and transformationalists, and later the globalist, sceptic and cosmopolitan (Held and McGrew 2012). In contrast, we use mondialist to indicate an advocate of mondialisation, which is partly derived from "alter-mondialisation" (Ramonet 1998). However, an alter-mondialist denotes an "alternative globalisation" and is essentially a movement, whereas the activity of a mondialist is rhizomatic thinking beyond the globalist-sceptic debate.

11. For example, Gray (1999), Landes (1999) and Frank (2002).

12. See, in this respect, the reports by the European Commission (2003; 2006; 2007) on the European single market or economic and monetary union, or the visions of Jacques Delors (1989: ch. II, sec. 5) or Roy Jenkin (1977).

13. As the globalist counsels (with some exceptions, for instance, Kenichi Ohmae [1990]), countries must don a "Golden Straitjacket" and accept that policy choices are reduced to Pepsi or Coke: "slight nuances of policy, slight alterations in design to account for local traditions ... but never any major deviation from the core golden rules" (Friedman 1999: 87).

14. Bauman (2001: 7-8) uses critique to articulate the boundary between structure and agency, as well as to speak out against their dissociation. We might contrast this with a crude Marxism's will to distinguish structure as the determinant of agency, and neo-liberalism's will to divorce agency from structure. As Jacques Donzelot (1991) shows, the latter shifts social risk from the collective indemnification of the individual on behalf of society to the individual's new civic obligation to minimise the risks she imposes on society.

15. As always, there are exceptions to the rule. Reinicke (1998), as a case in point, traces the emergence of global policy under the control of nation-states in the domains of transnational crime, dual-purpose civil-military goods and financial markets. Deacon, Hulse and Stubbs (1997), Dicken (1998) and Mishra (1999) make similar cases.

16. Of course, the sceptic explains these politico-cultural processes as a function of the economic (which is the sole concern of the globalist). As Marx and Engels (1967, p. 18) famously claimed, the economic processes of liberalisation and internationalisation, or "the need of a constantly expanding market for ... products [that] chases [business] over the entire surface of the globe," engender the politico-cultural consequences of modernisation and universalization: "[i]n place of the old local and national seclusion and self-sufficiency, we have intercourse in every direction, universal interdependence of nations."

17. Giddens (1990: 60ff.) and Held et al. (1999) argue likewise.

18. Archibugi and Mitchie (1995) and Archibugi and Iammarino (2002) detect three paths in this

process: the global exploitation of nationally produced technology; global techno-scientific collaboration; and, thirdly, the global generation of technology.

19. While there is relative convergence in the global assimilation of older technologies, for example, telephony and electricity, there is divergence in the global assimilation of new technologies, such as biotechnology or NICT (Archibugi 2005).

20. Technoglobalism can be distinguished from technonationalism (Montresor 2001). Although these terms originate as descriptive categories in science and technology policy debates in the 1990s (Ostry and Nelson 1995; Keller and Samuels 2002: 7-9), technonationalism's shortcoming is its claim that the nation-state is key for understanding cultures of innovation and the diffusion of technology.

21. There are several post-Keynesian explanations of the boom-bust nature of business cycles. Some focus on endogenous factors, namely, rational expectations about future economic outcomes that affect present levels of investment, or (from the monetarist perspective) government induced changes in money supply, while others concentrate on exogenous factors, such as natural disasters, the power of cartels to determine the price of key input factors or, for the neo-liberal, government intervention itself (Hall 1990; Palma 2009).

22. Here, evolution is the auto-transformation of a system through the internal production and diffusion of novelty. See Dosi, Orsenigo and Labini (2002), Nelson (2003), Nelson and Winter (1982) and Witt (2003).

23. The mechanism of natural selection in the evolution of capitalism is radical innovation, whose creative gales of destruction are fanned by the innovative and entrepreneurial. It is the origin of innovation in new technologies, rather than a drop in aggregate demand or a rise in prices due to a change in the money supply or interest rates, which determine capitalism's boom-bust cyclical evolution. Technology, Schumpeter assumes, Robert Solow (1957) backs up and Gerhard Mensch (1979) underlines, is an endogenous – and for many today, including Paul Krugman (1986) and Paul Romer (1990; 1986: 1003), the key – factor of production.

24. For reservations about the explanatory power of technological innovations, see Rosenberg and Frischtak (1994).

25. On the basic tenets of the SPRU approach, see Freeman (1992: 81-133), Freeman, Clark and Soete (1982), Dosi (1988), Freeman and Soete (1997), and Freeman and Louçã (2001).

26. This is standard approach of scholars of the economics of innovation, for instance, Littler (1988), McGinn (1991) and Tidd, Bessant and Pavitt (2005).

27. Bill Joy (2000) condemns the lack of social and ethical dialogue on the human purposes of NICT. For others, notably Anders (2002), it is already too late and humanity is all but obsolete.

28. On the modes through which technoscience can change the world, see Kastenhofer and Schmidt (2011).

29. Recounting Dostoevsky's visit to the Great Exhibition of 1851, Sloterdijk (2006: 33) suggests London's Crystal Palace personifies a self-satisfied society enclosing itself in comfort, which is destined to pay the price of a psychological stripping bare of its inhabitants. As a metaphor of the destiny of both capitalism and communism, Sloterdijk claims that for the former the acclimatised luxury of the glasshouse is indicative of the rendering of work, desire and culture into a base capacity to consume.

30. For a full discussion, see Dalgliesh (2013).

31. As Winner argues (1980: 125 and 128), the "things we call 'technologies' ... contain possibilities for many different ways of ordering human activity. The issues that divide or unite people in society are settled not only in the institutions and practices of politics proper, but also, and less obviously, in tangible arrangements of steel and concrete, wires and transistors, nuts and bolts."

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Public Access: For Socially Relevant Knowledge Production and a Democratic Cybersphere

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Introduction

In the "Information Age", power is largely a function of accessibility to, and control over, information and communication (Castells 2000, 2009). The development of the Internet and associated technologies is the primary driver of this shift, forever changing how information is produced, consumed, and dispersed. At the same time, we commonly hear that "knowledge is power", and that the Internet has the potential to democratize the knowledge production process, opening up the intellectual sphere to non-academic publics (Agger 2004; Agger 2006). Given the centrality of science in producing knowledge, we set out to analyze the economic, social, and political conditions which create and inhibit open dissemination and production of this information. In many ways, academics in the Information Age have greater opportunities to share their findings with those outside of the university than at any other time in history. Open Access (OA) is one way to share research with less well funded institutions and engage civil society and policy makers. Therefore a deeper explication of this new, more decentralized and democratic knowledge dissemination project is needed (Shiltz et al. 2005).

The Berlin Declaration on Open Access to Knowledge in the Sciences and Humanities conceived of OA as:

> a comprehensive source of human knowledge and cultural heritage that has been approved by the scientific community. In order to realize the vision of a global and accessible representation of knowledge, the future Web has to be sustainable, interactive, and transparent. Content and software tools must be openly accessible and compatible. Our mission of disseminating knowledge is only half complete if the information is not made widely and readily available to society (2003).

As such, OA advocates argue the importance of producing high quality research and making this information widely available without cost. Many questions remain, however, as to whether having access to more scholarly research through new technological mediums will lead to a more informed and reflexive public, especially given that the peer review process may reproduce knowledge considered relevant to scholars, but not to the public (Valsiner 2006). Moreover, such advocates often proclaim the merits of OA without considering how the reward systems of academic institutions (e.g. greater access equals more citations) might obstruct more liberatory models of knowledge production and dissemination.

This article contributes to the small but growing debate about the merits, role, and potential of OA scientific research. We provide a sociological critique[1] of OA by investigating the assumptions of OA advocates. As a corollary, we present some of the debates among scholars attentive to OA as well as similar digital and internet based technologies.[2] Such an investigation allows us to position the discipline of sociology within debates over the changing digital landscape, namely how Internet technologies make accessing scientific knowledge possible.[3]

Furthermore, an investigation of OA lays a foundation for probing the appropriate role of the sociologist, and maybe more broadly the scholar in the Information Age by tying debates regarding the potential for a democratic cybersphere and public sociology. Central to public sociology is a commitment to addressing extra-academic

audiences through reflexive knowledge production that interrogates social and professional values (Burawoy 2005). Within this debate, some scholars contend that sociology is the discipline with a mandate to foster liberatory social change (Feagin and Vera 2008) and should be overtly political (Piven 2007), while others contend that sociology must be a value-free science in order to maintain legitimacy (Stinchcombe 2007). Most forcefully, Agger (2000) argues that the primacy of positivism and quantitative methods and the de-emphasis on narrative has resulted in a hollow, stagnant discipline disengaged with the public sphere. After exploring contrary views on the appropriate relationship between academia and society, we point out that few of these discussions focus on accessibility and the changing knowledge landscape in society 2.0. We attempt to push the discussion in this direction by pointing out the many constraints faced by academics in the current education atmosphere, especially the publication and funding obligations of tenure obtainment.

We outline some critical approaches to knowledge production to provide a foundation for our notion of public access (PA), a form of praxis that includes OA, but goes further, prioritizing reflexivity and the co-creation of knowledge with publics, especially historically marginalized groups.[4] We contend that those outside of academia have much to offer researchers by providing important information and perspective that may otherwise be missed, leading to more informed understandings of social reality. Influenced by the pragmatist tradition, we recognize that knowledge is fluid and provisional. Moreover, participation and pluralism are the keys to any useful science, as we contend that developing strategies for emancipatory social change must be grounded in social "reality", which can best be obtained by collectively plumbing with publics the vast well of social information.

In this way we argue that OA is a necessary but insufficient condition for a sociology that seeks transformative social change. Whether this is within the purview of sociology or any other discipline, however, is still an open question, and in need of sustained discussion. Nevertheless, the accessibility of scholarly research is an understudied subject and necessitates a critical reevaluation of what this looks like within the context of advancing a democratic cybersphere.

From Knowledge "For" Publics to Knowledge "With" Publics

To help produce socially relevant knowledge requires scientific autonomy and new institutional avenues of knowledge dissemination. For Bourdieu (1996), social scientists should form an international association to develop and disseminate knowledge without the mediating influence of economics or the state. This association would allow intellectuals to collectively intercede in important political affairs while maintaining individual expertise (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1993). However, autonomous modes of knowledge dissemination do not account for scholar's relationship to multiple publics. Thus, Burawoy (2005) contends that public sociology – which actively engages civil society, is reflexive, and seeks to create positive social change – ought to be valued as highly as "professional" or supposedly value-neutral sociology. Along with public and professional sociology, he further divides the labor within the field into critical sociology, which challenges the sociological orthodoxy, and policy sociology which works with interests outside of academia (but risks co-optation by political and economic elites). The key point is that the typology is not a hierarchy, as Burawoy argues that all four areas of sociology are valuable and necessary for a vibrant discipline, but public sociology and its scholar-activists need to be esteemed for their engagement with the world outside of the ivory tower.

Burawoy's (2005) typology and notion of public sociology stimulated much debate and revealed the Balkanization of the discipline. In 2007, at Burawoy's urging, many of these critiques were compiled into Public Sociology: Ideas, Arguments and Visions for the Future. Reflecting the European view of sociology, Touraine (2007) contends that public engagement is central to sociology. Creating his own typology, Wallerstein (2007) largely agrees with Burawoy, holding that the work of sociologists should fulfill analytical, moral and political functions. Collins (2007) worries that labeling this work as 'public sociology' will only further "ghettoize" the discipline and marginalize those already practicing public sociology. Embracing a more radical stance, Piven (2007) contends that sociology should be overtly leftist and work primarily with publics at the bottom of social hierarchies. Massey (2007) on the other hand, strongly disagrees, arguing that sociology already holds scant credibility among political elites and further politicization will leave it voiceless. Smith-Lovin (2007) and Stinchcombe (2007) assert that public sociology will only undermine the true goal of the discipline, knowledge production through rigorous engagement with appropriate theory and methods. Stinchcombe (2007) goes as far as to say that academics should be isolated in the ivory tower in order to

generate "truth" untainted by political motives.

For his part, Burawoy (2008) argues for moving beyond the sociological imagination, which he sees as elitist and insufficient, and argues for a political imagination. Such an imagination allows social scientists to work from a particular standpoint in solidarity with historically marginalized groups, instead of independently doing research for and speaking at publics. Moreover, a political imagination will allow social scientists to create a more "humane, equal and just society" (Burawoy 2008: 374), or what Wright (2010) calls "real utopias". The political imagination does not, however, address how learning and teaching are dialectical, nor does it outline a path towards the production of socially relevant knowledge.

A more emancipatory vision is found in the work of those influenced by Marx and the Frankfurt School. For example, Marx (1998) originally contented that the goal of science is not simply to understand the world, but to change it. The Frankfurt School continued this critical tradition by investigating the role that various ideologies play in dominating publics, essentially providing a contemporary framework for understanding how the formation and dissemination of ideas mutually constitutes economic exploitation (Horkheimer and Adorno 2002; Marcuse 1964). Such domination and exploitation are not total; there is always room for resistance and transformation (Marcuse 1964).

In a work that critically recognizes the power of dominating ideologies and their exploitative material scaffolding, but maintains that social emancipation is possible, The Pedagogy of the Oppressed argues for education aimed at creating a more humane society (Freire 1992). This seminal work asserts that the dialectic between oppressors (those benefiting from structures maintaining privilege and power in a historically specific moment) and oppressed (those historically exploited on the basis of race, class, nationality, gender and/or sexuality, and at a distinct structural disadvantage) can be transformed through praxis. Praxis is "reflection and acting upon the world in order to transform it" (Freire 1992: 36). Moreover, the humanization of society can only arise when those with power trust those who have been historically marginalized by working alongside them in a broader struggle for social change (Freire 1992: 47). While it is laudable for social scientists to carry out research with a socially just aim, if there is no mutually trustworthy relationship with the community or group who benefits from such an aim, oppressive relations will continue.

This trust is especially important in light of processes supporting the internalization of oppressors' views (Fanon 1967). Such relations have profoundly negative implications for education. First, historically marginalized groups' knowledge of the world is often viewed as uninformed and naïve by the dominant group. Moreover, those in scientific and educational positions often make attempts to commensurate history and psychological, economic, and religious values of less powerful groups into a quantifiable figure (Espeland 1998). The ability to define the knowledge of the less powerful in the discourse of the powerful perpetuates inequality. Second, maintaining the political, economic, and social status quo in the United States (US) depends on the political indoctrination of children in American classrooms.

Education largely rests on the premise that those in front of the classroom hold all the knowledge and those in the seats are sponges for such knowledge. If the relationship between knower and learner stays as is, dehumanizing relations will remain in perpetuum. One can characterize the knowledge production approach as a banking model of education, which aims to produce a particular outcome. Teacher presents material. Material is memorized. Material is repeated back to the teacher in some evaluation format. On the other hand, Freire (1992) notes, "I cannot think for others or without others, nor can others think for me. Even if people's thinking is superstitious or naïve, it is only as they rethink their assumptions in action that they can change" (100). This co-intentional educational model promotes teachers and students engaging in dialogue and critically thinking together in order to produce minds capable of independent, insightful thought. Some of the goals of Freire's liberatory education proposals resonate with OA advocates, which we discuss below by placing such desires within the context of obstructive social forces.

Open Access in the Context of Institutional Pressures and the Academic Reward Structure

As Mills (1959) pointed out, universities are often intricately intertwined with corporate and military interests. Moreover, individuals and groups in society often come to accept the institutional perspectives of the economy and state through the institutions of education and the media (Bourdieu 1989). As such, it is critical to consider how institutional norms help to reproduce differences in what is perceived to be legitimate knowledge because people

often think and act in line with ideas that seep into mainstream culture without critically evaluating their validity. Such a state of affairs is not limited to the general public; intellectuals also internalize institutional forms of knowledge. Aronowitz (2000) argues that the university has become corporatized to the point where many of these institutions are churning out degrees in the name of "education" and "training" instead of "learning." No matter what scientific paradigm may be internal to the scientific enterprise at this time (Kuhn 2012), structural forces of neoliberal state ideology coupled with the accumulation cycles of capitalism increasingly influence what is researched and how, and the organizational form of the university (Giroux 2002; Slaughter and Rhoades 2004). Furthermore, many universities reflect the corporate and government bureaucracies that increasingly influence college professors to adopt similar values instead of values such as human freedom, democracy, and learning (Giroux and Giroux 2006). These social forces impact what is studied, how research is written, and how text both organizes and reinforces different forms of human relationships (Smith, 1989).

Research grants are even more important for academic success and security than publications, and these funds raise numerous ethical questions. For instance, the University of California, Berkeley's acceptance of a $500 million energy research grant from British Petroleum (BP) led many to question how these funds would affect future research paths (Altieri 2010). The financial support provided by the pharmaceutical industry to medical schools is another example where influence is exerted early in a career, leading to relationships that benefit industry from the development of prescription of drugs (Wazana 2000; Lexchin et al. 2003). Moreover, given a constrained economic climate, legislators are slashing higher education budgets, leading to a restructuring of the university through a strategy of "management by crisis" (Emery 2010). Such restructuring places an increased emphasis on entrepreneurial attempts to glean money from public and private sources outside the yearly university budget. Thus, there is pressure to spend more time finding outside funding, which typically comes with various constraints and less institutional support for scholars critical of these institutional forces.

One source of such funding is the US government which is increasingly intertwined with academia. A notable early example of this collusion was "Project Camelot" during the 1960s in which the US Army sought to understand the causes of social rebellion (Horowitz 1967). The implicit goal of the project was to thwart socialist uprisings in Latin America that might challenge US political and economic interests. More recently, the Intelligence Community Centers for Academic Excellence (ICCAE) was developed following the attacks of September 11, 2001 in the belief that links between scientists and intelligence agencies would help protect Americans (Ember 2002). Over the previous four years, twenty-two US universities have received these hubs. Moreover, the goals of the US government and military may seep into scholarly circles through programs such as the Human Terrain System (HTS), which embeds social scientists in Afghanistan in order to glean knowledge of indigenous cultures. Such knowledge is used for a number of purposes, including the generation of propaganda in a counterinsurgency war (Price 2010). These are but a few of the numerous examples of how dominant institutions actively infiltrate the academic sphere and drive scholars down intellectual avenues that may be in conflict with maintaining academic integrity and autonomy. Such pressures take on unique characteristics in an era marked by new digital technologies that may provide avenues for circumvention, resistance, and/or transformation.

Bringing in the Question of Open Access

Although the modern public library symbolizes significant headway in the democratization of information, they are largely dependent on local funding putting libraries in competition with other local needs for a diminishing pool of resources. Research libraries housed at universities and colleges have also seen changes. Whereas before the 1960s most scholarly publishing was controlled by non-profit academic and scholarly societies, which necessarily kept the costs of publishing low, commercial publishers are increasingly dominant (Thomes and Clay 1998), leading to greater knowledge commodification.[5] Furthermore, an increasing number of society journals and specialty journals are published by commercial publishing companies. This cost then gets passed along to consumers of academic scholarship in the form of per article pricing, and potentially to students through increased tuition or fees. It is within this context that OA seeks to alter academic publishing.

Willinsky (2006) argues that what underlies OA is an access principle: "a commitment to the value and quality of research carries with it a responsibility to extend its circulation of this work as far as possible, and ideally to all who are interested in it and all who might profit by it" (5). Librarians are among the more vocal supporters of OA, arguing that there is both a "pricing crisis" and a "permission crisis" (Suber 2003). Many libraries cannot afford the costs of purchasing scholarly journals, while many licensing and archiving restrictions create roadblocks for permanent

access to such knowledge. The push for OA provides the potential for scholarly research to reach more people. Specifically, the OA principle is premised on access to original scientific research, raw data, scholarly multimedia, source materials, and graphical and pictorial representations used in research. OA supporters argue that in order to begin disseminating knowledge new copyright models are needed. Specifically, OA advocates want models where the author keeps the copyright, or shared models that would use something like a Creative Commons license, which allows for use and reuse of an author's own work (Hoorn and van der Graaf 2006).

OA takes two forms for the consumer of knowledge: gratis OA and libre OA (Suber, 2008). Gratis OA removes price barriers, while libre OA removes price barriers and some permission barriers. However, for the publisher of OA research there are "green" and "gold" standards. It has been estimated that around 90% of academic journals are "green" (non-OA journals that allow authors to self-archive in an OA archive)[6] and 10% are "gold" (OA journals) (Harnard et al. 2008). In short, there are multiple challenges to the OA project resulting from differences in how the knowledge produced by scholars is disseminated.

In our field of study, sociology, the lack of OA journals is striking.[7] In the fall of 2010 we set out to assess the openness of the fifty highest ranked journals according to their impact factor as evaluated in the Journal Citation Reports published by Thomson Reuters on the ISI Web of Knowledge website. We found that just two of the fifty journals offered their content freely to those without institutional affiliations, providing strong evidence for those critical of university isolation from the public (see Appendix A). Below is a further dissection for why these patterns exist, specifically the publishing obstructions to writing for and with the public.

Scholarly Motivations and Institutional Pressures

While barriers certainly exist to accessing scholarly journals, simply stating an ethical obligation to disseminate such research belies some of the more self-interested motives that may motivate scholars to support the OA movement, namely fulfilling the necessary curriculum vita requirements. Therefore, some studies explore whether OA articles have a greater research impact than articles only available in print. Some studies find that OA articles have greater research impact as measured by number of citations (Antelman 2004; Harnard et al. 2008; Swan 2010). The only study to use a randomized controlled trial of OA publishing across the natural sciences, social sciences, and humanities, however, found that OA articles are downloaded more often, but not cited any more frequently than subscription articles (Davis 2011). Davis argues that those working at prestigious universities already have access to all the literature they need, so OA instead benefits communities of practice such as educators, medical professionals, and policy makers.[8] The access question raises the issue of scholarly motivation, or what Willinsky (2006) calls the "ego economy". Such a culture thrives off the drive for upward mobility within one's discipline, which, while having individual benefits, leads to a widening gap between science and policy, and a reduced commitment to producing socially relevant knowledge (van Dalen and Henkens 2012). On the other hand, academics whose work is more widely read and cited may find it easier to advance their own careers, obtain tenure, collect speaker fees, and gain the respect of colleagues. For example, instead of confinement to one's epistemic community, one may be able to break into the public arena because media and policy makers access OA scientific research. That being said, for the ego economy to result in material benefits within the halls of the academy it is often more important who cites your article rather than if your work is read. This is because of the growing reliance on various bibliometrics and citation indices, such as the impact factor, and h-index. Some research even shows that social media tools such as Twitter can be used to generate buzz around a peer reviewed publication, thus leading to greater social impact of a scientific article and therefore more academic citations, and that alternative metrics can be developed to measure article impact (altmetrics) (Eysenbach 2011). While some scholars may truly be interested in both pressuring publishers to adopt and work to create OA outlets for scholarly research, personal gain often trumps egalitarian motives.

Such a dour picture must be seen though in light of scholarly attempts at dialogic engagement through the use of platforms and portals such as Facebook, Twitter, wikis, and blogs. As Fitzpatrick (2012) argues, "All these experiments recognize that the critical element in scholarly engagement is participatory exchange and that the dialogic spaces of the read-write Web can be used to support the process of reading and writing within a community in productive ways" (49). The possibility for such participatory approaches increases if we begin to think of communities in a way that includes the lay public. To get from where we are now to a place where greater coproduction of knowledge is possible, we can begin to look at the merits of altmetrics. At a minimum, our measures of "reach" and "impact" can begin to include forms of digital scholarship that circumvent the traditional publishing process (Anderson and McPherson 2011). What might this mean in the context of publishing pressures?

Publish or Perish?

Similar to the commodification of scholarly research by political institutions, academic publishing is a commodity concentrated in the hands of a few corporate publishing companies, such as Springer, Elsevier, and Wiley-Blackwell (Merger Mania 2003). It is estimated that these three publishers account for 42% of all articles published (Morgan Stanley 2002). While scholars are not directly paid for a published article, salary, tenure, and academic positions are directly linked to the volume of publications produced, with little option but to publish articles in journals owned by large publishing companies (Harley and Acord 2011). Company policy often restricts scholars from freely sharing their research, curtailing academic freedom and more public forms of knowledge dissemination. For example, authors are expected to sign over copyrights before the article is published, disallowing scholars from reusing and distributing their research for free to the public. That being said, efforts such as Science Commons are creating tools such as the Scholar's Copyright Addendum Engine. This can be used to create an attachment to a journal publisher's copyright agreement that allows full access, immediate access, and/or delayed access to your article in order to repost it for non-commercial uses. Scholars may confront these pressures, though, only to find that they are marginalized in their respective field (Agger 2000). The commodification of knowledge challenges those working to produce knowledge that questions those systems, institutions, and organizations that perpetuate inequality (Gattone 2006).

As the hackneyed but succinct phrase, "publish or perish" highlights, academics have but little choice to publish in the journals of the major publishing companies and relinquish control of their intellectual property. To "perish" means a failure to obtain tenure, which often results in a status of academic vagabondage.[9] The value of most published scholarly work in this milieu is judged by the prestige of the academic journals where a scholar's research is published, as well as the sheer amount of articles published. Agger (2000) argues that "[T]he authorial choices sociologists make are examined in light of a literal political economy that stratifies publication outlets, both journals and publishing houses, in ways that have direct impact on scholars' careers" (4). This atmosphere leads many researchers to unnecessarily stretch their findings across numerous articles to increase their publication count. Indeed, much sociological research is driven by mining survey data in order to produce a publication rather than seeking to answer socially impactful questions. In addition, Scheff (1995) contends that work that is truly cutting edge is often dismissed:

> There are rare exceptions in which career advancement is produced entirely by the originality or importance of one's publications. Of course talent as a teacher is unrelated, or even negatively related to advancement. But in the typical instance, one's writing is judged by a jury of one's peers who are unable or unwilling to recognize originality and importance, especially if it is expressed in a form that is more complex or difficult than their own work. They are taking valuable time out of their busy lives to serve on the jury, and are not liable to spend undue time with difficult cases (157).

In addition, little value is given to work put forth in alternative, non-peer reviewed journals or other media outlets although these formats are often more accessible for those outside of academia.[10] Social scientists are rarely rewarded within academia for community outreach that may involve writing editorials, giving interviews for media outlets, and providing policy assessments for local governments, although integrating these uses of scholarly research builds stronger connections between skeptical publics and isolated intellectuals. For example, scholarly blogs, whether individual or collectively managed, can provide a medium for greater dialogical engagement. As Wade and Sharp (2012) convincingly show, the blog Sociological Images – with a readership of 20,000 people a day – is an important tool for expanding the sociological imagination and launching social action.[11] Such efforts reveal pedagogical diversity within sociology and social science more broadly, but it is still valuable to point out the shortcomings of how knowledge is produced, used, and disseminated in the hopes that OA and other publically engaged projects may expand beyond the parochial concern with knowledge dissemination. Below we begin to flesh out some guiding principles and examples that could do just that.

Towards Combining Internet and Place Based Democratic Commons: Public Access

Central to claims that the public has a right to scientific knowledge is the reality that much of what is produced results from public funding. The argument goes that at a minimum, the public should have access to relevant scholarly knowledge, because it is a public good. Much like public parks, public access television, or public radio, we are collectively paying for a good that should benefit society, where one person or group's access is non-exclusive and

does not lead to scarcity. In an era where intellectual property and patents seek greater enclosure and appropriation many are beginning to argue for scientific knowledge to be treated as part of a commons like the air we breathe or the water we drink (Hess an Ostrom 2005). We agree with these assessments in so far as they are premised on Hardt and Negri's (2009) understanding of knowledge as a part of a cultural commons that involves "both the product of human labor and the means of future production" (139). In short, the laboring public is already involved in the production of knowledge, yet is alienated from the process and product. Many OA advocates fail to recognize this premise and do not appreciate that the scholarship being accessed by the public may be perpetuating institutional forms of knowledge that reflect institutional goals and norms. Power differences are often ignored between the industries that fund scientific research and the public when touting the benefits of journals publishing OA articles. The public is still relying on knowledge that may not be helpful in solving ecological, economic, political or social problems if it overlooks the structural factors that contribute to conditions that disproportionately harm marginalized groups. This approach to knowledge also fails to grapple with the production of knowledge in that it does not see the discursive power reproduced through scientific discourses indecipherable by much of the public.[12]

Therefore, our notion of public access (PA) incorporates Freire's (1992) "dialogical cultural action." This first requires cooperation between freely acting subjects. Co-subjects openly communicate in materially and historically specific moments to transform oppressive knowledge systems. Relatedly is the importance for unity between establishment knowledge producers and those historically marginalized from the scientific process. This unity of action and theory calls for engendering the particularities of the historical and existential moment, which right now requires bridging digital and physical space. Actions necessitate organization between teachers and learners in an ongoing effort to transform how knowledge is produced. Specifically, organizational forms that help transfer power to those denied an authoritative voice, may equalize power relations in the knowledge production process. In short, solidarity among those with varying forms of knowledge can help create the conditions for freely acting individuals to transform social reality.

Dialogical cultural action recognizes that education and the dissemination of knowledge take place at a cultural level. However, such action at the cultural level has material consequences when it evolves through the mutually constitutive process of learners and teachers engaging in a process committed to collective education. This form of liberating education, would involve social scientists on one hand identifying with the knowledge of marginalized groups and on the other hand working to dispel uncritical or unjust elements of such knowledge. The conducting of research which explicitly supports the goals of the state, military, and industrial complexes sustains hegemonic discourses and structures rather than challenging unjust forms of knowledge and has no place in a sociology, or other scientific project oriented around our conception of PA.

PA looks very different than OA in terms of the way it is framed and the way it operates. Following Habermas (1984) and his emphasis on creating democratic communication space, PA rests on the combination of co-produced knowledge with open dissemination processes, and an academic environment that values teaching, learning, and sharing. Similarly, Mills (1959) argues that for social sciences to be useful outside of university walls, "the end product of any liberating education is simply the self-educating, self-cultivated man and woman; in short, the free and rational individual" (187). The notion of reason and knowledge are contested social and political spaces. While we agree with the commitment to developing "self-cultivating publics" (Mills 1959: 186), not everyone deems university education as necessary, nor sufficient for creating a society based on reason, freedom, and justice. Therefore, maintaining a high level of reflexivity as it pertains to the social, political, and economic location the social scientist occupies may provide the foundation needed to co-develop knowledge.

Also of critical importance is debunking myths to be found in social science research. At core, PA is more about means: knowledge production. OA is about ends: knowledge dissemination. PA could look similar to OA when a challenge to established frames of knowledge takes place. PA would provide an alternative medium for intellectuals to engage publics without interference from mainstream radio and television, and economic and political elites. By using the far-reaching power of the Internet, more people would have access to alternative forms of knowledge. When such mediums are insufficient, place based engagement with publics is necessary. Moreover, tension still exists when institutional forms of knowledge via the state influence the institution of science; scientists can still be co-opted. In short, PA may better serve society if it rests on a foundation where social scientists work with publics instead of creating knowledge for publics. This may not only lead to more just knowledge, but also help us garner a better understanding of our social worlds.

What Does (Might) Public Access Look Like?

Some of the following examples and suggestions point to what public access looks like as a praxis committed to expanding a democratic cybershpere. Committed to a structural evaluation of racial and ethnic inequality and to working toward just solutions, the Applied Research Center (ARC) stands as a model for how empirically robust research can be driven by community concerns, and disseminated in ways that impact public policy and raise social consciousness. Schooled in journalism, social sciences, media studies, computational sciences, policy making, and grassroots activism, ARC staff and board represent a wide ranging set of skills collectively directed to actualizing a racially just world. In a recent victory, ARC developed a web-based public education campaign aimed at stopping the use of the word "illegal" to refer to immigrants. The Associated Press dropped its use of this word at a critical moment in national debates over immigration reform, prioritizing language that reflects instead of ignores all people's human dignity. Similarly, they conduct research with and for low-income communities and communities of color. In a recent report, The Color of Food, they not only weigh in on scholarly debates regarding structural racism in the food system by revealing racial inequality throughout the food supply chain, but work with community groups, schools, and activist organizations to develop solutions to these problems (Liu and Apollon 2011).

A web-based example is the public media archive and fair use advocacy network, Critical Commons, originally funded by John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, with ongoing support from USC Institute for Multimedia Literacy. In short, this platform provides a digital space for users to create, debate, and rework captured, ripped and stored media under the fair use statute. As Anderson and McPherson (2011) put it,

> Digital scholarship often renders unstable the divisions between scholarship and pedagogy...Critical Commons recognized no sharp distinction between these two realms...(and) was designed to support in-class teaching, student participation, and self-guided study as well as research and publication" (144).

There is great potential for such platforms to rupture banking models of education. While current academic reward systems might have difficulty adjusting to participatory forms of learning and knowledge production, scholars themselves can further models that open the process of production using tools that engage an open intellectual commons.

As we have argued elsewhere in the context of contemporary social movements, the bringing together of platforms, portals, and places, is one way to build collective power through democratic means that elevate engagement between myriad publics (Sbicca and Perdue 2013). Platforms represent the tactics and/or ideologies that inform alternatives. For example, anti-oppression trainings both in academic and public spaces can be used to further efforts aimed at understanding and dismantling various interlocking systems that reproduce inequalities. Or as was discussed above, Critical Commons is a digital platform that alters user/creator/participant relations. Smaller affinity groups can form to address specific concerns that then report back to a larger group in a democratic communication process. Portals are central to our notion of PA. These are digital communication tools. Social media plays a particularly important role in bridging scholars, activists, and front line communities. These portals are not in and of themselves liberatory (e.g. using Twitter as a means to simply increase scholarly buzz and citations), but can be used to bring many different groups together in digital and physical space. We conclude, then, with places. The creation of a democratic cybersphere is only possible to the degree to which publics gain more power in the material world. Harkening back to Hardt and Negri (2009), the platforms and portals mentioned above should be aimed at taking back control of the cultural commons, knowledge being itself a product of collective labor and a key element to future social reproduction. Digital technologies and tools are a product of physical and social systems, which in turn change the use and form of the digital. How praxis looks in this context is of the utmost importance.

Conclusion

In this article we presented the uneven and contradictory nature of current efforts to change how scientific knowledge is communicated and shared both within and outside the academic community. Moreover, we investigated the structural influences dissuading academics from pursuing either open access or public access. This is particularly troubling within sociology, which is the discipline of society and failing to engage in a reciprocal partnership for emancipatory social change via participatory scholarship is a missed opportunity.

We recognize OA is not a panacea, but contend that it is a necessary component of what we call PA, or a stride towards socially relevant knowledge production. Research conducted with the public allows for better understandings of our social world and the development of feasible solutions to pressing social problems. In addition, research conducted with the knowledge that findings will be shared with chosen communities will likely lead to works more meaningful for us all. Scholars privileged pedagogical dais offers an opportunity to help raise awareness of injustices. Critical scholars have long used research to help the causes of various social movements and this approach, coupled with a political imagination, may facilitate meaningful change. Despite the very real institutional roadblocks and perverse incentives of academic institutions, a PA approach can help scholars produce socially relevant knowledge.

To summarize, operating from the standpoint of PA would link means and ends together: the democratization of access to knowledge and the co-construction of knowledge between publics and intellectuals. In this model, institutions that perpetuate educational inequality are challenged. While the goal of OA is to make scholarly research free, PA focuses on the structural problems that prevent this from happening. The tools of education such as computers, good teachers, books, libraries, science labs, and access to college or trade schools are as important as finding ways to spread knowledge. This conception of PA rests on the premise that institutions of knowledge are enriched by a commitment to reflecting the standpoint of historically marginalized groups, that socially relevant research can be produced through more participatory methods, and that structural inequalities are worth challenging both inside and outside academia.

Appendix A. OA Status of Top 50 Sociology Journals Ranked by Impact Factor

Rankings	Journal Title	Impact Factor	5-year Impact Factor	OA	Publisher	Cost per Article
1	Annual Review of Sociology	3.702	5.953	No	Annual Reviews: A Non-Profit Publisher	$20
2	American Journal of Sociology	3.476	5.411	No	University of Chicago Press	$10/$14
3	American Sociological Review	3.221	5.578	No	American Sociological Association/ Sage	$14/$32
4	Social Networks	2.349	3.328	No	Elsevier	$31.50
5	Sociology of Health & Illness	2.041	2.598	Yes	Wiley-Blackwell	-
6	Sociological Methods & Research	1.850	3.596	No	Sage	$25
7	Sociological Theory	1.710	2.031	No	Wiley-Blackwell	Vary by title
8	British Journal of Sociology	1.702	2.457	No	Wiley-Blackwell	Vary by title
9	Social Problems	1.698	2.586	No	University of California Press	$12/$14
10	Population and Development Review	1.588	2.230	No	Wiley-Blackwell	Vary by title
11	Annual Review of Law and Social Science	1.583	1.648	No	Annual Reviews: A Non-Profit Publisher	$20

12	Journal of Marriage and Family	1.553	2.957	No	Wiley-Blackwell	Vary by title
13	Economy and Society	1.527	2.553	No	Routledge	$30
14	Law & Society Review	1.490	1.727	No	Wiley-Blackwell	Vary by title
15	Politics & Society	1.487	1.436	No	Sage	$25
16	Health Sociology Review	1.486	-	No	eContent Management	$35
17	Kolner Zeitschrift Fur Soziologie Und Sozialpsychologie	1.457	1.308	No	VS Verlag für Sozialwissenschaften	$34
18	Sociology	1.455	1.969	No	Sage	$25
19	Sociologia Ruralis	1.442	2.010	No	Wiley-Blackwell	Vary by title
20	Sociology of Education	1.438	2.818	No	Sage	$14/$32
21	Human Ecology	1.402	1.712	No	Springer	$34
22	Global Networks	1.380	2.018	No	Wiley-Blackwell	Vary by title
23	Social Forces	1.379	2.492	No	University of North Carolina Press	$5
24	Work, Employment & Society	1.348	1.977	No	Sage	$25
25	Language in Society	1.341	1.500	No	Cambridge University Press	$30/$34
26	Gender & Society	1.339	2.405	No	Sage	$19/$25
27	Work and Occupations	1.323	2.129	No	Sage	$25
28	Theory and Society	1.304	1.583	No	Springer	$34
29	Discourse & Society	1.300	1.623	No	Sage	$25
30	Social Science Research	1.278	1.927	No	Elsevier	$31.50
31	Acta Sociologica	1.268	1.451	No	Sage	$25
32	Ethnic and Racial Studies	1.245	1.900	No	Routledge	$30
33	Poetics	1.227	1.602	No	Elsevier	$39.95
34	European Sociological Review	1.210	1.607	No	Oxford University Press	$25
35	Annals of Tourism Research	1.165	2.204	No	Elsevier	$31.50
36	Zeitschrift Fur Soziologie	1.140	0.952	Yes	-	-
37	Agriculture and Human Values	1.123	1.288	No	Springer	$34
38	Journal of Sports & Social Issues	1.075	1.307	No	Sage	$25
39	Leisure Sciences	1.036	1.468	No	Routledge	$30
40	The Sociological Review	1.019	1.448	No	Wiley-Blackwell	Vary by title
41	Society & Natural Resources	1.016	1.626	No	Routledge	$37

42	City & Community	1.000	-	No	Wiley-Blackwell	Vary by title
43	Rationality and Society	1.000	1.038	No	Sage	$25
44	Sociological Methodology	1.000	2.203	No	Wiley-Blackwell	Vary by title
45	Youth & Society	1.000	2.038	No	Sage	$25
46	Cultural Sociology	0.971	0.971	No	Sage	$25
47	Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion	0.929	1.532	No	Wiley-Blackwell	Vary by title
48	International Sociology	0.920	1.107	No	Sage	$25
49	Mobilization	0.911	-	No	San Diego State University	$49/year
50	International Journal of Intercultural Relations	0.897	1.526	No	Elsevier	$31.50

Endnotes

1. Although we are sociologists, and position this article within some key sociological debates, the issues raised transcend these disciplinary walls. Natural and social sciences and the humanities regularly debate the degree of public transparency and permeability acceptable by their discipline or science writ large. Some examples include critical praxis, participatory action research, "public geography", "public criminology", Science Gallery in Dublin brings art-science collaborations into public debate, and the Center for Public Engagement with Science and Technology.

2. We recognize that the digital humanities have been much more forward thinking than any other sector of academia. Our intent is for our examples to reveal some of the ways that scholars across the spectrum are thinking about access, reward structures, and knowledge production.

3. Take for instance our examination of the accessibility of sociology journals, only a few of which allow their content to be freely accessible to those outside of the university (see Appendix A).

4. Our definition of "public" links traditionally Marxist notions of the proletariat (i.e. low-income and working classes under regimes of wage labor and private property) with critical understandings of race, gender, sexuality, nationality, religion, age, and ability (i.e. people experiencing intersecting social systems of oppression). Thus, there is quite a bit of variability within the publics we are most interested in engaging. This in turn has implications for both place based and internet based participation and collaboration.

5. From 1986-2005 the cost of academic journals for research libraries increased 302% while the number of academic journals grew by 1.9% per year (Association of Research Libraries 2006). In 2007 the average price for subscribing to academic journals in chemistry was $3,429, $2,071 in engineering, $820 in business, and only $528 in sociology (Lee et al. 2007)

6. The cost of self-archiving is usually between $1500 and $3000.

7. Across a number of natural and social sciences and humanities, research by Harley et al. (2010) investigates faculty values on research and publishing, specifically around tenure and promotion, ways of disseminating research, access to resources for research, level of collaboration, and engagement with the public. Social sciences regularly undervalue OA, but engage the public to the degree it is professionally useful.

8. Given the purported fiscal constraints at many public universities, OA may begin leading to more citations once libraries have to cancel their subscriptions to cut costs.

9. All of the successful university OA resolutions/ mandates have allowed 'opt out' exceptions for pre-tenure folks who don't have the 'clout' to negotiate for OA with powerful publishers.

10. We recognize that there are also peer-reviewed OA journals that are perceived as less intellectually legitimate.

11. Posts dealing with contemporary social problems

such as gender or racial inequality will get picked up by more widely read blogs or social media platforms, resulting in greater social dialogue and mobilization aimed at alleviating such inequalities

12. Smith (2008) argues that in the field of sociology there is not simply a problem with lexical practices, but that sociology tends to ignore people at the ground level; we suffer from the "14th floor effect" whereby our language places us above people and not with people. If sociologists are not infusing their writing with the standpoints of those being written about, there is the risk that the agency of those in the text becomes obscured; the text as mediator between writer and reader organizes power relations along the lines of expert and non-expert, further obfuscating the writer's subjectivity.

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Beyond Dystopian Education in a Neoliberal Society

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Public education and higher education are under assault by a host of religious, economic, ideological, and political fundamentalists. This is true of the United States, but it is also increasingly true elsewhere. In US public schools, the most serious attack is being waged by advocates of neoliberalism whose reform efforts focus narrowly on high-stakes testing, traditional texts, and memorization drills. At the heart of this approach is an aggressive attempt to disinvest in public schools, replace them with charter schools, and remove state and federal governments completely from public education in order to allow education to be organized and administered by market-driven forces.[1] Left unchecked, this movement would turn schools into "simply another corporate asset bundled in credit default swaps" and valued only for its rate of exchange on the open market.[2]

At the same time as public schools face such pressures, a full-fledged assault is being waged on higher education across North America, Australia and New Zealand, the United Kingdom, and other European countries. While the nature of the assault varies in each country, there is a common set of assumptions and practices driving the transformation of higher education into an adjunct of corporate power and values. The effects of the assault are not hard to discern. Universities are being defunded; tuition fees are skyrocketing; faculty salaries are shrinking as workloads are increasing; and part-time instructors are being used as a subaltern class of migrant laborers. In addition, class sizes are ballooning; the curriculum is being instrumentalized and stripped of liberal values; research is largely valued for its ability to produce profits; administrative staff is depleted; governance has been handed over to paragons of corporate culture; and valuable services are being curtailed.

The neoliberal paradigm driving these attacks on public and higher education disdains democracy and views public and higher education as a toxic public sphere that poses a threat to corporate values, ideology, and power. Since the 1950s, colleges and universities have been seen by many to be democratic public spheres dedicated to teaching students to think critically, take imaginative risks, learn how to be moral witnesses, and procure the skills that enable one to connect to others in ways that strengthened the democratic polity. It is for these very reasons that higher education is increasingly under attack by the concentrated forces of neoliberalism. Self-confident critical citizens are viewed as abhorrent by conservatives who remember the campus turmoil of the sixties. Citizens who take their responsibility to democracy seriously now pose a dire threat to corporate power. Unsurprisingly, these same individuals daily face the suspicion of the new corporate university that appears willing to conceive of faculty only as entrepreneurs, students only as customers, and education only as a mode of training.[3]

Welcome to the dystopian world of corporate education in which learning how to think, be informed by public values, and become engaged critical citizens are viewed as a failure rather than a mark of success. Instead of producing "a generation of leaders worthy of the challenges,"[4] the dystopian mission of public and higher education is to produce robots, technocrats, and compliant workers. There is more than a backlash at work in these assaults on public and higher education: there is a sustained effort to dismantle education as a pillar of democracy, public values, critical thought, social responsibility, and civic courage. Put more bluntly, the dystopian shadow that has fallen on public and higher education reveals the dark side of a counterrevolution that bespeaks not only an unfettered mode of corporate sovereignty but the emergence of an updated form of authoritarianism. During the Cold War, US officials never let us forget that authoritarian countries put their intellectuals into prison. While political

imprisonment is not yet pervasive in the US or other capitalist democracies, the majority of critical intellectuals today are destined for conformity, if not poverty if they work in the academy. Too many academics fear the threat of being fired or denied tenure for being too critical, and an overwhelming number of them are relegated from the beginning to an intolerable state of dire financial distress and existential impoverishment.

Education within the last three decades has diminished rapidly in its capacities to educate young people to be reflective, critical, and socially engaged agents. Despite all attempts to degrade the value and purpose of education, the notion of education as the primary register of the larger culture persists. Yet, under a neoliberal regime, the utopian possibilities formerly associated with public and higher education as a public good capable of promoting social equality and supporting democracy have become too dangerous for the apostles of neoliberalism. Critical thought and the imaginings of a better world present a direct threat to a neoliberal paradigm in which the future must always replicate the present in an endless circle in which capital and the identities that legitimate it merge with each other into what might be called a dead zone. This dystopian impulse thrives on producing myriad forms of violence—encompassing both the symbolic and the structural—as part of a broader attempt to define education in purely instrumental, privatized, and anti-intellectual terms. It is precisely this replacement of educated hope with an aggressive dystopian project that now characterizes the current assault on public and higher education in various parts of the globe extending from the United States and the United Kingdom to Greece and Spain.

In light of this dystopian attempt to remove education from any notion of critique, dialogue, and empowerment, it would be an understatement to suggest that there is something very wrong with American public and higher education. For a start, this counterrevolution is giving rise to the commercialization of education, punitive evaluation schemes, harsh disciplinary measures, and the ongoing deskilling of many teachers that together are reducing many excellent educators to the debased status of technicians and security personnel. Additionally, as more and more wealth is distributed to the richest Americans and corporations, states are drained of resources and are shifting the burden of such deficits on to public schools and other vital public services. With 40 percent of wealth going to the top 1 percent, public services are drying up from lack of revenue and more and more young people find themselves locked out of the dream of getting a decent education or a job, essentially robbed of any hope for the future.

As the nation's schools and infrastructure suffer from a lack of resources, right-wing politicians are enacting policies that lower the taxes of the rich and mega corporations. For the neoliberal elite, the collection of taxes constitutes a form of coercion and class warfare waged by the state against the rich. What is ironic in this argument is the startling fact that not only are the rich not taxed proportionately, but they even receive over $92 billion in corporate subsidies. Even so, neoliberal ideology has resulted in widespread practices whereby "1paying taxes has devolved from a central social responsibility to a game of creative work-arounds."[5] There is more at stake here than untaxed wealth and revenue. As David Theo Goldberg points out, "Today, taxes are not so much the common contribution to cover the costs of social benefits and infrastructure relative to one's means, as they are a burden to be avoided."[6] Fierce debate over the issue of taxes is just one part of a larger project of hollowing out public institutions.

The outrage an ethically bankrupt neoliberalism voices against tax policies hardly conceals its loathing against any government which seeks to raise revenue in order to build and maintain public infrastructure, provide basic services for those who need them most, and develop investments such as a transportation system and schools that are not explicitly tied to the logic of the market. The battle being waged over crucial public resources is one that has dire political and educational consequences, especially for the poor and middle classes. One consequence is a vile form of class warfare that sacrifices the economic mobility and security of less wealthy citizens. There is also the fact that wealth buys and corrupts power, if not democracy itself. And this poisonous mix of wealth, power, and politics translates into an array of antidemocratic practices that creates an unhealthy society in every major index ranging from infant mortality rates to a dysfunctional electoral system.[7]

While it is evident that money controls elections in the United States, less apparent is the fact that it increasingly also controls the policies that shape public education.[8] One indicator of such corruption is that hedge fund managers now sit on school boards across the country doing everything in their power to eliminate public schools and punish unionized teachers who do not support charter schools. In New Jersey, hundreds of teachers have been sacked because of alleged budget deficits. Not only has Governor Christie used the deficit argument to fire teachers, he has also used it to break unions and balance the budget on the backs of students and teachers. How else to explain Christie's refusal to reinstitute the "millionaires' tax," or his craven support for lowering taxes for the top 25 hedge fund officers who in 2009 raked in $25 billion— enough to fund 658,000 entry level teachers?[9]

In this conservative right-wing culture now dominating American politics, the role of public and higher education is to produce students who laud conformity, believe job training is more important than education, and view public values as irrelevant. If the Heritage Foundation, the Koch brothers, and Bill Gates-type billionaires have their way, students will no longer be educated for democratic citizenship. Even now, their education is too often reduced and justified through an appeal to fulfilling the need for human capital.[10] What is lost in this approach to schooling is what Noam Chomsky calls "creating creative and independent thought and inquiry, challenging perceived beliefs, exploring new horizons and forgetting external constraints."[11] At the same time, public schools and colleges are under assault not because they are failing (though some are), but because they remain one of the few public spheres left in which people can learn the knowledge and skills necessary to allow them to think critically and hold power and authority accountable.

Unfortunately, the lines between the corporate world and public and higher education are blurring more all the time, as modes of education (except for the elite) are reduced to what Peter Seybold calls a "corporate service station."[12] At the heart of this imminent crisis regarding education are larger questions about the democratic ideals that have historically informed public and higher education, and have provided the formative culture necessary for a democracy to survive. The future of civic education, the role of educators as civic intellectuals, and education as a site of individual and collective empowerment hangs in the balance, as most aspects of education are now up for sale and increasingly being mined for private profit.

This current right-wing emphasis on low-level skills distracts the American public from examining the broader economic, political, and cultural forces that bear down on schools and undermine the purpose and meaning of education. The influence on schools of corporations, text book publishers, commercial industries, and the national security state are rendered invisible, as if schools and the practices in which they are engaged simply exist in a bubble. At work here is a dystopian view of schooling that displaces, infantilizes, and depoliticizes both students and large segments of the American public. Under the current regime of neoliberalism, education has been transformed into a private right rather than a public good. Students are now being educated to become consumers rather than thoughtful, critical citizens. Increasingly as public schools are put in the hands of for-profit corporations, hedge fund elites, and market-driven leadership, their only value is derived from their ability to turn a profit and produce compliant students eager to join the workforce.[13]

What is truly shocking about the current dismantling and disinvestment in public schooling is that those who advocate such changes are called the new educational reformers. They are not reformers at all. In fact, they are reactionaries and financial mercenaries and dystopian financial sleuths who are turning teaching into the practice of conformity and creating curricula driven by an anti-intellectual obsession with student test scores. This alleged reform movement is certain to turn students into active customers and passive subjects, increasingly unable to think critically about themselves and their relationship to the larger world. The poisonous virus of instrumentalism has infected public and higher education to the degree that some institutions have not only abandoned their public mandate, but even resemble repressive sites of containment devoid of critical learning, let alone soaring acts of curiosity and imagination.

As Diane Ravitch has pointed out, what is driving the current public school reform movement is a profoundly anti-intellectual project that promotes "1more testing, more privately managed schools, more deregulation, more firing of teachers, [and] more school closings."[14] At the level of higher education, the script is similar: defund higher education, impose corporate models of governance, purge the university of critical thinkers, turn faculty into a low-waged army of part-time workers, and allow corporate money and power to increasingly decide course content and determine which faculty get hired. As public values are replaced by corporate values, students become clients, faculty are deskilled and depoliticized, tuition rises, and more and more working-class and poor minority students are excluded from the benefits of higher education. There are no powerful and profound intellectual dramas in this view of schooling, just the muted rush to make schools another source of profit for finance capital.

Public and higher education are increasingly harnessed to the interests of corporations, a growing legion of bankers, billionaires, and hedge fund scoundrels, and the warfare state. One consequence is that many public schools, especially those occupied by poor minority youth, have become the new factories for dumbing down the curricula and turning teachers into what amounts to machine parts. At the same time, such schools have become militarized and provide a direct route for many youth into the prison-industrial complex or what has been called the school-to-prison pipeline.[15] What is excised from the educational rhetoric of casino capitalism reform is the ideal of offering public school students a civic education that provides the capacities, knowledge, and skills that enable young people

to speak, write, and act from a position of agency and empowerment. At the college level, students are dazzled by a blitz of commercialized spaces that now look like shopping malls, and in between classes they are entertained by a mammoth sports culture that is often as debasing as it is dangerous in its hypermasculinity, racism, and overt sexism.[16]

Privatization, commodification, militarization, and deregulation are the new guiding categories through which schools, teachers, classroom pedagogy, and students are defined. The current assaults on public and higher education are not new, but they are viler and more powerful than in the past. Crucial to any viable reform movement is the need to understand the historical context in which education has been transformed into an adjunct of corporate power as well as the current ways right-wing educational reform is operating within a broader play of power, ideology, and other social forces—which together are applying antidemocratic pressure to change the purpose of schooling and the practice of teaching itself. Making power visible is important, but it is only a first step in understanding how power actually works and how it might be challenged. Recognizing a challenge is not the same thing as overcoming it. Part of the significant task of reinvigorating civic education in the United States necessitates that educators anchor their own work in classrooms through projects that engage the promise of an unrealized democracy against its existing, often repressive, forms. And this is only the beginning of resistance that must struggle for broad-based social change.

Public and higher education, along with the pedagogical role of the larger culture, should be viewed as crucial to any viable notion of democracy, while the pedagogical practices they employ should be consistent with the ideal of the good society. Within the classroom, this means teaching more than the knowledge of traditional canons. In fact, teachers and students need to recognize that as a moral and a political practice, pedagogy is about the struggle over identity just as much as it is about learning and transmitting knowledge. At a time when censorship is rampant in public schools and dissent is viewed as a distraction or unpatriotic, the debate over whether we should view schools as political institutions might seem not only moot, but irrelevant. Yet, pedagogy remains a powerful mode of critical intervention, especially if one believes teachers have a responsibility to prepare students for being in the world in ways that will not only equip them for jobs but enable them to influence the larger political, ideological, and economic forces that bear down on their lives. Schooling is an inherently political and moral practice, because it is directive and actively legitimates particular values, forms of agency, and even what counts as knowledge.

One of the most notable features of contemporary conservative reform effort is the way in which it increasingly positions teachers as a liability, and in doing so accustoms them to modes of education that are as demeaning as they are deskilling. These reforms are not innocent and actually promote failure in the classroom. And when successful, they open the door for more public schools to be closed, provide another chance at busting the union, and allow such schools to be taken over by private and corporate interests. Under the influence of market-based pedagogies, public school teachers are the new welfare queens and are repeatedly subjected to what can only be described as repressive disciplinary measures in the school and an increasing chorus of verbal humiliation from politicians outside of the classroom. Academics do not fare any better and are often criticized for being too radical, for not working long hours, and for receiving cushy paychecks—a position at odds with the fact that over 70 percent of academic labor is now either part-time or on a non-tenure track.[17]

Teachers and academics are not only on the defensive in the neoliberal war on schools; they are also increasingly pressured to assume a more instrumental and mercenary role. Such conditions leave them with no time to be creative, use their imagination, work with other teachers, or develop classroom practices that are not wedded to teaching for the test and other demeaning empirical measures. Of course, the practice of disinvesting in public schools and higher education has a long history, but it has been around at least since the election of Ronald Reagan in the 1980s and has intensified in the new millennium. How else to explain that many states invest more in building prisons than educating students, especially those who are poor, disabled, and immersed in poverty? What are we to make of the fact that there are more black men in prison than in higher education in states such as Louisiana and California?[18] The right-wing makeover of public education has resulted in some states such as Texas banning critical thinking in their classrooms. In Arizona, legislation has been passed that eliminates all curricular material from the classroom that includes the histories of Mexican-Americans. These are the same states that want to tie the salaries of faculty in higher education to performance measures based on a neoliberal model of evaluation.

Fighting for democracy as an educational project means encouraging a culture of questioning in classrooms, one that explores both the strengths and the weaknesses of the current era. I think Zygmunt Bauman is right in arguing that "if there is no room for the idea of a wrong society, there is hardly much chance for the idea of a good society to be born, let alone make waves."[19] This notion of questioning is not simply about airing conflicting points of view, nor is it about substituting dogma for genuine dialogue and critical analysis. Rather, it is about a culture of

questioning that brings ideas into the framework of public values and enables a broader engagement with the larger social order. At issue here are pedagogical practices that go beyond the search for knowledge to encourage taking responsibility for intervening in the world by connecting knowledge and power, and by developing learning and personal values into modes of commitment and social engagement. The relevant questions in this instance are what kind of future do our teachings presuppose? What forms of literacy and agency do we make available to our students through our pedagogical practices? How do we understand and incorporate in classroom pedagogies an ongoing search for equity and excellence, truth and justice, knowledge and commitment?

The broader project of addressing democratization as a pedagogical practice should be central to any worthwhile classroom teaching and learning experience. And this is a political project that encompasses both democratizing pedagogies and a pedagogy of democracy. Educators should begin with a vision of schooling as a democratic public sphere. Faced with growing ideological, political, and social impediments, educators must work together to figure out common goals and organize collectively to challenge the conditions that prevent them from engaging in a meaningful work both in and outside of the classroom. In other words, educators need to start with a project, not a method. They need to view themselves through the lens of civic responsibility and educate students in the best of those traditions and knowledge forms we have inherited from the past, but also prepare those students to act in the world as critically engaged agents responsible for our collective future.

Educators, if not already committed to democratization, need to be ready to consider how they will link their overall investment in education to modes of critique and collective action that address what it means to live in a democratic society while recognizing democratic societies are never too just or just enough. Such recognition perceives how any viable democratic society must constantly nurture the possibilities for self-critique, personal and collective agency, and forms of citizenship in which teachers and students play a fundamental role. Rather than be forced to participate in a pedagogy designed to raise institutional test scores and undermine forms of critical thinking, students must be involved in discussing, administering, and shaping the material relations of power and ideological forces that structure their everyday lives. Central to such an educational project is the ongoing struggle on the part of teachers to connect their pedagogical practices to the building of an inclusive and just democracy, which should be open to many forms, offers no political guarantees, and relies on the normative dimensions of politics as an ongoing process that never ends. Such a project is based on the realization that democracy and a democratic classroom involve ongoing exchange, questioning, and self-criticism that aspires each day to more closely envision and embody fairness, equality, and justice. It is precisely the open-ended and normative nature of such a project that provides a common ground for educators to share their resources through a diverse range of intellectual and practical pursuits while refusing to believe that struggles for greater justice in schools and in the broader society ever come to an end.

In order to connect teaching with the larger world so as to make pedagogy meaningful, critical, and transformative, educators will have to focus their work on important social issues that connect what is learned in the classroom to the larger society and the lives of their students. Such issues might include the ongoing destruction of the ecological biosphere, the current war against youth, the hegemony of neoliberal globalization, the growing influence of corporate culture on public schools, the widespread attack on the welfare system, the disproportionate rates of incarceration of people of color, the increasing gap between the rich and the poor, the rising burden of debt impacting college and university students, the spread of war globally, and the dangerous growth of the prison-industrial complex.

In addition, educators should do more than create the conditions for critical learning for their students. They also need to responsibly assume the role of civic educators within broader social contexts and be willing to share their ideas with other educators and the wider public by making use of new media technologies. Communicating to a variety of public audiences suggests using opportunities for writing, public talks, and media interviews offered by the radio, Internet, alternative magazines, and the church pulpit, to name only a few. Such means of communication need to become public by crossing over into spheres and avenues of expression that speak to more general audiences in a language that is clear but not theoretically simplistic. Capitalizing on their role as intellectuals, educators can address the challenge of combining scholarship and commitment through the use of a vocabulary that is neither dull nor obtuse, while seeking to speak to a broad audience. More importantly, as teachers organize to assert the importance of their role and that of public schooling in a democracy, they can forge new alliances and connections to develop social movements that include and also expand beyond working with unions.

Educators also need to learn how to work collectively with other educators through a vast array of networks

across a number of public spheres. This might mean sharing resources with educators in a variety of fields and sites, extending from other teachers to community workers and artists outside of the school. This also suggests that educators become more active and self-critical in addressing the ethical and political challenges of globalization. Public school teachers and higher education instructors need to unite in making a case for public and higher education. In the United States, they could at the very least make clear to a befuddled American public that the deficit theory regarding school cutbacks is a fraud.

There is plenty of money to provide quality education to every student in the United States—and this certainly holds true for the United Kingdom and Canada. As Salvatore Babones points out, "The problem isn't a lack of money. The problem is where the money is going."[20] The issue is not about the absence of funds as much as it is about where funds are being invested and how more revenue can be raised to support public education in the United States. The United States spends around $960 billion on its wars and defense related projects.[21] In fact, the cost of war over a ten-year period 1 "will run at least $3.7 trillion and could reach as high as $4.4 trillion, according to the research project '€˜Costs of War' by Brown University's Watson Institute for International Studies."[22] As Babones argues, the crucial recognition here is that

> research consistently shows that education spending creates more jobs per dollar than any other kind of government spending. A University of Massachusetts study ranked military spending worst of five major fiscal levers for job creation. The UMass study ranked education spending the best. A dollar spent on education creates more than twice as many jobs than a dollar spent on defense. Education spending also outperforms health care, clean energy and tax cuts as a mechanism for job creation.[23]

Surely, this budget could be trimmed appropriately to divert much needed funds to education given that a nation's highest priority should be investing in its children rather than in the production of organized violence. As capital, finance, trade, and culture become extraterritorial and increasingly removed from traditional political constraints, it becomes all the more pressing to put global networks and political organizations into play to contend with the reach and power of neoliberal globalization. Engaging in intellectual practices that offer the possibility of alliances and new forms of solidarity among public school teachers and cultural workers such as artists, writers, journalists, academics, and others who engage in forms of public pedagogy grounded in a democratic project represents a small, but important, step. Nothing less a critical mass will be sufficient to address the mammoth and unprecedented reach of global capitalism.

Educators also need to register and make visible their own subjective involvement in what they teach, how they shape classroom social relations, and how they defend their positions within institutions. This is especially crucial at a time when many institutions are legitimating educational processes based on narrow ideological interests and political exclusions rooted in a denial of social injustice and inequality. Teachers who recognize the ongoing operations of power both inside and outside of the classroom should make their own authority and classroom work the subject of critical analysis with students, and this must be done in ways that move beyond the narrow and often instrumentalized rhetoric of method, psychology, or private interests. Pedagogy in this instance becomes a moral and political discourse in which students are able to connect learning to social change, scholarship to commitment, and classroom knowledge to public life. Such a pedagogical task suggests that educators define intellectual practice as "part of an intricate web of morality, rigor and responsibility"[24] that enables them to speak with conviction, enter the public sphere in order to address important social problems, and demonstrate alternative models for what it means to bridge the gap between public education and the broader society.

Unfortunately, there are many academics, teachers, and right-wing pundits who argue that the classroom should be free of politics, and hence a space where matters of power, values, and social justice should not be addressed. The usual scornful accusation in this case is that teachers who believe in civic education indoctrinate their students. In this supposed ideologically pure world, pedagogy is reduced to a banal transmission of facts in which nothing controversial can be stated and teachers are forbidden to utter one word related to any of the major problems facing the larger society. Of course, this view of teaching is as much a flight from reality as it is an instance of irresponsible pedagogy. In contrast, one useful approach to embracing the classroom as a political site, but at the same time eschewing any form of indoctrination, is for educators to think through the distinction between a politicizing pedagogy, which insists wrongly that students think as we do, and a political pedagogy, which teaches students by example and through dialogue about the importance of power, social responsibility, and taking a stand (without standing still). Political pedagogy, unlike a dogmatic or indoctrinating pedagogy, embodies the principles of critical pedagogy through rigorously engaging the full range of ideas about an issue within a framework that enables

students to move from moral purpose to purposeful action.

Political pedagogy offers the promise of nurturing students to think critically about their understanding of classroom knowledge and its relationship to the issue of social responsibility. It is also responsive to the challenge of educating students to engage the world critically in order to struggle for those political and economic conditions that make democratic participation in both schools and the larger society possible. Such a pedagogy affirms the experience of the social and the obligations it invokes regarding questions of responsibility and transformation. It does so by opening up for students important questions about power, knowledge, and what it means for them to critically engage the complex conditions impacting themselves and others. In addition, political pedagogy provides students with the knowledge and skills to analyze and work to overcome those social relations of oppression that make living unbearable for those who are poor, hungry, unemployed, deprived of adequate social services and viewed under the aegis of neoliberalism as largely disposable. What is important about this type of pedagogy is how responsibility is understood as both an ethical issue and a strategic act. Responsibility is not only a crucial element regarding what issues teachers address in a classroom; but is also embodied in their relationships with students, parents, and the wider society. Responsibility as a crucial part of any pedagogical practice suggests providing the connective tissue that enables students to raise issues about the consequences of their actions in the world and their behaviors toward others, and to analyze the relationship between knowledge and power and the social costs it often enacts. The emphasis on responsibility highlights the performative nature of pedagogy by raising questions about both the pedagogical relationship that teachers have with students, and about how ideas are situated in the public realm in order to highlight those practices and relationships that expand and deepen the possibilities of democracy.

Central here is the importance for educators to encourage students to connect knowledge and criticism as a precondition to becoming an agent of social change buttressed by a profound desire to overcome injustice and a spirited commitment to social action. Political education teaches students to take risks and challenge those with power. Likewise, it encourages students and teachers to be reflexive about how power is used in the classroom. Political education proposes that the role of the teacher as public intellectual is not to consolidate authority but to question and interrogate it, and that teachers and students should temper any reliance on authority with a sense of critical awareness and an acute willingness to hold it accountable for its consequences. Moreover, political education foregrounds education guided not by the imperatives of specialization and professionalization, but by goals designed to expand the possibilities of democracy. Linking education to modes of political agency is therefore part of a larger project to promote critical citizenship and address the ethical imperative to alleviate human suffering.

In contrast, politicizing education silences in the name of orthodoxy and imposes itself on students while undermining dialogue, deliberation, and critical engagement. Politicizing education is often grounded in a combination of self- righteousness and ideological purity that silences students as it enacts "correct" positions. Authority in this perspective rarely opens itself to self-criticism or for that matter to any criticism, especially from students. Politicizing education cannot decipher the distinction between critical teaching and pedagogical terrorism because its advocates have no sense of the difference between encouraging human agency and social responsibility, on the one hand, and molding students through taking an unquestioned ideological position and applying a sutured pedagogical script on the other. Politicizing education is more religious than secular, and more about training than educating. It harbors a great dislike for complicating issues, promoting critical dialogue, and generating a culture of questioning.

Education operates as a crucial site of power in the modern world. If teachers are truly concerned about safeguarding education, they will have to take seriously how pedagogy functions on local and global levels. It has a role to play in both securing and challenging how power is deployed, affirmed, and resisted within and outside of traditional discourses and cultural spheres. In a local context, critical pedagogy becomes an important theoretical tool for understanding the institutional conditions that place constraints on the production of knowledge, learning, academic labor, and democracy itself. Critical pedagogy also provides a discourse for engaging and challenging the production of social hierarchies, identities, and ideologies as they traverse local and national borders. In addition, pedagogy as a form of production and critique offers a discourse of possibility—a way of providing students with the opportunity to link understanding to commitment, and social transformation to seeking the greatest possible justice. Rejecting traditional, elitist notions of the intellectual, critical pedagogy and education encourage recognition of the vocation and contributions of teachers as intellectuals who undertake pedagogical and political work tempered by humility, a moral perspective on suffering, and the need to produce alternative visions and policies that go beyond a language of mere critique.

Positioning educators in public schools and higher education as public intellectuals has important implications that

need to be connected to developing a new academic agenda, particularly at a time when neoliberal values increasingly guide social and educational policy. In opposition to the privatization, commodification, commercialization, and militarization of everything public, educators need to define public education as a resource vital to the democratic and civic life of the nation and larger global sphere. At the heart of such a task is the challenge for teachers, academics, cultural workers, and labor organizers to join together in opposition to the transformation of public education into commercial entities—in other words to resist what Bill Readings has called a consumer-oriented corporation more concerned about accounting than accountability.[25] As Bauman reminds us, schools are one of the few public spaces left where students can learn the "skills for citizen participation and effective political action. And where there is no [such] institution, there is no '€˜citizenship' either."[26] Indeed, public education may be the last remaining site in which young people can engage in formal learning about the limits of commercial values, the skills of social citizenship, and how to deepen and expand the possibilities of collective agency and democratic life.

Defending education at all levels as a vital public sphere and a public good, rather than merely a private commodity, is necessary to develop and nourish the proper balance between democratic public spheres and commercial power, between identities founded on democratic principles and identities steeped in forms of competitive, self-interested individualism that celebrate selfishness, profit-making, and greed. Public education must be defended through intellectual work that self-consciously recalls the tension between the democratic imperatives and possibilities of public institutions and their everyday realization within a society dominated by market principles. If public education is to remain a site of critical thinking, collective work, and thoughtful dialogue, educators need to expand and resolutely defend how they view the meaning and purpose of their work with young people. As I have stressed repeatedly, academics, teachers, students, parents, community activists, and other socially concerned groups must provide the first line of defense in protecting public education as a resource vital to the moral life of the nation. And if public education is going to remain vital in its role, then it must continue to be accessible to people and communities whose resources, knowledge, and skills have often been viewed as marginal. This demands not only a renewed commitment to public values and educational ideals, but a concrete analysis of the neoliberal and other reactionary forces currently working to dismantle public education.

Fostering inclusive conditions that will achieve free quality education for everyone will begin first with the desire to build a powerful social movement. Such a project suggests that educators develop the vocabulary and practices for connecting progressive politics with effective modes of leadership. In part, this means providing students with the language, knowledge, and social relations to engage in the "art of translating individual problems into public issues, and common interests into individual rights and duties."[27] Leadership demands a politics and a pedagogy that refuses to separate individual problems and experience from public issues and social considerations. Within such a perspective, leadership displaces cynicism with hope, challenges the neoliberal notion that there are no alternatives with visions of a better society, and develops a pedagogy of commitment that puts into place modes of critical literacy in which competency and interpretation provide the basis for actually intervening in the world. Such leadership is responsive to the call to make the pedagogical more political by linking critical thought to collective action, human agency to social responsibility, and knowledge and power to a profound impatience with a status quo founded upon deep inequalities and injustices.

One of the increasingly crucial challenges faced by educators is rejecting the neoliberal collapse of the public into the private, and the rendering of all social problems as faults of the individual. The neoliberal obsession with privatization not only furthers a market-based ethic which reduces all relationships to the exchange of money and the accumulation of capital, it also depoliticizes politics itself and reframes public activity as utterly personal practices and utopias. Citizenship is consequently reduced to the act of buying and purchasing goods. Within this neoliberal discourse, all forms of solidarity, social behavior, and collective resistance disappear into the murky waters of a politics in which privatized pleasures and ready-made individual choices are organized solely on the basis of marketplace interests, values, and desires. This is a reactionary public pedagogy that cancels out all modes of social responsibility, commitment, and action. Its central ambition is the creation of atomized individuals who live in a moral coma, regress into a state of infantilism, and relate to others through a sheer Darwinist survival-of-the-fittest ethic. One of the major challenges now facing educators, especially in light of the current neoliberal attack on public workers, is to reclaim the language of social justice, democracy, and public life as the basis for rethinking how to name, theorize, and enact a new kind of education as well as more emancipatory notions of individual and social agency and collective struggle.

This challenge suggests, in part, developing new forms of social citizenship and civic education that have a purchase on people's everyday lives and struggles. Teachers and faculty bear an enormous responsibility in opposing

neoliberalism—the most dangerous ideology of our time—by bringing democratic political culture back to life. Part of this effort demands creating new locations of struggle, vocabularies, and values that allow people in a wide variety of public spheres to become more than they are now, to question what it is they have become within existing institutional and social formations, and "to give some thought to their experiences so that they can transform their relations of subordination and oppression."[28] One element of this struggle could take the form of resisting attacks on existing public spheres, such as schools, while creating new spaces in clubs, neighborhoods, bookstores, trade unions, alternative media, and other sites where dialogue and critical exchanges become possible. At the same time, challenging neoliberalism means protesting the ongoing reconfiguration of the state into the role of an enlarged police precinct designed to repress dissent, regulate immigrant populations, incarcerate youth who are considered disposable, and safeguard the interests of global investors. It also means supporting a shift in spending priorities in favor of young people and a sustainable democracy.

Revenue for investing in young people, social services, health care, crucial infrastructures, and the welfare state has not disappeared: it has simply been moved into other spending categories or used to benefit a small percentage of the population. For instance, U.S. military spending is far too bloated and supports a society organized for the mass production of violence. Such spending needs to be severely cut back without endangering the larger society. In addition, as John Cavanaugh has suggested, educators and others need to rally for policies that provide a small tax on stocks and derivatives, eliminate the use of overseas tax havens by the rich, and create tax policies in which the wealthy are taxed fairly.[29] Cavanagh estimates that the enactment of these three policies could produce as much as $330 billion in revenue annually, enough to vastly improve the quality of education for all children through the United States.[30]

As many governments globally give up their role of providing social safety nets and regulating corporate greed, capital escapes beyond the reach of democratic control. This leaves marginalized individuals and groups at the mercy of their own meager resources to survive. Under such circumstances, it becomes difficult to create alternative public spheres that enable people to become effective agents of change. Under neoliberalism's reign of terror, public issues collapse into privatized discourses and a culture of personal confessions, avarice, and vacuous celebrity emerges to set the stage for depoliticizing public life and turning citizenship and governance into a form of consumerism. It gets worse. The rich and the powerful realize it is not in their own narrow interests to support public education, and many despise any real notion of democracy and the social good. They will do all in their power to control and defend their ideological and economic position as the dominant one ruling American society.

The growing attack on public education in the United States and elsewhere may say less about the reputed apathy of the populace than about the bankruptcy of old political languages and orthodoxies. The need for new vocabularies and visions for clarifying our intellectual, ethical and political projects is pressing, especially as these work to reinsert questions of agency and meaning back into politics and public life. In the absence of such a common language and the social formations and public spheres that make democracy and justice operative, politics becomes narcissistic and caters to the mood of widespread pessimism and the cathartic allure of the spectacle. In addition, public service and government intervention are sneered upon as either bureaucratic or a constraint upon individual freedom. Any attempt to give new life to a substantive democratic politics must therefore address the issue of how people learn to be political agents. It must inquire what kind of educational work is necessary and where this work can take place in order to enable people to use their full intellectual resources to provide a profound critique of existing institutions and undertake a struggle to make freedom and autonomy achievable for as many people as possible, in as wide a variety of spheres as possible. As engaged educators, we are required to understand more fully why the tools we used in the past feel awkward in the present, often failing to respond to problems now facing the American public and other people across the globe. More specifically, educators face the challenge posed by the failure of existing critical discourses to expose the growing gap between how society represents itself and how individuals experience themselves and others within society. The development of a common understanding and a critical orientation is a necessary precursor for engaging such representations and the oppressive social relationships they often legitimate.

Against neoliberalism, educators, students, and other concerned citizens face the task of providing a language of resistance and possibility, a language that embraces a militant utopianism while constantly being attentive to those forces that seek to turn such hope into a new slogan or to punish and dismiss those who dare to look beyond the horizon of the given. Hope is the affective and intellectual precondition for individual and social struggle. It is hope, not despair, motivating critique on the part of intellectuals in and outside of the academy who use the resources of

theory to address pressing social problems. Hope is also at the root of the civic courage that translates critique into political practice. Hope as the desire for a future that offers more than the present becomes most acute when one's life can no longer be taken for granted. Only by holding on to both critique and hope in such contexts will resistance make concrete the possibility for transforming politics into an ethical space and a public act. And a better future than the one we now expect to unfold will require nothing less than confronting the flow of everyday experience and the weight of social suffering with the force of individual and collective resistance and the unending project of democratic social transformation.

There is a lot of talk among educators and the general public about the death of democratic schooling and the institutional support it provides for critical dialogue, nurturing the imagination, and creating a space of inclusiveness and engaged teaching. Given that educators and others now live in a democracy emptied of any principled meaning, the ability of human beings to imagine a more equitable and just world has become more difficult. Yet, I would hope critical educators, of all groups, would be the most vocal and militant in making clear that at the heart of any substantive democracy is the notion that learning should be used to expand the public good, create a culture of questioning, and promote democratic social change. Individual and social agency becomes meaningful when made part of a robust collective project that aims to "help us find our way to a more human future."[31] Under such circumstances, knowledge can be used for amplifying human freedom and promoting social justice, and not simply for private financial gain.

The diverse terrain of critical education and critical pedagogy offers insights for addressing these broader social issues. We would do well to learn as much as possible from the resources we have at hand in order to expand the meaning of the political and revitalize the pedagogical possibilities of cultural politics and democratic struggles. Pierre Bourdieu argued that intellectuals need to create new ways of doing politics by investing in political struggles through a permanent critique of abuses of authority and power, especially under the reign of neoliberalism. Bourdieu wanted educators to use their skills and knowledge to do more than inform academia and the classroom. He exhorted educators to combine scholarship with commitment and to "enter resolutely into sustained and vigorous exchange with the outside world (that is, especially with unions, grassroots organizations, and issue-oriented activist groups) instead of being content with waging the €˜political' battles, at once intimate and ultimate, and always a bit unreal, of the scholastic universe."[32]At a time when our civil liberties are being destroyed and public institutions and goods all over the globe are under assault by the forces of a rapacious global capitalism, there is a concrete urgency on the horizon that demands not only the most engaged forms of political opposition on the part of teachers, but also new modes of resistance and collective struggle buttressed by rigorous intellectual work, social responsibility, and political courage.

The time has come for educators to distinguish caution from cowardice and recognize the need for addressing the dire crisis public education is now facing. As Jacques Derrida reminded us, democracy "demands the most concrete urgency...because as a concept it makes visible the promise of democracy, that which is to come."[33] We have seen glimpses of such a promise among those brave students and workers who have demonstrated in Montreal, Paris, Athens, Toronto, and many other cities across the globe. Teachers can learn from such struggles by turning the colleges and public schools into vibrant critical sites of learning and unconditional spheres of pedagogical and political resistance. The power of the existing dominant order does not merely reside in the economic or in material relations of power, but also in the realm of ideas and culture. This is why educators as engaged intellectuals must take sides, speak out, and welcome the hard pedagogical work of debunking corporate culture's assault on teaching and learning, while also orienting their teaching for social change and connecting classroom learning to public life. At the very least, educators can examine the operations of power in their own classrooms and provide a safe space for students to address a variety of important issues ranging from poverty to crimes against humanity.

Assuming the role of public intellectual suggests being a provocateur in the classroom. It means asking hard questions, listening carefully to what students have to say, and teaching against the grain. It also means stepping out of the classroom and working with others to create public spaces where it becomes possible not only to "shift the way people think about the moment, but potentially to energize them to do something differently in that moment." [34] Students and others should be encouraged to link their critical imagination with the possibility of activism in the public sphere. This is, of course, a small step, but a necessary one if we do not want a future that repeats or sustains the worst afflictions of our present, or subsumes any remaining public spheres within the workings of dominant power. It is time for educators to mobilize their energies by breaking down the illusion of unanimity that dominant power propagates while working diligently, tirelessly, and collectively to reclaim the promises of a truly global, democratic future.

There is no room for a dystopian pedagogy in a democratic society because this form of pedagogy destroys the

foundation of critical engagement, hope, and resistance necessary for a democratic formative culture—one equipped to provide people with a full range of knowledge, skills, and values that can support ongoing collective struggles for democratization. In light of the current neoliberal assault on all democratic public spheres, along with the urgency of the problems faced by those marginalized by class, race, age, and sexual orientation, I think it is all the more crucial to take seriously the challenge of Derrida's provocation that "we must do and think the impossible. If only the possible happened, nothing more would happen. If I only I did what I can do, I wouldn't do anything."[35] We may live in dark times, as Hannah Arendt reminded us, but history is open and the space of the possible is larger than the one on display.

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Against Speed Cosmopolitanism towards the Slow University

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Introduction

As I sit at my desk working on this paper, the world continues accelerating. It is a nihilistic acceleration; without patience; without prudence; toward a forgetting of the very reasons for the acceleration in the first place. This acceleration is the backbone of contemporary risk society and the risk society's related knowledge society(Beck, ; Beck, 1992). The ideology of speed cosmopolitanism is our universalizing justification of accelleration in relation to our lives as individuals and members of greater and global wholes. At the core of that ideology is its technicity, which is perhaps best exemplified in the internet. The internet is a network of networks or system of interconnected networks, computers, peoples, agents, and programs. The internet enables and to some extent incorporates the ideology of speed cosmopolitanism as it enables faster and faster communication amongst a global population, transforming their relations through accelleration.

The internet's technicity is operationalized within speed cosmopolitanism as both a system of real or virtual travels and travails of knowledges and knowledges' communities; as a system of knowledge construction and communication. But the internet's relations to the communities of contemporary construction of knowledges also enables us to use it to resists the accelerations of speed cosmopolitanism. This consideration of knowledge and its construction in relation to the internet brings me to the idea that is central to this paper, and that is that knowledge is not fast, knowledge grows fast but its growth is primarily due to population and population's multiplications, and not due to speed cosmpolitanism and technocultural acceleration of its technicities. Coming to know is not fast, nor is it becoming faster, and while new technologies aid us in creating knowledge and the larger communities engaged with questions might create a simulation of acceleration of knowledges, the communal nature of knowledge and the trust we build into knowledge limits its speed of personal and communal knowledge production and acquisition. The tension between the perceived need for the acceleration of knowledge construction and acquisition and the reality of the process is the generative thesis of this paper.

As the slow science manifesto says:

> **We do need time to think. We do need time to digest. We do need time to misunderstand each other, especially when fostering lost dialogue between humanities and natural sciences. We cannot continuously tell you what our science means; what it will be good for; because we simply don't know yet. Science needs time. http://www.slow-science.org/**

Science is one mode of coming to know, and those performing that mode need time to think, time to engage with prior knowledges, time to engage with others in relation to that knowledges, and time to build more knowledge. Coming to know, as the primary process of knowledge, is a mobile, communal and material effort, and it engages people, places, and things, through our memories and practices tied to the histories of knowledges, its fluxes, and its futures. The processes of knowledge as such are not easily co-constructed in any meaningful or passionate relation without considerations of time and time's passing. Since the rise of the culture of speed cosmopolitanism after World War 2, there have been numerous attempts to provide learning spaces that allow for knowledge to be co-constructed in consideration of time and thus to be built well, with all of its normativities encapsulated and

planned. Similarly various colleges and universities have been created with that mindset, and many alternatives to those institutions have also been created; some have failed and some have flourished. This paper posits and follows yet one more possibility, a possibility that resists the idea that knowledge production and acquisition is fast, that knowledge can be a commodity, and that knowledge can be formalized and packaged into consumable degree that meets a determined schedule and as such exists only in relation to the economic and efficient necessities. Instead I argue that knowledge should be constructed in relation to one's life, one's community, and with an eye toward the global future. This requires us to slow knowledge production and acquisition down, to reimagine the institutions of knowledge production and to redesign, or perhaps even explode the university as we know it in order construct the slow university.

Speed Cosmopolitanism and Its Technologies in the Context of Hypercapitalism

Speed cosmopolitanism globalizes the transformative accelerations of capitalism as a normative ideology. It claims that we should be fast, move fast, decide fast, and if anything we should do them faster as exemplified by global business literatures(Jennings & Haughton, 2002; Gates, 1999; Gleick, 2000). Speed cosmopolitanism highlights a generalized strategic vision of how to take advantage of other people being slower and thus implies we should always be quicker. As it globalizes, speed cosmopolitanism transforms global value systems, reconfiguring those systems in relation to speed and acceleration culture. As an assemblage of our social imaginations; speed cosmopolitanism entails the alienation of elements of our subjectivity through the reimagining and resubjectifying of elements of ourselves withing the context of the necessities of relative acceleration and speed.

Being quicker, as the ideology demands, can be and frequently is a strategic disadvantage in our lives as consumers and our lives as learners due to the limiting frameworks in which we exist. These limits constrain our ability to be quick in a strategic manner because they limit what we can know before we act. To act strategically in our best interests, we already must know what is best or at least we need to know the heuristics of discovering the optimal bestness within the framesworks of speed cosmopolitanism. If we don't have those heuristics or the knowledge to operate without them, we must find ways to construct or constrain our environments to provide us with the strategic advantage. However, speed ablaits our efforts, and frequently it is not possible to reconstruct the environment to our advantage when moving at speed.

Without the ability to change the environment or our situatedness in relation to our strategic speed, we are left with the only thing left to change, ourselves. This re-construction of our subjectivity first imagines, then re/creates human beings as strategic fast-moving, machinic, individualities that must operationalize within themselves a strategic daemon optimized for our own capacities at performing decisions based on limited and imperfect information, we become calculating machines in ourselves and could be best thought of less as humans in that light, then as information processors like computers(Beck-Gernsheim & Beck, 2002; Guattari, 1995; Guattari, 1996). This is the model of homo economicus in speed cosmopolitanism, we become the creators and operators of robots inside of ourselves that manage the optimizations that the accelerating world requires.

These operationalized robots function as our primary adaptation to speed cosmopolitanism and they govern our everyday lives in those contexts. This makes our bodies into the defacto zombies of hypercapitalism, in which our subjectivities are primarily robotized responses to stimuli and ensconced within our streams of informational stimuli. We seldom find time to escape into any critical or reflective mode of thought that would actually allow us to transform our lives toward actual creative thought leading to innovations. That escape would be resisted socially as it would make the whole system remarkably inefficient at precisely what the system is supposed to be becoming efficient. In the case of universities, those efficiencies would be the operationalizations surrounding the markets of information and knowledge being constructed as their replacement in neoliberalism(Olssen & Peters, 2005).

Speed cosmopolitanism is a form of hypercapitalism which could be thought of as one form of trans-temporal neoliberalism(Graham, 2001; Pedersen & Nielsen, 2013; Reid, 1978). As neoliberalism, it attempts to formalize markets where none exist by transforming systems, processes and/or thoughts into commodities. This neoliberalism assumes these markets are just systems of exchange for mutual profit, and all goods are about profit. (Habermas, 2000) These markets of thought and process like all markets center on questions of information and the lack of perfect information. Thus in neoliberalism we construct a system of informationally biased 'free' trading within those markets which given the imperfections of information is anything but free and likely anything but just. This

lack of freedom is comparably exploited by those with more information, who are theoretically more free. But in this hypercapitalist environment, these 'free' traders need to act before their private information propagates to others thus becoming public information.

The need for speed in neoliberal environments created the hypercapitalist tendency that is the trans-temporality of neoliberalism and thus the promotion of the imaginary over the reality in our market environments(Graham, 2001; Massumi, 2005). While the imaginations are important to consider, the central operation of the re/creation of realities through those market operationalizations in speed cosmopolitanism plays within the both the technesis and technics of hypercapitalism, from the computers and their programmable systems trading shares faster than humanly capable, to prediction markets predicting future actions, and the statistical systems that support all the technics of hypercapitalism within their normal and non-normal frameworks. These technics/techneses operate both historically and in the future across our normal experiences of time, creating the trans-temporal space of activity through which our markets of knowledge will operate. We can already see this with the subtle editing of systems like wikipedia by certain groups use those technics to alter our understandings ever so slightly, while other groups create a plurality of competing sources of knowledges, each with their own biases. These movements toward the past and its projection to future systems are policy decisions by groups and individuals that then are read by the computational engines aiming at providing accurate models. Hypercapitalism's trans-temporality operates through the systems, organizations, processes and thoughts that neoliberalism is transforming into markets through our own actions(Feldman & Feldman, 2006).

Hypercapitalism is not the only trans-temporal system to occur in the world, indeed most systems have trans-temporal elements. But I should be clear here, by trans-temporal, I do not mean eternal in the religious sense. Trans-temporal means some process is cutting through and across temporalities and thus through and across speeds and the eras in which we find those speeds. Given that definition, trans-temporality is clearly found in our construction of our knowledge production systems and within them the universities and similar environments. These knowledge environments both produce, archive, and project knowledge across times and speeds through systems of learning and memory are built not only in the people who inhabit those institutions, but also within the infrastructures of the institutions(Hunsinger, 2009a; Hunsinger, 2009b).

I am not arguing that the institutions of knowledge production are in any way separable from neoliberal or hypercapitalist systems, instead I argue that if the problems of our institutions of knowledge production are derivatives of the ideology of speed cosmopolitanism and its relation to the systems and processes related to those ideologies, then perhaps there is a way forward that transforms those ideologies(Olssen & Peters, 2005; Olssen, 2006). In much the same way that the mass production of folio books transformed the ideologies of speed of the learning found in lectures prior to mass production was resisted by the institution of the lecture and the university credit system, we can transform learning and knowledge production systems in resistance. (Agger, 1988). We can look to prior transformations of speed in relation to learning to discuss new issues of speed and learning(Agger, 2004; Virilio, 1986).

We construct our systems of knowledge production, our markets and their ideologies such as neoliberalism, hypercapitalism and speed cosmopolitanism discursively and performatively through our everyday lives within capitalism and within its complicit institutions such as the university(Fairclough, 1992; Lemke, 2007). That the university as a system of knowledge production is complicit in these ideologies should be clear from its changing structures, its growing managerialism, and its accelerational goals. We as the people who co-construct our institutions both discursively and performatively, could construct the university to be different by changing our practice and creating new institutions. Given that some professors want to attempt to carve out this sort of subaltern from within the hegemonic neoliberal university, they should also realize that like almost every other educational movement in higher education; any subaltern will eventually become complicit within and accounted for by the systems of hypercapitalism and speed cosmopolitanism. Each new program becomes a new market for speed and accelleration, so long as we allow those ideologies to promulgate.

This promulgation of ideology combines with our machinic, computational subjectivity and recreates us and our institutions as elements of the ideology itself. We can resist it, but neoliberalism, hypercapitalism, and speed cosmopolitanism are not the only ideological construct we are facing. All three go hand-in-hand with an element of biopolitics, which is bureacratism, which in the accellerated form might be thought of as hyperbureauctratism and hyperbureaucratization.

From Hypercapitalism to Hyperbureaucratism

If we think, as professors, that the modern university is under attack by the neoliberal, hypercapitalist knowledge-oriented robber barons, then as a class we are self-deceiving. While this narrative gives us an externality to resist which is not based in the complicities of ourselves within the universities, it is also not revelatory of the actual conditions of our complicity in our own condition. It is not only the outside of the university bringing about this transformation, but it us, within the university that enables the transformation. What we have is the faculties, the central bodies of the university system, becoming disempowered through their own self constructed interests of wanting less work in the face of the mounting workload of the bureaucratic environments being imposed upon by the system of governance as founded in legislative and juridical arenas.(Adorno, 2001; Foucault, 2008) This ballooning bureaucratic workload needs balanced by the professoriate against their related goals of service, teaching, and research.

In the face of the ever increasing workload, the ideology of speed cosmopolitanism requires speedy resolution of the bureaucratic requests originating both from within and outside of the university. The ideology of speed requires the requests to be removed from the arena of faculty decision with its implicit slowness of consideration and moved into the new efficient academic bureaucracy. By necessity the bureaucracy grows exponentially in relation to the increasing workload, increasing budgets, and in the end requiring even more faculty oversight, which faculty no longer have time to provide(Essaji & Horton, 2010; Vest, 2007). The tension between the growth of university bureaucracy and the increasing workload of faculty is the essential driver of the transition toward the death of the university in its contemporary and nostalgic forms. In its place will be born, if the managerial class continues to flourish, a new series of service oriented knowledge production centers where a former member of a university faculty will now be a for contract service provider at either: a learning oriented service center, which provides basic credentializaton of the population as its teaching core; a research oriented service center which provides research on demand for anyone that will pay; or a community oriented service center which will apply the knowledge of highly specialized services workers to specific problems for people who can pay. All of this will be managed by a class of managers far removed from the experiences of the service provider, but work to ensure the quality of the programs through systemically abstracted evaluative metrics. This is one predictive story of how the hypercapitalist university becomes the hyperbureaucratic university, which in terms eventually becomes nothing more than a hyperbureaucratic service provider.

The university is always and has always been a place of struggle between governance and knowledge production. The current struggle centers on the implications of the required workloads of governance and knowledge production. Faculties are frequently engaged in everything other than confronting their own governance and thus become complicit in schemes to make their own lives and systems of knowledge production more efficient, more bureaucratized, and more capitalized(Rutherford, 2005; Nowotny, Scott, & Gibbons, 2001; Slaughter & Rhoades, 2004). The mode of resistance is not to revolutionize the university, but contrarily to deny the acceleration culture and the ideology of speed cosmopolitanism driving the revolution.

Slow Science and the Slow University

> Virtually all slow movements are resistances to speeded-up qualities of life (Carp, 2012) 104

Acceleration culture and the ideology of speed cosmopolitanism are not new in academia nor is it new in the North American research context. Bertrand Russell was confronted with what he perceived as the culture of "quick results" at Harvard University, which is why he decided not to join that university.

> But if Russell liked, even admired, the students, he had little good to say about the faculty, which persisted in trying to recruit him. "Dull," "tiresome," "complacent" people, forced to spend themselves in endless teaching and to produce "quick results," they were deprived of the "patient solitary meditation...that go[es] to producing anything of value." They lacked, he said, "the atmosphere of meditation and absent-mindedness that one associates with thought—they all seem more alert and businesslike and punctual than one expects very good people to be." Above all, it was the "blind instinctive devotion to ideals dimly seen" that Russell missed, "regardless of whether they are useful or appreciated by others."(Bailyn, 1991)

What Russell was indicating was the virtual blindness toward knowledge caused by the culture of quick results

and the related acceleration culture around academic knowledge production. That Bertrand Russell crossed the Atlantic to be confronted with such problematic circumstances is not surprising, because by then the systems of knowledge production were cosmopolitan.

Russell did not end his critique of that well regarded institution of higher learning. Baylin continues the description of what Russell thought of the President of the university thusly:

> Lowell was determined, Russell wrote, "to get his money's worth out of [the faculty] and throw them on the scrap heap when they are used up." Under Lowell's administration, he wrote, "this place is Hell." The only remedy for Lowell's "hard slave-driving efficiency," his "loathsome" regime, Russell believed, was a reversal of precisely those developments of the early eighteenth century that had come to distinguish Harvard and other American colleges and universities from the pattern of the ancient colleges he knew so well.(Bailyn, 1991)

We can see the same responses amongst faculty today. University administrations are attempting to maximize profits from faculty labors as part of the need to be fact, the need to compete, the need to participate in the marketplace of higher education and research. The university and its faculty do not have to compete, we do not need to maximize profits, and we do not need to perpetually compare ourselves to others in order to justify our existence. What we need to do in order to justify our existence is to produce communities that generate knowledge.

Knowledge needs time, science needs time and to that end some scientists have put forth a manifesto which is emblematic of some of the problems faced by researchers these days:

THE SLOW SCIENCE MANIFESTO

> *We are scientists. We don't blog. We don't twitter. We take our time.*
>
> *Don't get us wrong—we do say yes to the accelerated science of the early 21st century. We say yes to the constant flow of peer-review journal publications and their impact; we say yes to science blogs and media & PR necessities; we say yes to increasing specialization and diversification in all disciplines. We also say yes to research feeding back into health care and future prosperity. All of us are in this game, too.*
>
> *However, we maintain that this cannot be all. Science needs time to think. Science needs time to read, and time to fail. Science does not always know what it might be at right now. Science develops unsteadily, with jerky moves and unpredictable leaps forward—at the same time, however, it creeps about on a very slow time scale, for which there must be room and to which justice must be done.*
>
> *Slow science was pretty much the only science conceivable for hundreds of years; today, we argue, it deserves revival and needs protection. Society should give scientists the time they need, but more importantly, scientists must take their time.*
>
> *We do need time to think. We do need time to digest. We do need time to misunderstand each other, especially when fostering lost dialogue between humanities and natural sciences. We cannot continuously tell you what our science means; what it will be good for; because we simply don't know yet. Science needs time.*
>
> *—Bear with us, while we think. (http://slow-science.org/)*

Slowness works for knowledge, slowness works for science(Pels, 2003). It does not have to be super-slowness, but it has to be the slowness of knowledge and science that actually is prudent for the world in which we live, that world's futures. We need time to read, time to think, time to reflect and time to come to know. We need time to make knowledge work on the human scale and our ecological scales.

If knowledge takes time to create and time to process on a human scale, why are we pushing both faculty and students to do more with less? Why are we forcing our students to not be able to learn in our classes by forcing them to learn according to schedules which do not actually map onto their possible timeframes for coming to know? It is because we are caught in a series of ideologically biased traps about time and capital. These traps all assume knowledge is fast, but only people who can actually move fast, strategically are those that actually taken the time to come to their knowledge, or those that deny the benefit of knowledge, though the latter could hardly be called strategic. The ideologies of speed cosmopolitanism and acceleration culture in knowledge production as such should be thought of as a deceit driven by ignorance of the system of knowledge production. Beyond being deceipt, these ideologies also are creating unreal and impossible conditions for the creation of that knowledge for all learners.

The university is not traditionally a place of teaching, it is a place of learning; a place that houses our professional learners which are called professors. This focus on learning is key differentiation that defines the nature of the community of learning that is the university. Teaching, if it happens at a university, is only in service of learning.

Our learning goes beyond the mere gaining of knowledge and then representing it. Our learning is about learning to construct new knowledges. We base much of this learning to construct new knowledges by learning models of old knowledge's constructions. The intimate knowledge of our processes of knowledge construction allows us to trust what we know. For unless we actually know the processes of knowledge production, we cannot really know the knowledge is legitimate, nor can we really understand the knowledge at all. Without that learning, we can only trust the authority which is presenting us with claims to knowledge, which may or may not be someone who actually is an authority on the subject. This focus on authority undermines our professors, who do not traditionally rely on the mediated authority structures that our students are presented on television, nor necessarily the authority structures of the traditional elementary and secondary schools.

Similarly the novice learners or students students need to be able to move beyond those models of authority and into the systems and processes of knowledges focussed on enabling them develop the capacity to recognize the legitimation of knowledge which is found in the practices of knowledge. Our students need time; they need to slow down, to focus on their work, and to practice their knowledge processes. They do not need a prepackaged informational system that may not be anything more than they can read on the internet such as those in moocs. Our students need time, because science takes time and all modes of research take time. Time is consistently poached from the researching and learning in order for the time to be placed in administrative tasks or placed in teaching tasks. As professional learners, professors know knowledge takes time, research takes time, and students need time to learn those processes.

Since knowledge and learning are slow and require time, perhaps we need to promote the idea of a slow university. One conception of a slow university arises in conjunction with the slow food movement, that movement attempts to resist the acceleration of food culture into a homogeneous normality of blandness in order to instead celebrate the unique food traditions, flavours, and regional identities that arise from living local, cooking slow, and eating slow. Their university is the University of Gastronomic Science, which much like the food it supports, supports slow learning and depth of learning over the speed of production of the neoliberal institutions which would prefer to graduate students in scheduled fashion.

However, the slow food movement is not the only model of a slow university, Warsaw also has its slow university, their motto as an autonomous, nomadic university is, "Freedom through slowness". Speed and acceleration will inevitably cause us to be trapped in a race to the finish where we do not determine the terms of the race or the finish, and thus we must always lose.

Knowledge production should not be seen to be a race to be won or lost as it is in the speed cosmopolitanism of the hypercapitalist/hyperbureaucratized university, it should be about the generation of knowledge in communities that require it. This situation requires an education system that generates and sustains the knowledge production system. This is also one of the real reasons why universities are also institutions that teach students. This education system should also be predicated on admitting that knowledge production and acquisition is slow, is fluxing, and entirely dependent on trans-temporalities of the knowledge system. Education whether fast or slow is not a game of achievements or check-boxes; it is about life improvement and the opening of possible trajectories for that life(Illich, 1971). Education is also about joining a community of knowledge that is dedicated to learning about a topic. Slow education as described as part of a sustainability movement in Japan is described in terms of developing a good life that is embedded in its community.

> **SLOW EDUCATION: We pay less attention to academic achievement, and create a society in which people can enjoy arts, hobbies, and sports throughout our lifetimes, and where all generations can communicate well with each other.(2003)**

The ability to communicate knowledge across communities is part of the legitimizing system of knowledge and the only solution to the problem of legitimation of knowledge in the slow university. (Habermas, 1975; Lyotard, 1984; Hunsinger, 2005) The capacity to enjoy knowledge and to love it is also part of the good life. That enjoyment is also necessary for the good of our communities and for us to have good lives together. By slowing education down and allowing students the freedom to find what they love to learn and what they will learn to love, we can transform the slow university through slow education, thus transforming the university from a system of individualized instruction based on personal achievements to a system of community learning based on the development of good communities (of knowledge, of people, of things) and people participating in those communities. With the communities will arise the new systems of legitmation needed to sustain those communities and thus to sustain slow education and the slow university.

Slowness as Tenant: a Conclusion

The Slow movement connects people to the material conditions of existence in a way that informs and honors their relationship to their everyday surroundings. The lived experience of the senses, of personal reciprocity and exchange, of cultural diversity and history and sense of place, of health and well-being is engaged with respect to a particular social, cultural, and ecological context. The Slow movement articulates the interrelationship among natural resources, the process of making (whether it be music, sense, love, or cheese), and use. (Carp, 2012) 105

Our world does not need needs to be fast. Being fast does not improve our world. It is that people do not resist the fast. In this paper, I propose that we resist the fast, that we slow down. By slowing down, I want us to have more time to think, not just think individually, but to think as a community. Knowledge as I have argued in this paper is slow, and its central processual tenant is its slowness. If we run into fast knowledge or the demand for speed within knowledge production, we should slow down. we should go slow, be skeptical,and consider why someone wants something fast and think about what the implications of speed for that knowledge will be for everyone. We should not transform our subjectivities toward knowledge and its legitimation in relation to speed cosmopolitanism. We need to de-daemonize/de-mechanize our subjectivities in relation to knowledge systems. The implications of speed cosmopolitanism and its resistance, as I have argued, are going to be far broader than we can individually think. If we stop and take the time to discuss the knowledge, to actually generate the knowledge and its reflexive positions in our communities, we stand a chance to develop a system of knowledge production that can actually resist the nihilism of acceleration; that will recognize and promote our values. This type of system is possible both for the internet and the university.

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The Role of Marketing in the Infantilization of the Postmodern Adult

Jacopo Bernardini

In a recent interview, Natalia Vashko, director of the television channel 2x2, stated: "We cater for young viewers, where 'young' has nothing to do with age, it's rather a lifestyle attitude" (Ivanova 2007). This statement, in my opinion, supports the thesis that being young today is no longer a transitory stage, but rather a choice of life, well established and brutally promoted by the media system. While the classic paradigms of adulthood and maturation could interpret such infantile behavior as a symptom of deviance, such behavior has become a model to follow, an ideal of fun and being carefree, present in a wide variety of contexts of society. The contemporary adult follows a sort of thoughtful immaturity, a conscious escape from the responsibilities of an anachronistic model of life. If an ideal of maturity remains, it does not find behavioral compensations in a society where childish attitudes and adolescent life models are constantly promoted by the media and tolerated by institutions. Numerous research studies confirm this thesis. For example, in a series of interviews with young adults in 1999, the sociologist Lynn White found a significant discrepancy between what is believed to be appropriate adult-like behavior and the manner in which adults actually behave. This confirms the thesis of Arnett (1997, 1998) in which adulthood, over time, has shifted from an idea to follow to an ideal, which is difficult to achieve. In the meantime, people in their thirties and forties are constantly subjected to incitements that awaken their inner child: in the proliferation of movies exalting the immaturity of kidults (Bernardini 2012); in television programs in which mature people enact childish stunts; and in Internet shows that, through the nostalgia effect, try to bring the user back to his early days.[1]

The Phenomenon of Infantilization

Infantilization is a fleeting phenomenon, and yet concrete at the same time; it creates controversy but seems accepted and metabolized by public opinion. We live in an era in which it is practically normal to refuse to accept one's own age, in which young people want to be adults and adults want to be young (Samuelson 2003). One sees the traditional stages of the life cycle, to which the social sciences still refer, progressively postponed and altered. The age of childhood has been shortened; adolescence today begins long before puberty and for many seems to last forever (Blos 1979; Arnett, 1998; 2003; Samuelson 2003); the boundaries of adulthood seem, by now, indefinable; and seniority, as a phase of life, is likely to become an individual concept. The media, markets and advertising play a fundamental role in this transformation of vital stages, gradually lowering, starting after the Second World War until the present day, the criteria of measurement of youth (Epstein 2003) and extending the possibilities of a young semblance to people who are older. One finds the evidence in favor of this thesis in popular culture. Newscasts give more and more space to broadcast news of color and crime; the language of politics has been simplified, depleted, and dogmatized and has lost the complexity of a typically adult morality; and video games and role playing games are becoming increasingly popular among adults. Each year, the most successful movies are cartoons or childish comedies and the same thing can be said for books (think of the Harry Potter or Twilight phenomena); and the clothing of adults has become a photocopy of clothing styled for the young. The adult uniform no longer exists: now, it is ordinary to encounter middle-aged individuals in blue jeans, an untucked shirt and sunglasses. Then there are

the fields of aesthetic surgery and beauty products, gradually grown over the past decades even in the recent period of economic recession. The increasing use of rejuvenating creams, Botox injections, and sexual enhancement drugs represent further evidence of a conscious and widespread escape from one's biological age. The actor-consumer of this system tends to childishness without pleasure, to indolence without innocence, dresses without formality, has sex without reproducing, works without discipline, plays without spontaneity, buys without a purpose, lives without responsibility, wisdom or humility (Linn 2004; Barber 2007).

Infantilization coincides with a kind of collective regression and may be related, in my opinion, to two interdependent factors: the main social phenomena that have characterized post-modernity and unprecedented market strategies.

Postmodernity and Immaturity

The liberal, liquid, individualistic and presentist connotations that gave shape to postmodernity seem to have gradually led to a real psychological rejection of the condition adulthood.

As observed by Jeammet (2009), an unprecedented and fragmented freedom of the individual characterizes our society, a freedom that has everyone choosing based on desires and ambivalent feelings, and fearing not living up to one's own ambitions. This a freedom authorizes any possibility – with the help of the media – but also entails frustration and anxiety, because everyone knows that he could never choose and try everything. Prohibitions and limitations have the advantage of allowing us to believe that our dissatisfactions could be attributed to them; knowing that we are the only builders of our own lives leads, instead, to a constant sense of insecurity. Freedom means also knowing that eventually you will have to make an account of things undertaken and successfully completed. This worries the adult and leads him to a psychological escape from his own condition by taking refuge in the world of young people where the possibilities are increasingly vast.

Our society is liquid (Bauman 2000); it has redesigned its temporal spaces according to the dimensions of speed and possibility and, as a result, youth appears to be the more efficacious model.

The evanescence of limits and conscience combined with freedom of choice also match with the obligation of the individualization of one's biography and the research of the biographical solutions best suited to resolve the systemic contradictions of the moment (Beck 1998). Authoritative guidelines are lacking; autonomy and self-determination of the individual are the bases for everything. In pre-industrial societies, on the contrary, at birth one entered in an organizing structure that was not considered resulting from cultural evolution but the enactment of a constant and unchanging nature. This guaranteed the social affiliation of the individual. Later, industrialization put in motion a process of acquisition of one's role for which one's identity was no longer given once and for all, but became the result of a choice. There is no longer a consolidated stratification; allocation has been replaced by acquisition and identity is given by the economic and employment role assumed by the individual and no longer by the ties of kinship. But it is only in contemporary society that certainties rarefy in relation to purpose (Bauman 2000). The person loses every identifying criterion; the individual is now called to choose and embody a model of stability in which to recognize himself without relying on a normative principle (Luhmann 1990). The individual discovers the unprecedented opportunity to draw his own social. This is a truly fascinating yet risky context. The vagueness, the unknown, and insecurity hide behind each potential decision.

Media communication comes to the rescue and becomes the primary vehicle for the dissemination of values, trends and guidelines that establish the symbolic universe of the individual's ethical choices. This communication, as recently ascertained (Bernardini 2012, 2013), legitimizes, on the one hand, immature and childish behaviors, and on the other hand promotes an unprecedented lifestyle that thirty years ago Laslett (1989) defined as youthfulness. Marketers and media have become obsessively devoted to the exaltation of youthful image in every aspect: clothing, physical form, and behavior. As noted by Bonazzi and Pusceddu (2008), media communication, and especially advertising, nowadays seems to promote a kind of collective regression: needs should be satisfied immediately because it is imperative to take here and now everything that life, or rather the consumer's society, promises to give us. And youth - like beauty, success and money - becomes an object that is possible to own, always. In other words, youth, a biological condition, seems to have become a cultural definition. One is young not because he is a certain age, but because he is entitled to enjoy certain styles of life and consumption.

Taking note of this new possibility, the media conveys a clear message: being adult is an environmental situation

that one can reject as neither attractive nor trendy. As a result, within the young adult a defense mechanism takes over against adulthood itself, which is simplistically viewed as a set of excessive responsibilities, a threat to existential possibilities and an unavoidable journey toward old age. Searching for immediate satisfaction, denying the future and living a perennial and undefined present appear both a more compelling proposal and a concrete possibility. In Freudian terms, it is the pleasure principle that dominates the reality principle. Past and future become nightmarish dimensions and are, therefore, removed: what remains is an attractive present represented as a place where immediate pleasure and the realization of the self as eternally youthful are possible. Therefore, the transition to adulthood may not be viewed as an authentic life option since it is the adult himself who proclaims it inadequate. Not only that: the adult who shuns his condition kills the aspiration of the youth to become an adult. It is a vicious circle where youth becomes the only real existential proposal.

Presentism, another phenomenon that characterizes today's reality, is a forced choice in the individual who does not want to clash with uncertainty. In a globalized and presentist society for which the here and now and the all at once are utmost values, the past must be zeroed from memory and the future must be ignored since it is predisposing to the life stage of old age. As observed by Rosa (2003), existence is no longer designed along a line that goes from the past to the future: decisions are made day by day depending on needs and desires related to the situation and the context. But the focus on the present cancels the future, the projects and the long-term commitments, the conception of a life based on duration, stability and irreversibility: fundamental indicators of the social recognition of the adult. Thus, a vision of an unstable and irresponsible pseudo-adulthood takes form. At the same time the youth loses that linear dimension that the concept of transition itself should evoke, the life-path becoming fickle and circular in nature. As the present is not lived and primarily represented as a preparatory dimension of the future (Leccardi 2005), in the same manner the existential phases of youth or of late adolescence are not only intended as a preliminary step of adulthood, but as a valid life option, regardless of one's age and social status. The contemporary adult can, therefore, choose to wear a mask and live without a concrete sense of time. He dwells in a universe where the diversity between youth and adulthood has been not only removed, but has become a characterizing element.

We can, therefore, affirm that a new figure is emerging, a youthful adult. An adult individual who lives in a state of continuous present, that chases the existential and aesthetic paths of the young people and blends with them in order to forget and disguise his age and, especially, the responsibilities and the preclusion that this entails. He is an individual who is not made, but is in the making. Whether he wishes it or not, whether he is conscious of it or not, he continues, potentially, to maintain a plurality of options, choices, and existential promises. His life never seems to appear perfectly deposited in its fundamental signs. This scares, confuses, and especially fascinates because "that which is not yet attracts more than what has been, because the expectation of a dream has more charm than its fulfillment, because that which is far away from the end helps to remove the awareness that is not given to escape it for eternity" (Bonazzi et al. 2008, p. 75). The youthful adult is a young man who has decided not to grow up and enjoys this introspective shortcoming: he lives an artificial youth with infinite potential, possibility of digressions and recoveries, and absence of the ghosts of what could no longer be. He denies his age to assume those characteristics incidental to the symbols of eternal youth, crystallized in timelessness devoid of planning and awareness (Bonazzi et al. 2008); in reality, he tries to hide from the world and himself the non-acceptance of the new image of self that time is creating in spite of him. It is an image that has to be removed, kept away from the consciousness because its acceptance would be the recognition of a continuous inner and exterior changing: a process that does not change him suddenly, but that in the course of time modifies those psychological and aesthetic traits used to recognize himself. An alteration difficult to accept since a form of the self that he does not want to see changed is now interiorized.

Infantilization as a Law of the Market

The youthful adult, archetypal figure of postmodern infantilization, may also be related to novel and stringent market strategies, complicit and consequent to the recent social phenomena just taken into consideration.

In a recent publication, Barber (2007, p. 3) introduces a concept apparently connected to such a figure, the infantilist ethos briefly relating the phenomenon of the prolonged adolescence with the global market:

> "(The infantilist ethos) is an ethos of induced childishness: an infantilization that is closely tied to the demands of consumer capitalism in a global market economy."

According to the scholar, the infantilist ethos is today strongly promoted in marketing and is effective in forming the ideologies and behaviors of current society that is so radically consumeristic, at least at the same level as the Protestant ethics were in forming the entrepreneurial culture of the first capitalist societies. The comparison of Barber, in my opinion, is more than just a simple provocation and could be a useful introduction to the understanding of the magnitude of the phenomenon. More than a century ago, Weber (1904) introduced the concept of inner-worldly asceticism, to which the origins of the capitalist spirit can be traced as consequences of the ethics of the Protestant sects influenced by the doctrines of Calvino, in particular by the dogma of predestination. This doctrine affirms that God, in his inscrutable will, has determined from eternity who will be saved and who damned. Up against the anguish arising from the uncertainty about their eternal destiny, believers have then to seek worldly success as a signal of salvation (Bagnasco et al. 1997). With this thesis, Weber has not only shown the importance that the Protestant religion has played in the promotion of the capitalist economy. He has also showed that capitalism and culture are much more bound together than the limitations imposed by the Economy, Sociology and Psychology of the time suggested. In the same way, we could now easily correlate capitalism with the phenomenon of infantilization and search in the contemporary economy for new evidence to confirm this argument. Many scholars (e.g., Bell 1996; Freidman 2005) consider that the end of the Protestant ethic has given birth to capitalism devoid of any ethics and morals. In my opinion, the question is another: what new ethic is today's capitalism based upon in order to survive? In the current hyper-consumeristic system, the inner-worldly asceticism no longer translates to the obligation to produce, but to the obligation to buy, consume and accumulate. Greed is no longer sin; avidity is, paradoxically, a form of altruism toward productivity and, therefore, toward the survival of the national economy. After 9/11, the President of the United States George W. Bush invited his fellow citizens to go to the mall and shop to demonstrate the force and the patriotic spirit of the country to Al Qaeda. In recent times of crisis, practically all the European leaders have asked consumers to consume.

Once, productivist capitalism sought to meet the real needs of people. Today, in a saturated market, it is necessary to create new clientele and, to paraphrase Marx (1867), imaginary needs. It is a well known logic of the market: as early as 1848, Marx argued that once the old needs are satisfied, the individual is brought to seek new needs. Or, more recently, Guy Debord (1967, p. 15) stated: "The satisfaction of primary human needs, now met in the most summary manner, by a ceaseless manufacture of pseudo-needs." My thesis is that the encouragement of regression of adults is, therefore, necessarily connected to the promotion of goods directed to a specific group of adults: youthful adults and adult-children, or rather the kidults (Linn 2004, Schor 2004, Aberdeen 2008, Bernardini 2012), which is a group that has been gradually created by the market itself. But why opt for a regression toward young or even infantile ages? Apart from the obvious reasons related to the aesthetic charm typical of the young, in my opinion there are at least three reasons.

Firstly, because the needs of children and young people are ideally and potentially infinite, while "the demand for adult services and goods has proven not to be endless" (Del Vecchio 1997, p. 19). If the adult can consciously assess the real need for an object, the youth rather tends to the accumulation of goods which are ephemeral, superfluous, devoid of any practical or utilitarian value; similarly the child evaluates only the ludic and playful aspects of the object and does not voluntarily limit the desire for new goods.

Secondly, the adult used to be a child and a teenager. The memory of those years is a heritage that is always present in the eyes of the consumer and can continually resurface when the market relies on the nostalgia effect. It is a simple stratagem, very common nowadays, in which the actor-consumer relives past experiences and regresses once again toward previous life stages. Think of the countless remakes or sequels of movies, cartoons and comics of the seventies and eighties, of the success of vintage products in the fields of fashion and furniture, of the influences of covering and disco music in the recording industry. As Gary Cross suggests (2008, p. 158) the search for nostalgia is a relatively recent phenomenon; it is the effect of a frenetic and uncertain society in which the consumer finds stability in the memory of past experiences:

> "(the phenomenon of the search for nostalgia) emerged fully only when people found an accelerating rate of change in many things so frustrating and alienating that they tried to capture the fleeting past in their ephemeral culture and goods. It may seem strange that we seek stability in what lasted only briefly when we were young, but, as we age, our experiences as children and teens seem to be timeless. It may seem strange that we tend to seek stability in what has lasted for only a brief time when we were younger, but, as we age, the experiences we had as children or teenagers seem to be timeless."

It is not, therefore, a simplistic inability to make new resolutions: actually, looking at the past is often more fruitful than imagining the future.

The third reason is purely demographic. After the baby boom years, the birth rate in the western world has progressively decreased and, as a consequence, the average age has risen strongly. In fact, the average age of the world's population has increased considerably in the last fifty years, and it is assumed that it will continue to grow. If in 1950 those who were fourteen years old or less made up more than a third of the world's population, today they are just 13.5%, and in forty years it is estimated that they will be 8.6%. In the United States the average age has increased from 25 years in 1960 to 38 years in 2012. In Europe the situation is even more dramatic: in France the average age is 39.7 years, in Spain 41.5, in Italy 43.7, and in Germany 44.3.[2] Italy, in addition to having the third highest average age in the world, is also the second country in the world with the highest life expectancy at birth, 82 years, preceded only by Japan.[3] Young people are elsewhere: in the Third World and emerging economies, but they do not yet constitute an approachable market. The population of North America, which is just 5% of the world, represents 31.5% of global economic spending. The European Union (6.4% of the world's population) represents 29%. In other words, 11% of the world's population controls 60% of the market. An important motivation for the constant promotion of infantilism by the mainstream media and marketing can be traced to this imbalance. As long as the Second and Third worlds are unable to afford ephemeral goods, they will not be a possible market for youthful goods, which must then necessarily be redirected to western societies, even if they're aged by now.

It was the sociologist Juliet Schor (2004, p. 9) who declared: "the United States is the most consumer-oriented society in the world and the architects of this culture [...] have now set their sights on children. [...] Kids and teens are now the epicenter of American consumer culture. They command the attention, creativity and dollars of advertisers. Their tastes drive market trends. Their opinions shape brand strategies." According to the scholar, the United States and the western world in general are going through a period in which the child and the teenager are the epicenter of the consumerist culture, influencing the media and forming needs and behaviors of a growing number of adults. Postman (1994) defines them as adult-children, Epstein (2003) as locked in a high school of the mind individuals, Tierney (2004) as adultescents, and Cross (2008) as boy-men. The concept is the same: husbands in their forties who spend hours playing the same video games that obsess adolescents; fathers verbally and physically involved in fist fights at their children's game; politicians and managers who behave like impulsive teenagers; young adults who live with their parents, watch cartoons and see in marriage and in parenting an obstacle to their independence; in other words, infantile adults and kidults unable to assume responsibilities. A multitude of actors are united by the same lifestyle, because, if adult cultures are pluralist and distinctive, the youth culture is extraordinarily universal (Barber 2007): it almost seems that all the Western middle-class young people live in a kind of parallel universe (Walker 1996). Returning to a strictly economic point of view: is this not the best target for a market that wants to sell identical products in necessarily different realities? After all, as McNeal said (1992, p. 250):

> "in general, it appears that before there is a geographic culture, there is a children's culture; that children are very much alike around the industrialized world. They love to play [...] they love to snack and they love being children with other children. The result is that they very much want the same things, that they generally translate their needs into similar wants that tend to transcend culture. Therefore, it appears that fairly standardized multinational marketing strategies to children around the globe are viable."

On the one hand, therefore, the logic of global capitalism (Greider 1997) provides for the ongoing capital investment in new factories and, consequently, an overproduction of goods in a saturated market. On the other hand, in these times of economic crisis as the economic boom years have ended, consumers have acquired a strong diversification in what they desire to purchase and are apparently less likely to buy goods that are not necessities. It is in this context that, according to many economists (McNeal 1992; Parmar 2002; Barber 2007; Grams et al. 2008), the child has acquired a new value as a consumer and has become the new target of marketers. The child is easily suggestible, tends to want objects that have no utilitarian purpose, is driven by individualistic, irrational and almost exclusively playful desires, does not take into account the needs of others and does not present a substantial diversification in tastes. My thesis, however, goes beyond this logic: the market has not caused production to deviate toward the child-customer, it has rather found the ideal customer in the irrationally consumerist nature of the child. The main target remains the adult for at least two reasons: his economic resources, and the massive and growing presence of adults in the total population. The promotion of infantilization by the market has this aspiration: to foster the regression of the desires of the consumer – which, as we have seen, is allowed in a post-modern scenario - in order to make them more compatible with a capitalist logic based on surplus production and equality of products.

This is the reason why, in economic circles, we are far from a trivialization of fashion, an infantilization of consumption, a dumbing down of the goods (De Conciliis 2008) and a leveling down of cultural products: the

purpose is not only to make them more appealing to adolescents or children, but to impose psychological and behavioral regression adults. Adolescents are the archetype of a capitalism that exalts hedonism, the centrality of leisure, spending instead of saving, selling rather than investing, and that has replaced the concept of serving society with the propensity to serve one's self. Children represent the model of the ideal consumer because they are emotional, egocentric, and impulsive. Numerous research studies can function as a frame to this vision: back in 1999, Ken Dychtwald noticed that Americans in their fifties buy more than 40% of the total of consumer goods despite representing less than 10% of the target of advertisements and television programs, the target being mostly directed at teenagers and adolescents. In a 2002 survey he edited, John Nelson ascertained that most of the Americans in their forties and fifties show interest almost exclusively for the same things that interested them when they were adolescents or young adults. And that, thanks to the economic power at their disposal, they can now afford to buy those goods, mostly ephemeral, that they previously yearned. A few years after, Leo Bogart (2005), throughout the analysis of a similar survey, affirmed that most of the interviewees in their forties and fifties expressed the desire to remain forever young and saw in the accumulation of material goods a practical expedient for the realization of such desire.

In conclusion, it seems clear that this socioeconomic interpretation is indispensable in the analysis of a phenomenon – i.e., the infantilization – that now affects society in all its structure. The promotion of infantilism to safeguard a globalized capitalism may be, therefore, taken as a primary component of the infantilistic transformation that the media and institutions have experienced, and must surely be taken into account in the redefinition of the adulthood paradigm.

Endnotes

1. For example the streaming Talking Classic, the Angry Video Game Nerd and the Nostalgia Critic jokingly review videogames and movies that have shaped the previous generations. At the same time, these venues promote exhibitions and events (for example the various ComiCon) in which a mainly adult target celebrates comics, cartoons and television programs of the past.

2. Source: Ministry of Health, Labor and Welfare, United States, 2012.

3. Source: The World Factbook, Central Intelligence Agency, 2012.

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WMD Transformations: When did an RPG become a WMD?

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> The Iraqi regime has used weapons of mass destruction. They not only had weapons of mass destruction, they used weapons of mass destruction. They used weapons of mass destruction in other countries, they have used weapons of mass destruction on their own people. That's why I say Iraq is a threat, a real threat.
>
> — George W. Bush, Address at Ford Hood, Texas, Jan 3, 2003

The transformation of the term Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) from its specifically destructive characteristics to multiple, surprising variations in its socio-legal and political sense has been dramatic. This essay examines the absurd play of language inherent in the use of the term WMD, discussing the way weapons of apocalyptic terror became weapons of domestic innocuousness. From its appearance in the 1930s as a term of use, to its dissimulative abuse by the Bush administration leading up to the invasion of Iraq in 2003, WMD became a matter of fantasy, nightmare, comic relief and military justification. Its absurd finale has come in the form of the ultimate mockery – the use of a Rocket Propelled Grenade or pressure cookers filled with nails.

WMD as Terminology

In 1873, Friedrich Nietzsche suggested that figures of speech, "after long use, seem firm, canonical and obligatory to a people". Truth, suggested Nietzsche in a radical reappraisal of its meaning, is, "A mobile army of metaphors, metonyms, and anthropomorphisms – in short, a sum of human relations which have been enhanced, transposed, and embellished poetically and rhetorically, and which after long use seem firm, canonical and obligatory to a people; truths are illusions about which one has forgotten that this is what they are; metaphors which are worn out and without sensuous power; coins which have lost their picture and now matter only as metal, no longer as coins" (1954: 46-7).

Lotfi Zadeh, in an illuminating study of systems analysis, argues that human understanding is generally founded on "labels of fuzzy sets… classes of objects in which the transition from membership to non-membership is gradual rather than abrupt" (1973). Human reasoning, to that end, comprises a "logic of fuzzy truths, fuzzy connectives, and fuzzy rules of inference." As a system increases in complexity, the means of making judgments that are "precise yet significant" on its operation "diminishes until a threshold is reached beyond which precision and significance… become almost mutually exclusive characteristics" (1973: 28-44).

Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD), one of the twenty-first century's more famous abbreviations as WMD, became a term of conflation, used repeatedly, thereby obscuring "the distinctions among chemical, biological and nuclear weapons" (Oren and Solomon 2006: 1). Precision and significance became, to use the terms of Zadeh, mutually exclusive. Whether it is the "mobile army" of various lexical forms suggested by Nietzsche, or a matter of "fuzzy truths" and "connectives" inherent in a system of reasoning, the WMD fixation has taken states to war, resulted in absurd domestic adjustments to laws, notably those in the United States, and seen a satirising of the term. The current legislation in the United States reflects this expansion.

Learning to Love WMD

The term WMD has a curious biography. An address in 1937 by the then Archbishop of Canterbury Cosmo Gordon Lang is cited as one source where the term first appears. His subject of reference were wars taking place in China and Spain, where technological developments were becoming increasingly murderous to civilian populations. "Who can think without horror of what another widespread war would mean, waged as it would be with all the new weapons of mass destruction" (Cullinane Apr 26 2013). The context there seemed clear – the bleak promise of total war, the massacre of civilians by industrialised forms of mass killing that obliterated distinctions between combatant and non-combatant. The Basque town of Guernica had been levelled by German bombers, prompting George Steer of The Times (Apr 27, 1937) to describe the range of terror tactics employed to subdue then destroy the populace.

The United Nations deliberated over the use of such a term in the context of disarmament policy in 1948, coming up with a definition that included "atomic explosive weapons, radioactive material weapons, lethal chemical and biological weapons, and any weapons developed in the future which may have characteristics comparable in destructive effect to those of the atomic bomb or other weapons mentioned above" (Reichart and Carus 2012). Two years prior to that, it passed a resolution – its' first – establishing a committee to draft proposals relevant to various topics, including those concerned with "the elimination from national armaments of atomic weapons and of all other major weapons adaptable to mass destruction" (UN, A/Res/1(1) 1946).

Rendering the term WMD benign and indistinct has been a gradual outcome of the military industrial complex that grew up during the Cold War. Horror can be dealt with by minimising the threat – duck and cover, get under a desk, hide in ineffectual shelters and watching such propaganda products as Bert the Turtle whose shell will shield against extraordinarily destructive forces. A nuclear attack might well take place, but you may well still live. "Megadeath intellectuals" made apocalypse and Armageddon the necessary staples of the military industrial establishment.[1] Historiography on the subject of the first genuine WMD – the atomic bomb – shows that, far from being kept singular and spectacular as a weapon of destructive force, it would be normalised and rendered, in time, a feature of the tactical framework of the armed forces. Little wonder then that a redefinition was taking place from the other end – making domestic, seemingly harmless utensils of daily weapons WMDs.

The bomb, in other words, had to be loved, an instrument of power both useful and indispensable. As Lt. General James Gavin would write in 1958, "Nuclear weapons will become conventional for several reasons, among them cost, effectiveness against enemy weapons, and ease of handling" (1958: 265). The tag of being "conventional" and being treated as any other weapon, was deemed an inevitability by such planners as Secretary of State John Foster Dulles (NSC May 27 1957; Tannenwald 2005: 5). Certainly, the normalisation of such weapons finds form in Stanley Kubrick's film Dr. Strangelove or: How I Learned to Stop Worrying and Love the Bomb (1964), which only alludes to the cataclysm around the corner. The point, as the conclusion of the film suggests to the voice of Vera Lynn, is that "we will meet again" – the WMDs employed are not going to wipe out the entire human race after all. This is all part of the order of living.

There is another sociological phenomenon in the military complex worth noting even as the nuclear or WMD option is sliding into the background as standard fare for some states. During the Obama administration, there has been a conspicuous move to increase the significance of spectacular conventional weapons that are, for all intents and purposes, unconventionally powerful in their firepower. The initiation of a "global strike capability" that is growing in popularity in the White House and the Pentagon has been deemed to be so threatening that it might encourage smaller, less capable states to use a nuclear option (Grossman Aug 22 2012). The reliance on robotic and drone warfare is very much of the same ilk.

Fragmentation: WMD and Non-state Actors

The use of WMD as an expression is casual, presumed, an umbrella for a series of terms, has become common place. That said, a fundamental contradiction developed in the course of WMD discourses. Only some states were entitled to have them. Others, depending on the nature of their regime, are deemed incapable of holding such weapons in their inventory. The same logic has applied to non-state actors, organisations deemed inappropriate as recipients of WMD material. An important feature of this transformation has been the deconstruction of the state in favour of non-state actors with a magnified capability of doing harm. The "non-state" actor has become

the terrifying imaginary in the planning of officials keen to secure the homeland against the deployment of WMDs.

The U.S. Congress's National Defence Panel group, comprising retired generals and civilian experts, released a report in December 1997 extending the scope of threats to the United States, comprising not merely nuclear attack but WMD, terrorism, information warfare, ballistic and cruise missiles and other "transnational threats". The Defence Science Board also felt that, "The technology of today, and that which is emerging, allows a small number of people to threaten others with consequences heretofore achievable only by nation states." The Board added a note of greater urgency, suggesting that "the likelihood and consequences of attacks from transnational threats can be as serious, if not more serious, than those of a major military conflict" (quoted in Cato Institute 2011: 529).

The entire debate on WMDs is characterised by one running argument: only some should be allowed to possess them. There are monopolies of violence, though the contradictions arise in what geographical and urban spaces these take place in. Those that seek to attain them – countries that are not legitimately accepted by the international community; individuals who are regarded as formally "terrorist" organisations – are prevented from acquiring them.

The fragmentation of the state-WMD nexus was considered in an essay by George Orwell for the Tribune after the conclusion of World War II. He was primarily concerned with what the atomic bomb had done to interstate and human relations. Having such terrifying, obliterating power was dangerous if it was confined to states – a cheaper manufacture of such weapons would, far from making the world less safe, enhance its security by democratising the use of mass lethality. Such a view has been developed by such international relations theorists as Kenneth Waltz (1981) – an even distribution of nuclear weapons would make the world more, not less, stable. Having the means to kill the human race with such ease might be its own deterrent from use. Much of this hinged on how expensive the manufacture of the atomic bomb would be. "The atomic bomb," wrote Orwell, "may complete the process by robbing the exploited classes and peoples of all power to revolt, and at the same time putting the possessors of the bomb on a basis of equality. Unable to conquer one another they are likely to continue ruling the world between them, and it is difficult to see how the balance can be upset except by slow and unpredictable demographic changes" (Orwell [Apr Oct 19 1945]1968: 8-10).

Such violence, in short, cannot be democratised, if one is to follow the line of reasoning that only the good may hold the bad. The democratisation of such lethal means is precisely what bothers such figures as Google's Eric Schmidt. "I'm not going to pass judgment on whether armies should exist, but I would prefer not to spread and democratise the ability to fight war to every single human being" (Robertson Apr 13 2013). In February 2013, the Preserving American Privacy Act (PAPA) was introduced into the house designed to limit the uses of drone technology, another extension of such logic.

The United Nations Security Council resolution of April 1991 regarding Iraq's biological, chemical, and nuclear weapons programs provided the clear international example of how certain weapons had to be surrendered and destroyed by a regime. In so doing, it paved the way for what would be the ultimate mockery once that regime did comply. Security Council Resolution 687(c) made the claim that Iraq should "unconditionally accept, under international supervision, the destruction, removal or rendering harmless of its weapons of mass destruction, ballistic missiles with a range of over 150 kilometres, and related production facilities equipment."

There would also be a system of ongoing monitoring and verification put in place ensuring Iraqi compliance with the measure. Overall, such language reflects an illusion of singularity – that such weapons are only spectacularly destructive in the presence of the "wrong" people. In the appropriate hands, they are but ordinary extensions of state power, entirely legitimate provided they are controlled. To that end, WMD as a term transforms just as it is being transformed.

Simulacral WMD

A further linguistic and conceptual fragmentation took place during the Iraq conflict which revealed how the term WMD was an imperial monarch with no clothes, a symbolic echo of an order of a threat that did not exist. The term WMD became an illusion, an absence treated as a simulated presence. It assumed simulacral properties. The weapons were not there, but had to be there for the sake of legitimising the unauthorised invasion of a sovereign state in 2003. The U.S. National Intelligence Estimate (NIE), Iraq's Continuing Programs for Weapons of Mass Destruction (2002) claimed that Iraq was still pursuing its weapons of mass destruction program, that it had reconstituted its nuclear weapons program and would be able to assemble a device by the end of the decade; that it possessed the facilities to

produce biological warfare (BW) agents; that it had renewed its production of chemical weapons and had 500 metric tons worth of stockpiles; and that it was developing UAVs to deliver BW agents (Commission on the Intelligence Capabilities of the United States Regarding Weapons of Mass Destruction Mar 31 2005: 45).

U.S. Secretary of Defence Donald Rumsfeld ingeniously, if unwittingly, developed the post-modern fantasy of military absences that are still present realities – the absence of any genuine WMDs – in his infamous observation about "known knowns", "known unknowns" and "unknown unknowns" (Rumsfeld Feb 12 2002; Jun 6, 2002). This was a form of abductive reasoning gone mad, a "hunch" without much basis despite being justified as such.[2] "What he forgot to add," quipped the Slovenian philosopher Slavoj Žižek, "was the crucial fourth term: 'unknown knowns', things we don't know that we know – which is precisely the Freudian unconscious." It is precisely in unearthing the "unknown knowns" that the intellectual performs a service, the "disavowed beliefs, suppositions and obscene practices we pretend not to know about" (Žižek Feb 19 2005).

Furthermore, it did not matter that the weapons were never found. Having been dislocated from any direct, verifiable meaning or existence, the very term WMD was liberated of any concrete reference point. Even as former Vice President Dick Cheney was leaving office, he would claim with steadfast certainty that, "What they found was that Saddam Hussein still had the capability to produce weapons of mass destruction. He had the technology, he had the people, he had the basic feed stock" (Ritter Dec 16 2008). It did not matter that the capabilities of dual-use had been degraded by economic sanctions. The fantasy was what sustained the mission.

WMDs: Uses Both Popular and Domestic

The dual-image Cheney promoted during and after his period in the Bush administration regarding innocent uses of material that might become weapons-grade has a few implications. While the ultimate weapon – the nuclear option – might be normalised, innocuous options such as pressure cookers might well be transformed into lethal weapons and rendered abnormal. "Feed stock" can rapidly be converted into deadly chemicals for use against civilians, even if what was found in Iraq were mere precursor chemicals that could not be used for the manufacture of sarin, tabun or VX chemical nerve agents (Ritter Dec 16 2008). The cultural implication here is that a domestic, civilian use of a particular device (cooking, cleaning, drinking) can rapidly become a WMD. This has been brilliantly demonstrated by several comic sketches during and after the Cold War, where the ordinary use of an object can rapidly become deadly via symbolic representation.

The domestic could well apply to the industrial – and the quip during the radio comedy series Hancock's Half Hour in 1955 is indicative of that very fact. In a skit titled "The Chef That Died of Shame", the comedian Tony Hancock discusses a UN delegate's views that a particular chef's dumplings be added to a list of "Banned Weapons of Mass Destruction." Here, cookery elides with weaponry – a chef's product becomes as lethal as a weapon of mass lethality, the chef as scientist and potential killer. Or perhaps one can see it the other way – WMDs can assume the forms of cuisine made or manufactured by a humble cook, the banal scene that is vested with symbolic destructive force. But such humour has a habit of replicating, as Da Ali G Show demonstrates strikingly when the hip hop journalist Ali G (Sacha Baron Cohen), in the episode Rekognize, refers to WMDs in error as BLTs (bacon, lettuce and tomato sandwiches) – innocuous food again can assume gigantic proportions of terror, and the term itself has little meaning other than a poorly described sandwich.

In conversation with Republican politician and advisor Pat Buchanan, Ali G poses the vital question. "Does you think that Saddam ever was able to make these weapons of mass destruction or whatever, or as they is called, BLTs?" (Liberman Aug 4 2004). Buchanan embraces the malapropism without batting an eyelid, for here, the terms are interchangeable, be they ordinary sandwiches or actual weapons of mass lethality. The benign is credibly lethal; the lethal credibly benign. "Yes. At one time, he was using BLTs on the Kurds in the north. If he had anthrax, if he had mustard gas…" Ali G poses the next question: what if Hussein had just had plain BLTs without mustard. "Would you have been able to go in there then?" "No," comes the answer from an emphatic Buchanan (Liberman Aug 4 2004).

From coming in the form of deadly food, WMDs have also become caricatures and absurdities in popular culture, the brunt of fun for rapper Xzibit, whose album Weapons of Mass Destruction (2004) features a car called a WMD in the song Pimp My Ride. WMDs are totally decontextualised, the framework of reference removed and ultimately replaced by a symbolism of ordinary use. WMDs might be sentiments; they might be breasts for an

advertising campaign in which they are Weapons of Mass Distraction; they might form the subject of a refund for a travel to Cyprus that ceases to be safe because Saddam Hussein might be able to deploy weapons in 45 minutes.[3]

The advertisement campaign by the budget airline company EasyJet in 2003 constituted a provocative attempt to confront the multifaceted term WMD had become. There, the bikini-clad breasts of a model with the tag "Discover Weapons of Mass Distraction" was deemed irreverent and amusing. But 186 complaints were reported in Britain, some of which cited the trivialisation of the war on Iraq as a primary course of concern. The British Advertising Standards Authority was not on their side, finding that the advertisement had been humorous and unlikely to cause offence. (Billings Jul 30, 2003). "The authority considered that, although the phrase 'weapons of mass destruction' was likely to be seen to refer to recent events in Iraq, the advertisement did not trivialise the deaths, injuries or plight of those involved or affected by the conflict." The reference had been merely "distasteful" (Cozens Jul 30 2003).

The reduction of WMDs to a satirical context, the insinuation that the potency of such weapons had been "sexed up" in the vital dossier that was used, gave further play to the idea that such weapons are manageable but lethal. It is also the fiction that a person who is about to perform sexually is bound to merely be talking through his hat. This enables various constructions of the term to come into play. As Mark Thomas pondered in The New Statesman, bio-weapons may well have been "in a flat-pack, and that's why they were never assembled in time. As the Americans and Brits invaded, he [Hussein] had the instructions spread all over the palace living room floor, frantically muttering that 'they never look like they do in the picture'" (2003: 11).

The truth is that WMD as a term was itself a mockery, possessing within it its own undermining, it own fastasmic realisations and reconstitutions. It was the object of fun for Google, whose search engine parodied the term WMD when visitors would type in the term and search, only to have the message "404 Not Found" message.

Legal Extensions

WMDs have been effectively de-contextualised, their meaning broadened and encompassing. For that reason, the situation where an RPG (Rocket Propelled Grenade) might be deemed a WMD is not as illogical as it might, on first appearance, seem. They are found in the hands of U.S. veterans fighting as foreign soldiers in conflicts, thereby bringing into play the provisions that inculpate the use of WMDs under the U.S. Criminal Code. Few mention the paradox that the entire nation is effectively awash with WMDs by that definition. Was 20-year old Adam Lanza, perpetrator behind the Sandy Hook Elementary killings in December 2012, using such a weapon in deploying a Bushmaster XM 15-E2S rifle?

The drafting of U.S. laws on the subject of WMD became more adventurous and less logical with the passage of provisions that effectively made assault weapons and hand guns WMDs. The relevant expansive section is s. 921, explaining what a "destructive device" can be, including bombs, grenades, and rockets having a propellant charge of more than four ounces (18 U.S.C.§ 921). When read in the context of s 2332(a) – Use of weapons of mass destruction – the scope of application is enormous (18 U.S.C. § 2332(a)).

As Spencer Ackerman claims, writing in Wired (Mar 29, 2013), "U.S. law isn't particularly diligent about differentiating dangerous weapons from apocalyptic ones." W. Seth Carus of the Centre for the Study of Weapons of Mass Destruction has also commented on the evolution of the term in an occasional paper (No. 8, Jan 2012), noting that "high explosives" found its way into the definition over time. Khalid Ali-M Aldawsari was sentenced in 2012 to life imprisonment for attempting to use a WMD. He had, according to the Departmental release, purchased "chemicals and equipment necessary to make an improvised explosive device (IED) and his research of potential U.S. targets" (U.S. Department of Justice Nov 13, 2012).

Two seemingly absurd applications of the legislation have taken place this year, the first being the case of Eric Harroun, where special Federal Bureau of Investigation agent Paul Hinginbotham decided to charge an American citizen under the provision for using a "weapon of mass destruction". Harroun, a veteran of the U.S. Army, was merely using a Rocket Propelled Grenade in the course of his engagements with the forces of Bashir al-Assad in Syria. Reichart and Carus identify more than 50 instances where WMD has been defined. The authors also observe that the U.S. Criminal Code's reference to high explosives as also falling within the term was "inconsistent with most national guidance and with the usage preferred by the State Department and the international community". In having such a definition, virtually every crime could be prosecuted under the definition. In other words, the distinction regarding WMD was "fuzzy" in a different way than it had been in the case of Iraq. In the latter, it was darkly comic,

deceptive, non-existent but still a vital factor of policy – the WMD that won't get you because it won't be found but must be treated as a genuine threat. In the former, the weapons exist, but are exaggerated in terms of destructive potential.

Higginbotham explained in his affidavit that, among his various duties was the requirement to "enforce various laws, to include those that involve acts of terrorism by U.S. citizens and involving designated foreign terrorist organisations" (United States of America v Eric Harroun Affidavit, 1). This was of lesser interest than the specific provisions of the U.S. code he sought to rely on. Specifically, the affidavit was filed in support of a criminal charge that Harroun had conspired to "use a weapon of mass destruction outside of the United States, in violation of 18 U.S.C. § 2332a(b)." The relevant section covers conspiracy to use a weapon of mass destruction outside of the United States.

The sticking point here was also his involvement with a designated terrorist organisation, the al-Nusra front. Purported evidence taken from YouTube and Facebook accounts was also described, including one post with an accompanying video featuring "Downed a Syrian Helicopter then Looted all Intel and Weapons!" Photos featuring the accused holding or possessing an RPG "and other weaponry" were also noted (United States v Harroun Affidavit 3). Once he had finished his fighting in Syria, Harroun promised that he would travel to Palestinian "because of Israeli atrocities there."

Jurist Robert Chesney's views on the subject show an unconscious acceptance, a non-reflexive position on juridical reasoning on the subject. The term WMD has no relevance other than to punish all inappropriate uses of weaponry that might fall within the definition. What mattered was the government's unwillingness in feeding the apocalyptic imagery suggested by a "narrow" definition of WMD. "At the bottom, it is simply a statute that makes it a felony to set off bombs in public places, which certainly applies in this case. Unless the government were trying to take advantage of the WMD language to try to convince the public that this defendant was using a WMD in the usual narrow and scary sense of that phrase, there's really no harm in the situation in my view" (quoted in Cullinane Apr 26 2013).

Alan Dershowitz of Harvard Law School was surprised with the use of the WMD definition, suggesting that the indictment should have been best made under the federal terrorism statute. "Instead they charged him under a very rarely used statute involving explosion of weapons of mass destruction that result in the death of an individual" (quoted in Cullinane Apr 26 2013). The point with the charge, suggested Dershowitz, was that the prosecution would not have to show an intention to carry out a politically or religiously motivated crime.

The second instance of how the WMD provision has been deployed this year involved the bombings in Boston, where the surviving suspect was charged for devices used at the Boston Marathon on April 15. Here, a device's conventional domestic application became became lethal, and the comic culinary reference of Tony Hancock becomes a serious application of a statute to a "terrorist" act. Suspect Dzhokhar Tsarnaev, like Harroun, found himself facing charges under the WMD article of the US criminal code including "use of a weapon of mass destruction" and "malicious destruction of property resulting in death." The weapons in question were improvised pressure cookers. The Justice Department complaint itself claimed that both pressure cookers were of the same brand, contained metallic BBs and nails, many of which were contained in an adhesive material. They also "contained a green-coloured hobby fuse" (Apr 15, 2013). The way the designation was used did not escape the attention of some commentators. "Iraq dictator Saddam Hussein didn't have weapons of mass destructions, but two young Boston bombers did?" (Mucha, Apr 15, 2013).

Reflections on WMD

The unreality of the term WMD, connoting mendacity, known unknowns, and forgeries – the false link with Niger and uranium being the most spectacular case in point prior to the invasion of Iraq in 2003 – has rendered the term hollow, or to be more precise, an echo, a suggestion of what might be but is not. In so having its meaning suspended, the term has assumed a lexical flexibility. The nature of "conventional weapons" has also been a casualty of the U.S. policy on what constitutes a WMD – the conventional means of killing and the unconventional method of destruction have no clear utility in current military strategy. The term can, quite literally, be used for anything. It can denote any degree of harm or induce any degree of fear. It can even be the plaything of youngsters, "a bunch of lads from Illford frantically trying to finish their work after a lunchtime session on a Friday" (2003: 11).

The evolution of the term WMD has not merely become inconsistent and fuzzy, to recall Zadeh's term, but mutually exclusive to its own definitions and applications. An RPG has equal standing to a nuclear weapon or nerve gas. A pressure cooker keeps company with siren gas and other toxins. Food can kill. The term WMD is simultaneously absurd and significant. It exists in some forms, becomes invisible in others. In all cases, its effects are genuine, shaking makers of policy and troubling law makers. In all cases, its use has become absurd.

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Endnotes

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2. For abductive reasoning, see Charles Peirce discussing artists and how they arrive at choices: Collected Papers of Charles Sanders Peirce (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1958).

3. Faithless, in the album No Roots (2004), with the single "Mass Destruction" featuring greed and racism as "weapons of mass destruction"; EasyJet Advertisement featuring bikini clad breasts as "Weapons of Mass Distraction": Claret, Susan Townsend, Adrian Mole and the Weapons of Mass Destruction (2004).

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Labour-time in the Dot.Com Bubble: Marxist Approaches

Frederick Harry Pitts

Introduction

Looking at the Dot.Com boom and bust witnessed in the United States between 1995 and 2003, this paper will give an interpretation of Marx's mature economic thought with a particular emphasis upon the role of labour-time in his wider theory of capitalist production and breakdown. It will situate this conceptual apparatus in the context of radically different conditions of work and capitalist production than those with which Marx was confronted in the writing of Capital. This will be done by building up an analysis of the position of labour-time in the creation of absolute and relative surplus-value and the determination of the make-up of the organic composition of capital with specific reference to the circumstances which saw a financial bubble develop around the so-called New Economy of fledgling tech, telecommunications, ICT and internet start-ups in the US during the late nineties and early noughties. Utilising quantitative and qualitative data including government statistics and ethnographic accounts to illustrate the operation of Marxian analytical categories, the paper will assess the usefulness of Marx's conceptualization of labour-time and crisis to an analysis of the US economy over the period described, and gauge to what extent it requires recalibration to adequately grasp the changes in the organization of capitalist production identified in the research.

Whilst much of the evidence provided will reveal that Marx's theorization is still of considerable relevance to contemporary capitalism, there nonetheless remain certain aspects of the New Economy that his economic work are at a loss to comprehend. On the one hand, the Marxist tradition is still a valuable framework through which to view the global economy. Yet, on the other, contemporary capitalism possesses many qualities that require that tradition to be updated in order to help us understand and interpret changes in the way in which wealth is generated. Chief among these is the increasingly immeasurable nature of labour-time in the context of primarily intangible and immaterial processes of production. It is argued that autonomist Marxism presents a strong example of the way in which Marx's original categorizations can be reconfigured to form a theoretical perspective adequate to these new circumstances, which can be combined critically and fruitfully with the earlier theoretical paradigm to illuminate contemporary conditions of labour and capitalism.

The Dot.Com boom and bust which afflicted the United States between 1995 and 2003 is a good arena in which to have this discussion, presenting as it does an example of a capitalist crisis based upon a demonstrable low rate of profit, the chief feature of Marx's conceptualisation of breakdown, but displaying at the same time a number of distinct characteristics in the realm of production which suggest that the easy generalisations around working time that one can extrapolate from Marx need clarification and recalibration in adjustment to the historical conditions of the period. The article suggests that autonomist Marxism may provide such a necessary recalibration, whilst simultaneously retaining in a clarified and enhanced form many of Marx's original insights.

Background

The Dot.Com boom and bust refers to the series of events whereby the US economy witnessed a financial

expansion in the early nineties based up growth, investment and productivity in one area in particular, the so-called 'New Economy' of high-tech and internet-oriented ICT and telecommunications start-ups that arose at that time. Their market valuations supported the US economy even as it fought against a persistently low rate of profit in the chief economic activity zone of manufacturing. Indeed, equity prices soared even when established on a foundation of low rates of profitability in the non-manufacturing sector, of which many of the companies the boom was based on were part. However, the New Economy, for a time at least, exerted an upwards pull on the fortunes of the US economy and remedied the ills of a falling rate of profit. In this article we will seek to ascertain to what extent this was due to changes in the way wealth was generated at the coalface, in the realm of production where the new kinds of companies associated with boom displayed a significant amount of specificity and novelty in the way they organised the temporal patterns of the workplace, among a more general shift in the culture of work.

One of the primary factors distinguishing New Economy production is its reliance on radically recalibrated structures of the working day. An ethnographic account of an archetypal New Economy firm specialising in ICT business services by Andrew Ross provides an exemplary picture of the workplace culture of the time (2003). Some of the features identified by Ross include: a pernicious informality that channels ever-increasingly the subjectivity of the worker into the job, creating a grey area into which work and leisure collapse; an environment in which developing new skills and social networks and solving problems in one's spare time becomes part of the substantive work task; and a significant degree of employee investment and involvement in the company and its ethos, inducing the worker to give swathes of their own time to the business in the name of a higher and more personal ideal. As we shall see, the theorisation of such labour, whereby communicative, emotional and cognitive capabilities are deeply implicated in the work itself, is one of the attributes of autonomist Marxism that render it well-placed to update Marx's initial conceptualisation of labour-time and the role it plays in remedying capitalist crises.

The very aspects of these enterprises that provided the novel and investment-worthy status that served to propel them into the driving seat of the US economy are precisely those which made the work involved so deleterious to perform. The internet itself can be seen as a prime mover in this. Far from the new technology upon which the bubble was based clearing the ground for a reduction in working hours, rather the 'finite workday' was 'obliterated' by the constant contact to information networks offered by the internet, leading to eighty-hour workweeks in some of the New Economy businesses Ross reports upon (2003, pp. 44, 51).

In seeking to construct an account of the Dot.Com boom and bust from its roots in the realm of production, the significant characteristics of working patterns expressed in Ross's research display the importance that labour-time possesses as the theoretical pivot upon which any analysis is to be advanced. In this chapter we will see that Marx's theorization of labour-time is an effective tool for viewing the changes that took place in production and the rate of profit in the US economy during the period in question. However, we will conclude that there is a general inability to grasp the way in which the boundaries between work and non-work time have become ever-increasingly indistinct, and as such render inadequate traditional quantitative measures of labour-time. This will bring us to the insights provided by the autonomists.

Surplus-value and Exploitation

It is necessary to begin at the most basic components of Marx's theory of labour-time. For Marx, the production of commodities is divided up into two parts: necessary labour and surplus labour. Translated into time, the first portion has two determinations: the amount of time taken to produce the commodity demanded for sale by the capitalist; and the amount of time the worker takes to produce the commodity in order to reproduce his labour-power with the consumption of equivalent commodities through the provision of a wage. Whereas the necessary labour-time is that part of the working day where the labourer works 'for himself', what Marx calls surplus labour-time is time spent working for the capitalist. The labour-time spent working over and above that taken to ensure a wage and the reproduction of the worker's labour-power is spent contributing to the production of surplus-value, that part of the value generated left over when the worker's recompense and other associated expenses are taken into account. The urge to expand this quantity provokes the capitalist to extend this portion of the working day as far as possible. As such, the rate of surplus-value is also the rate of exploitation: surplus labour divided by necessary labour (Marx, 1990, pp. 324-6) Such an approach demonstrates the centrality of labour-time to Marx's analysis, whereby the actual degree of exploitation, one human by another, is gauged purely by the amount of time worked for free by the

worker for the capitalist.

The rates of surplus-value and exploitation have a tendency to rise as the capitalist will seek to extract as much labour-time as possible from the labour-power he has purchased. In this way, the capitalist is simply attempting to gain as much use as he can from the commodity he has purchased in the marketplace. The contract of employment signed, the capitalist possesses full discretion over the way in which the commodity at his disposal is used. For the capitalist, 'moments are the elements of profit', and with a watchful eye on the clock, times extraneous to the labour process are carefully cropped, with the beginnings, ends and break-times that circumscribe and permeate the working day decomposing into an amorphous mass of time made pliable to the purposes of the production of surplus-value. Such is the capitalist's 'right' as a buyer (ibid., pp. 342-44). Capital holds the tendency to exceed all limits and physical bounds upon the working day, attempting always the absorption of every second of the worker's disposable time. As such, Marx signifies here that 'to appropriate labour during all the 24 hours of the day is the inherent tendency of capitalist production' (ibid., p. 367).

As the account provided by Ross testifies, labour-time in Dot.Com enterprises was extended in such a way, occupying every pore of existence. Average working hours increased throughout the decade, in line with the rate of surplus-value, dropping off as the economy stagnated, as evinced by Figure 1 (see appendix for details of sources and calculations). Our calculation of the rate of surplus-value is profits divided by employee compensation.[1]

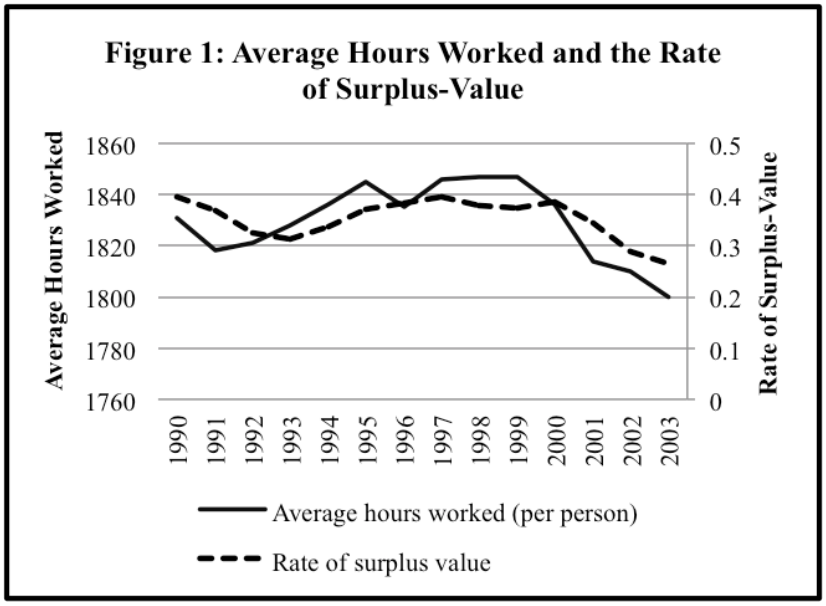

Figure 1

This data will be significant when we consider why capitalists might choose to prolong the working day depending on prevailing economic circumstances. For now, it is sufficient to say that Figure 1 displays the importance of labour-time to capitalist economic fortunes, a rise in the average hours worked coinciding with prosperity and a fall with times of relative hardship. The average amount of hours worked also neatly correlates with the rate of surplus-value.

Absolute and Relative Surplus-value

Thus far we have explored what Marx calls the production of absolute surplus-value. This is where surplus-value is accrued through the extension of the working day. In terms of altering the make-up of the working day in the pursuit of surplus-value, the other means that the capitalist has at his disposal is to intensify rather than extend the working day, recalibrating its internal composition rather than its external limits. This is known as the production of relative surplus-value. The principal process by which this is effected, and one very much in evidence in the conditions surrounding the Dot.Com bubble, is the influx of technology into production.

In place of the constant necessary basis of the working day that we assumed in our previous discussion of labour-time, relative surplus-value is structured around 'the curtailment of necessary labour-time, and the corresponding alteration in the respective lengths of the two components of the working day' (ibid., pp. 429-432). With relative surplus-value, rather than the absolute length of the working day being the moving participle on which production depends, that division which separates the working day into necessary and surplus portions becomes the territory in which capital exerts control over the time of workers.

The primary aim of capital can be seen to obtain less to a downward push on the total labour-time demanded of the worker, than to a downward push on the socially necessary labour-time in which the worker labours for himself and thus a corresponding rise in the amount of surplus labour-time devoted only to production for the benefit of the capitalist. Therein we are presented the way in which the production of relative surplus-value exerts as much influence upon the capitalist manipulation of the worker's time as does that of absolute surplus-value. We can best appreciate the difference when it becomes a question of how to increase surplus-value in the very last instance; when certain givens obstruct capital's path. With the working day given, the relative restructuring of the necessary/surplus partition is the only option capital has recourse to. With productivity or intensity given, capital only has recourse to the extension of the working day. As David Harvey writes, quoting Marx, [t]he difference is only one of capitalist strategy that "makes itself felt whenever there is a question of raising the rate of surplus-value'" (Harvey 2010, p. 237).

It is such questions of capitalist strategy with which we are preoccupied here. Where relative surplus-value cannot extend its domain any further for its downward influence on profitability, it might be suggested that capital can only satiate its need for surplus-value through recourse to methods of producing absolute surplus-value, namely, the lengthening of the working day. The arena in which such questions of capitalist strategy can be put is that in which they are posed with most urgency, in situations of capitalist crisis such as that of the Dot.Com crash. The key concepts in Marx's theory of crisis are the organic composition of capital and the tendency of the rate of profit to fall. We will discuss these with reference to the conditions of crisis as they arose in the Dot.Com boom and bust.

Crisis

The beginning of the Dot.Com boom can be attributed to the initial public offering (IPO) of stocks and shares by Netscape (Brenner 2002, p. 142). This set off an equity price bubble around firms similarly situated in the technology, media and telecommunications (TMT) sector. The new pre-eminence of non-manufacturing enterprises in the fortunes of the US economy should be seen against the background of a falling profit rate in the manufacturing sector after 1995. The ascendency of Dot.Com stocks and shares represented a boon to the ailing state of the traditional pillars of the US economy. However, the rise in equity prices around the TMT sector struggled against a similarly low underlying profit rate, with the valuations of stocks and shares separated from tangible measures of success (ibid., pp. 138-9). Telecommunications, despite in spring 2000 producing less than three per cent of GDP, had stocks and shares valued at $2.7 trillion, representing some fifteen per cent of the value of all non-financial entities (ibid., p. 292). The profits which ran parallel to these valuations offered little in the way of comparison. The contradictions presented by the combination of low profitability and high equity prices could hold no longer, with a crisis which began in telecommunications spreading to all high-technology firms and beyond, encapsulating e-commerce, internet content, infrastructure, connection services and a whole host of other ICT and new media-oriented functions. By winter 2001, there had been a 60% fall in the NASDAQ Index, where many of the internet and technology companies which had driven the boom were listed. Nearly 5,000 internet-related companies closed or were acquired at a loss in the first quarter of 2000 (ibid., pp. 248-9).

It is the position of this paper that the eventual crisis that unfolded from these boom conditions, and which erupted in 2000-2001, could plausibly be seen in the context of this persistent low profitability across sectors and the possible attempts at remedying this low rate of profit represented in the fledgling work practices and industrial cultures of the New Economy. The warped valuations of Dot.Com enterprises that arose in spite of this low profitability, it may be argued, is just one expression of capital's attempts to mediate and remedy the underlying problems that afflicted the economic situation. In this article, our focus is upon how the management of time within New Economy companies presents an interesting and useful prism through which to see the ways capitalism seeks to adapt and react to obstacles and paralyses that afflict its reproduction.

The Organic Composition of Capital

Marx's treatment of the interrelationship between trends in the organisation of labour and the manifestation or mediation of crises relies upon a series of concepts: constant and variable capital, the organic composition of capital and the tendency for the rate of profit to fall. For Marx, the inputs into the labour process are divided into constant and variable capital. Constant capital represents all means of production, machinery and raw materials. Variable capital is the human living labour which engages the elements of the former category. For Marx, the ratio between these two elements is of paramount importance in analysing capitalist production. This ratio Marx labelled the organic composition of capital (Marx, 1990, p. 762). The organic composition of capital (OCC), for Marx, presents the moving contradiction in his analyses of capitalist crisis. The increased productivity of capitalist production inevitably leads to the influx of new and greater means of production into the labour process. This drive toward improved efficiency necessarily results in the expulsion of labourers from employment, or in workers assuming control individually of an ever-expanding amount of technology. Either way, the proportion of constant capital to variable can be seen to rise, as either the amount of workers or the amount of hours worked decrease. For Marx, this proportional change can impact negatively upon the rate of profit, depriving as it does capital of the human labour to which it owes the creation of specific use-values for sale on the market as commodities (ibid., p. 318).

Thus, when we speak of the rising organic composition of capital, we refer to the increase in constant capital (raw materials, machinery, means of production) against variable capital (living labour) as a proportion of the total capital submitted to the production process. Brenner asserts that the US economy was plagued by over-capacity through the course of the Dot.Com boom. This over-capacity essentially represents having at one's disposal means of production into which no labour can be absorbed; in other words, too high a proportion of constant capital (2002, p. 46). In figure 2 we have calculated the OCC using proxies. For constant capital, we have used the capital stock, which is the total fixed capital and assets at the disposal of industry, and for variable capital, we have used employee compensation (see appendix for sources).

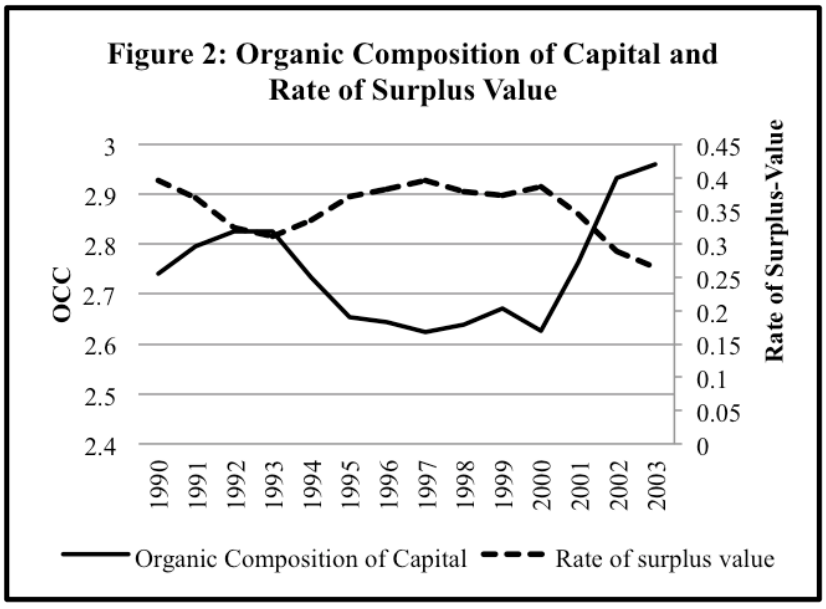

Figure 2

Figure 2 illustrates that there is an inverse correlation between the rate of surplus-value and the OCC. When the rate of surplus-value is lower, the OCC is higher. This is arguably because the increase in the amount of constant capital in the production process proportionally displaces the human labour-time represented in variable capital, decreasing the rate of surplus-value. The influx of high-technology means of production into most sectors of industry during the Dot.Com decade can be seen to have exerted great influence on these categories; the degree to which constant capital outweighed variable is exhibited, as we have noted, in the over-capacity that the system was

subject to.

With these insights in mind, it is not hard to see the potential contradiction in the rising OCC. The increase in the 'social productivity of labour' through the influx of new technology at once promises the opening of the full potential of capitalist production whilst simultaneously belying the destruction of the very foundation upon which it is established and maintained. The devaluation of labour-power, and the diminishing of variable capital in the OCC starve capital of the one thing upon which it thrives: human labour-time. Constant capital, despite its role in productive growth, bestows no new value through the means of production. Human labour plays an ever lesser role. Whilst this can be masked to an extent by an ever-increasing mass of surplus-value and profit, these false glories only serve to obscure an underlying tendency towards falling rates of surplus-value (and, of course, more immediately, rates of exploitation) and profit (Marx, 1981, p. 324).

Rate of Profit

The falling rate of profit is for Marx a tendency, rather than an iron law. It is contingent upon factors which may influence its operation and remedy its negative ramifications. In the OCC, as the total capital is forced upwards by the rise in the constant element, the proportion of the total capital represented in variable capital decreases to the detriment of the rate of profit. The unchanging rate of surplus-value in such equations is mirrored in the stagnation or regression of the rate of exploitation. However, this drop in rates of exploitation (and, hence, surplus-value) can be staved off to a certain extent by means of a recourse to absolute surplus-value. An increase in absolute surplus-value is necessary to preserve the rate of profit in the face of a rising total capital spurred on by the increase in the constant component.

Like Marx, Brenner emphasizes that 'capitalism tends to develop the productive forces to an unprecedented degree, and that it tends to do so in a destructive, because unplanned and competitive, manner' (1998, p. 23). Brenner presents a spiral of contradictions which ultimately, and usefully, provide grounds for comparison with Marx's theory by sharing the same basic premise: that the rise in productivity sows the seeds for the fall in profitability. As Brenner writes, in the mid-nineties 'the main forces shaping the economy of both the boom of 1995-2000 and the slowdown of 2000-03 were unleashed' (2004, p. 59).

Brenner's conceptualisation of the Dot.Com boom and bust locates the decline of profitability with which the bubble struggled in two, overarching factors. Firstly, productivity is increased by new cheaper and more effective methods, which neglect the 'requirements for realization' of existing investments in plant and equipment. Secondly, this results in falling profitability because it creates 'reduced prices in the face of downwardly inflexible costs.' Due to the 'resulting consolidation of over-capacity and over-production' (and the associated reduced profitability), investment, output and wages will decline, leading to subsequent reductions in productivity and effective demand. These conditions add further downward pressure on profitability, constituting a vicious cycle. Therefore, perhaps the key contradiction for Brenner is that '[t]he same cost-cutting by firms which creates the potential for aggregate profitability to rise creates the potential for aggregate profitability to fall, leading to macroeconomic difficulties' (1998, p. 24). This contradiction is essentially that proposed by Marx.

In an example of how a Marxian analysis can be applied to concrete examples of economic history, the mid nineties present an interesting case. Brenner juxtaposes the fall in profitability in manufacturing over the period 1996-1997 with the increase in profitability that occurred in non-manufacturing. What interests us about the latter is the way in which the rise in the rate of profit occurred alongside lower productivity when compared with manufacturing (2.35%), higher wages growth than manufacturing (3.2%) and higher unit labour costs (0.85%) than manufacturing. The figures for the manufacturing sector were 3.2%, 1.7% and -1.5% respectively (for 1996 and 1997) (Brenner 2002, pp. 135-7). What we see here is a rise in the profitability of those sectors with an OCC consisting of more variable capital and less constant capital, the variable capital represented in the higher wages and unit labour costs, and the reduced constant element in the lower productivity.

As figure 3 reveals, the tendency identified by Marx, of a rising OCC driving down the rate of profit is affirmed by the evidence available to us from the US economy between 1990 and 2003, with the rate of profit calculated as non-financial corporate profits and net interest divided by capital stock (see appendix for sources). As we have

previously identified, this rising OCC was achieved at the expense of the rate of surplus-value, with human labour-time displaced by an influx of new means of production into the labour process. Despite increases in working hours, it was still not enough to imbalance the proportional rise of constant capital in the ratio that determines the OCC. This can be seen to have negatively influenced the rate of profit over the period in question. It is evident, therefore, that Marx's theorization holds significant utility for an analysis of this period.

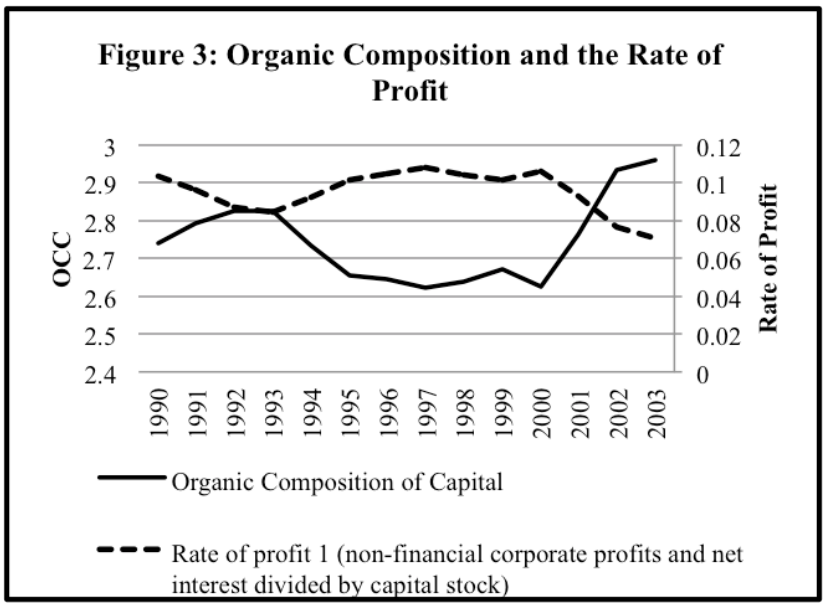

Figure 3

Countervailing Tendencies

With the decrease in profit established, Marx comes to the problem of explaining why the fall in the rate of profit is 'not greater or faster', and why it takes only the form of a tendency as opposed to a certainty. Marx suggests that '[c]ounteracting influences must be at work, checking and cancelling the effect of the general law and giving it simply the character of a tendency, which is why we have described the fall in the general rate of profit as a tendential fall' (ibid., p. 339). We will focus on one countertendency in particular: the increase in exploitation through a rise in absolute surplus-value.

Primary among Marx's list of countervailing tendencies is the 'more intense exploitation of labour'. The principal means by which capital can exploit labour further is through the prolongation of the working day. For Marx, this 'increases the amount of surplus labour appropriated without basically altering the ratio of the labour-power applied to the constant capital that this sets in motion, and which in point of fact rather reduces the constant capital in relative terms.' Marx writes that 'the tendency for the profit rate to be reduced, in particular, is attenuated by the increase in the rate of absolute surplus-value that stems from the prolongation of the working day [...].'

Fine and Saad-Filho (2004, p. 43) claim that absolute surplus-value is 'at any time a remedy for low profitability'. We can see evidence of the continuing relevancy of this remedy in the accounts of labour-time given earlier in the paper. The evidence presented from the research suggests that working hours did rise over this period. Figure 4 allows us to see whether or not this in any way correlated with, or possessed any determination on, the rate of profit (see appendix for data sources). As displayed, profitability does seem to follow trends in labour-time, increasing when average working hours are higher, decreasing when they are lower. This suggests that the increase in exploitation achieved through the production of absolute surplus-value via the extension of the working day may well constitute an effective and historically useful countervailing influence upon the tendency of the rate of profit to fall.

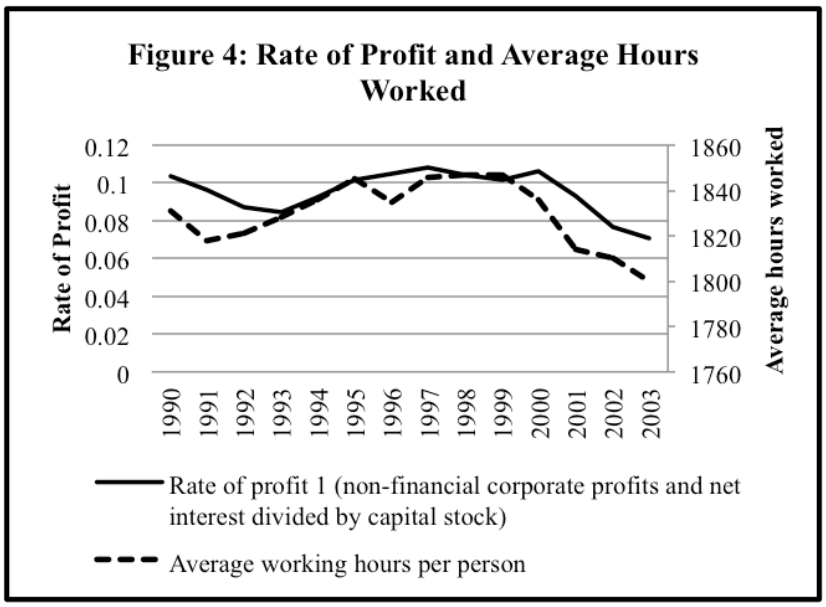

Figure 4

Beyond Measure?

However, despite this statistical confirmation, we might also reflect upon the anecdotal and ethnographic evidence found in the accounts provided earlier in the paper. Long working days were described where no clear demarcation was possible between necessary and surplus, or even paid and unpaid working time. The tendency in labour-time presented in the figures above does not seem to directly reflect those accounts of ever-increasingly longer working days, relying as it does on standard numerical and quantitative means of ascertaining work time rather than the qualitative dominance it can be seen to assume in ethnographic accounts and elsewhere. The countervailing tendency of an increase in the rate of absolute surplus-value may still be a useful way to view the responses of the capitalist organisation of work-time to a context of capitalist crisis, but new understandings forged squarely in the contemporary scene may be needed to reinforce its utility. In the remainder of the paper, we will display how the autonomists help us understand the extra labour-time expended in the New Economy as one 'beyond measure', and thus resistant to such statistical appreciations.

As we have seen in this chapter, Marx's theorization of labour-time, composition and profit does provide a good basis for understanding what took place in the US economy during the nineties and early noughties. However, if we consider the testimonies as to the structure of the Dot.Com working day, which emphasizes the increasing indistinctiveness of where the working day ends, the Marxist construct, formed in response to a set of industrial, material and physical conditions of labour that lent themselves well to measurement and estimation, may face some difficulty in examining a capitalism in which labour is broadly immaterial, the actual amount of time in which it takes place elusive, and the inputs and outputs that it consumes and creates increasingly of an intangible and transient quality. These are the limitations that form the crux of the particular research puzzle we are seeking to piece together, and which lead us to the autonomist Marxists as a means by which these gaps in Marx's economic theory can be plugged and eventually reconciled to the new conditions of production in contemporary capitalism.

Autonomist Marxism

We have seen that Marx's theorization of labour-time provides a good basis from which to extrapolate a number of insights about the economic trends of the Dot.Com boom and bust. However, in light of the ethnographic research presented at the beginning of the paper and the assessment of the distinct culture of long working hours

that was witnessed in the New Economy enterprises at the centre of the bubble, there are ways in which Marx's conceptualization of capitalism could be bolstered by a recalibration formed in response to the new conditions of production exhibited, rather than remaining tied to the very different realities of his own time. We will see that autonomist Marxism presents a basis from which to make this theoretical leap.

Immaterial Labour

The most superficial difference between the autonomist theory of production and that of Marx may appear to be the way in which contemporary labour is presented. Indeed, in their analyses of the economy, autonomists do differ from more traditional empirical strands of Marxism in attempting to update Marxian categories such as absolute and relative surplus-value and variable and constant capital to reflect an economy reliant upon the new kinds of work exemplified in the New Economy. Key here is the theorisation of immaterial labour, 'that is, labour that produces an immaterial good, such as a service, a cultural product, knowledge or communication' (Hardt and Negri 2001, p. 290).

Due to the fact that such 'immaterial labour' relies upon the everyday human capacity to communicate, consume, empathize, cognize, and emote, the boundaries between labour-time and non-labour-time become ever-increasingly blurred and indistinct. As Hardt and Negri vividly convey, '[w]hen production is aimed at solving a problem [...] or creating an idea or a relationship, work time tends to expand to the entire time of life. An idea or image comes to you not only in the office but also in the shower or in your dreams' (2004, pp. 111-112). In this way, the blurring of boundaries between labour-time and non-labour-time is, as Paolo Virno asserts, a symptom of the increasing similarity between human activity and labour activity (2004, pp. 102-3). Whilst such graphs as those used to illustrate Marxian categories of labour-time might be useful, they suffer for their inability to adequately reflect the seemingly immeasurable quality of the immaterial labour of the Dot.Com industry.

The autonomist theorization of time seems to suggest, when read in conjunction with the Marxist perspective expressed in the first part of this paper, that what is being posited is a return to the production of absolute surplus-value. This suggests a shift in favour of variable capital in the OCC; however, autonomist theory mounts a radical reconceptualization of constant capital which demands a more inclusive approach. Alongside the extension of labour-time out of the 'factory walls' and into the 'immaterial basin' of society at large, autonomist theory provides further grounds for challenging and reformulating the Marxian conception of the roles of variable and constant capital in the OCC. This takes the form of a line of reasoning derived from Marx himself, yet taken much further by the autonomists. This concerns the concept of general intellect. We will first outline the concept and the role it plays in Marx's thought, followed by an examination of its centrality to the autonomist theoretical project, engaging with the ways in which the autonomist embrace of Marx's concept has been updated and reflected back upon Marx's other work in order to demand a new interpretation of the OCC.

General Intellect

In the 'Fragment on Machines' from the Grundrisse (1973), Marx states that the increase in machinery in the labour-process displaces human labour to the extent that the activity of workers is reduced to a purely supervisory or regulatory role alongside the new chief actor of the labour process, the machine, weakening the role of labour-time as the measure of human productive activity. This technological leap brings about the possibility of a social development on a massive scale, as workers, freed from physical subordination to the means of production and newly possessive of the increased 'power to enjoy' in their disposable time, avail themselves of great advances in their intellectual and cooperative capabilities. In defining the 'general intellect' so enabled, Marx makes the assertion that the capacities developed in the worker's new free time will reinsert themselves into the production process without coercion as fixed capital, incorporating the worker only at a distance, rather than as a constituent part of the capital relation (Marx 1973, pp. 705-6).

Virno's considered account of the reality of the general intellect disavows any temptation to claim that these conditions are those we are party to today. Virno draws upon Marx's developmental, tentative conception of the

general intellect to paint a picture of the way in which increased 'freedom' from the formal infrastructure of the labour process is turned to capital's advantage as a means whereby the bond between employee and employer can be strengthened.

Virno accepts that technology, when it fails to subordinate workers ever further to its command, has opened up time in which the worker may devote his energies to other tasks. Furthermore, like Marx, Virno claims that the results of this do find their way back into the production process. However, Virno presents an account of the situation whereby the emancipatory content of the general intellect is neutered, its benefits ploughed by capital into ever-increasing control over the organization of time and the reduction of human activity to a subservient function of the imperative to produce and profit. Virno writes that '[w]hat is learned, carried out and consumed in the time outside labor is then utilized in the production of commodities' (Virno 2001).

The research conducted by Ross on work in the New Economy reveals the extent to which this was the case in the Dot.Com boom; training oneself to adopt new skills demanded by ever-changing technology was estimated to occupy up to 13.5 hours of the worker's unpaid free time per week (2003, p. 93). With immaterial labour, the reappearance of the increased knowledge and intellect possessed by labourers as fixed capital (or constant capital) in the labour process does not occur. The benefits of the social development of the workforce instead reappear simply as living labour, variable capital, the human subject of exploitation at the hands of capital.

Virno emphasizes the role of communication in this subjugation of human capacities to the logic of the labour process, suggesting that '[t]houghts and discourses function in themselves as productive 'machines' in contemporary labor' (Virno, 2001). Hardt (2008, p. 10) elaborates further, contending that 'our brains, linguistic facilities, and interactive skills' have assumed the position previously held by machines in the constitution of constant capital. As Virno (1996, pp. 22-3) concludes, rather than destabilizing capitalist production, the general intellect, and the organization of time around it, has in fact become 'the stabilizing component' of the capital mode of production'. From our reading of Marx, it might be suggested that this stability arises from the primacy of living labour in the labour process; whereby variable capital, the wellspring of surplus-value, is increased in proportion to constant capital by means of the extension of the working day and thus of labour-time as a factor in production. The experience of workers in the New Economy suggest that the immaterial forms of labour which autonomist analyses seek to understand terminate not in the optimistic picture provided by Marx in his Fragment on Machines but rather in the almost infinite increase in absolute surplus-value made possible by their boundary-breaching intangibility, and by which capital attempts to insulate itself from crisis and further falls in the rate of profit, as seen in the previous discussion.

Linguistic Machines

The reality of general intellect- the turning of free time and the power to enjoy towards productive ends of capitalist value- manifests itself a self-valorising, cooperative plenitude of creative activity that continues regardless of its direct organisation by capital. The most obvious example of this is that the economic boom around the internet relied upon millions of hours of unpaid labour on the part of amateur programmers and run-of-the-mill users. The attempts of capital to capture the value so produced demand us to reconceptualise the way in which the Marxian categories of variable and constant capital, and their relationship through the OCC, function in such a context.

The capacity of workers to cooperate spontaneously, outside the direct coordination of the capitalist, demands that we reconsider the category of 'variable capital' as traditionally understood when examining the autonomist reformulation of the OCC. Whereas Marx pictured the labour-process as featuring a productive cooperation between workers organized by the capitalist, Hardt and Negri (2001, p. 294) make the claim that cooperation instead becomes the self-organizing function of the workers themselves. This cooperation is 'immanent in the labouring activity itself'. With immaterial labour, ordered around intellect, communication and affect, the role of the capitalist instead becomes to 'expropriate cooperation' as a means of garnering surplus-value from the self-valorizing activity of workers (Hardt and Negri 2009, p. 141). Indeed, as noted, the World Wide Web itself was a fine example of the incorporation of 'trillions' of hours of free time in a project based upon the innovations and shared collective know-how of millions of everyday PC users (Ross 2003, p. 218).

Providing the most fully fleshed-out articulation of the new OCC in the autonomist literature, Christian Marazzi posits that the contemporary capitalist organization of production is structured so as to fulfil the primary purpose

of capturing the value produced in society at large. Bringing together various threads that we have encountered in the autonomist oeuvre thus far, Marazzi suggests that the OCC is still a valid tool for analysing capitalism, albeit recalibrated along strictly immaterial lines. For Marazzi, such 'crowdsourcing' Web 2.0 phenomena as Facebook and Google represent the new OCC. Here constant capital is 'the totality of linguistic machines' that act in society at large to capture what becomes the substance of variable capital, that is 'the totality of sociality, emotions, desires, relational capacity, and..."free labor".' The 'linguistic machines' that become the new constant capital extend the working day with their acquisitive search for variable capital (Marazzi 2010, p. 56).

The importance of these new forms of constant capital is a corrective to any notion that constant capital has decreased, alleviating the contradiction that sparks the tendency of the rate of profit to fall. Indeed, although Marazzi does point to the reduced costs achieved through the continuing and sometimes infinite usage capacities of these apparatuses of value-capture, we should also consider Marx's distinction between the two departments of the economy: that which produces wage goods, and that which produces the means of production (ibid., p. 59). The constant capital component of the OCC also rises in proportion to the amount of labour expended on producing means of production, for the simple fact that there are more means of production per worker. Virno suggests that we should see the communication industries as a whole as an 'industry of the means of production' adequate to the new forms of constant capital that drive the creation of value (2004, p. 61).

The evidence presented by Ross conforms to this. With the Dot.Com firm he studies primarily operating as a service to other businesses, Ross concludes that '[i]f new media was an industry, it was one that existed to transform other industries '(2003, p. 244). Coupled with the further observation that what pass as wage goods (cellphones, software etc) might also possess a double function as means by which production is extended into the domestic sphere, it is clear that a new context of principally immaterial labour and intangible forms of production resolutely does not discredit the relevancy of constant capital nor a more general sensitivity to the ratio of constant and variable capital presented in the OCC.

Despite the proliferation of constant capital in the ways detailed above, there is also in evidence in the conceptualisations of immaterial labour given in the autonomist tradition the concurrent increase in variable capital by virtue of the expansion of absolute surplus-value through the extension of the working day, as we have seen in the preceding discussion. It is evident that an autonomist-inflected reading and a Marx-inflected reading provide different, but not irreconcilable, understandings of the role of the OCC in determining the economic function of capitalism.

Marazzi (2008, p. 60) claims that the new forms of immaterial production secure an 'economy of increasing returns', working against an underlying fall in the rate of profit. The tendencies described above, the 'putting to work of the language of social relations, the activation of productive cooperation beyond the factory gate' and the extension of the working day are presented therefore as countertendencies to falling profitability, 'respond[ing] to declining profit rates by intensifying the exploitation of the communicative-relational cooperation of the workforce'. In Marxian terms, the rise in profitability is as a result of a return to absolute surplus-value as a means of increasing variable capital in the OCC, restoring the chief input from which capital derives its wealth: labour-time. It is the restatement of labour-time's centrality to the understanding of capitalism that allows autonomist Marxism to continue Marx's work on the topic whilst also endowing it with new characteristics suitable for the era in which we find ourselves.

Conclusion

We have seen that the autonomists adopt and advance many of Marx's theoretical tools and categories whilst addressing the inability of his quantitative and systematic economic thought to accommodate an immaterial model of production that operates beyond all measure. This is exhibited nowhere more than in the debate over labour-time. Our account of Marx's schematization of labour-time and crisis teased from the research the suggestion that labour-time may possess some determining influence over the rate of profit. Whilst we have displayed that Marx's work holds standalone relevance for the analysis of recent trends in capitalist production, the continuing inquiry of the autonomist Marxists performs the necessary work of dragging Capital kicking and screaming into the uncertainties and absurdities of twenty-first century capitalism. The autonomist theorization of labour-time similarly identifies working hours as possessing a determining influence upon rates of profit, albeit it with a sensitivity to contemporary

conditions that allows us to see clearly its application in reference to the research of Ross and others on the actual quotidian reality of work in the Dot.Com boom. The combination of conceptual insights from Marx and the autonomists on the subject of labour-time has enabled us to perceive the New Economy and its crisis through a theoretical prism that embraces these everyday conditions of work, whilst simultaneously facilitating extrapolation to a wider economic mise-en-scène capable of interpreting broader macroeconomic claims about the US economy during the nineties and early noughties.

What the meeting of Marx and his autonomist interpreters allows us to comprehend is the way in which the seemingly dislocated logic of the macro-economic picture at times of turbulence such as those of the Dot.Com years can be associated at its very foundations with shifts in the way in which value and wealth are generated in the realm of production. The organisation of time, it has been suggested here, is a key element, both in capitalist responses to crises and at the inception of the economic booms and bubbles that eventuate in these crises. The lesson of Marx, in this sense, is that the way in which time is organised in the workplace is an important aspect which cannot be ignored in analyses of the wider economic picture. However, it is only a lesson, one which needs to be taken forward and fulfilled in the setting of a contemporary suite of conditions in which the organisation of non-work time is as important as the organisation of time in the sphere of formal employment. This difference is central in how we go about approaching the question of labour-time in the Dot.Com bubble and the role it plays in determinations of the organic composition of capital and its attendant impact upon the rate of profit. It is the autonomists that allow us to take Marx's lesson on labour-time and apply to it the specific circumstances which surrounded a New Economy in many ways utterly distinct from the economy Marx had subjected to critical scrutiny, but in very many more important ways still entirely open to interpretation along the lines of the conceptual apparatus provided in Capital and elsewhere. This conceptual apparatus allows us to see that labour-time- in its appearance as variable capital or otherwise- has a bearing upon the successful reproduction of capitalist social relations and those points at which this reproduction can be seen to break down, no matter where, how, when and for how long it is extracted.

Acknowledgments

The author would like to thank Timothy Cooper at the University of Exeter for his supervision of the 2011 research that eventually resulted in this paper.

Endnotes

1. Please see Appendix for data sources relevant to this and other graphs presented in this article.

Appendix: Data Sources

All variables are referenced from the available OECD and Bureau of Economic Analysis indicators, as follows:

Average Working Hours

OECD, 'Average annual hours actually worked per worker', OECD.Stat online database, available at http://stats.oecd.org/Index.aspx?DataSetCode=ANHRS [last checked 1st August 2011]

Capital Stock

OECD, 'Capital Stock, total economy, volume', in OECD Economic Outlook available at http://stats.

oecd.org/Index.aspx?QueryId=29817 [last checked 1st August 2011]

Employee Compensation

Bureau of Economic Analysis, Table 1.12: National Income by Type of Income, National Income and Product Accounts Tables, National Economic Accounts available at http://www.bea.gov [last checked 1st August 2011]

Net Interest

Bureau of Economic Analysis, Table 1.16: Sources and Use of Private Enterprise Income, National Income and Product Accounts Tables, National Economic Accounts available at http://www.bea.gov [last checked 1st August 2011]

Non-Financial Corporate Profits

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Violent Media, Guns, and Mental Illness: The Three Ring Circus of Causal Factors for School Massacres, as Related in Media Discourse

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"When something like this happens, everybody says it's an epidemic, and that's just not true" (Amanda Nickerson, in Glaberson, 2012). While this reaction to the December 14, 2012 shooting at Sandy Hook Elementary School[1] is one of the more realistic responses to the event, it also is rather uncharacteristic. When news of a school shooting breaks, most people struggle to come to terms with the tragedy and begin their quest for answers to a number of questions. One of the most elusive answers is to the question of "why" the event has happened (Schildkraut, 2012a).

In an effort to answer this question, two groups have emerged as key narrators of the school shootings story. First, the mass media are responsible for breaking the news and providing audiences with information on the shooters, the victims, and the events. Once the audience receives this information, they then turn to the second group – politicians – to report on the response and "official reaction." In addition to seeking answers to why these events happen, members of society also rely on their elected representatives and political figures to help put the event in perspective, and to look for ways to prevent the next tragedy. Both of these key narrators are filtered through mass media, as journalists themselves frame and comment upon the tragedies, and as politicians reach their constituents and broader audiences via media reportage.

New Hampshire Senator Kelly Ayotte recently weighed in on the tragedy in Newtown, stating, "Ultimately when we look at what happened in Sandy Hook we should have a fuller discussion to make sure that it doesn't happen again" (Kelly Ayotte, quoted in Associated Press, 2013). While a similar sentiment has been echoed following other mass shootings in schools, both the media and politicians continue to focus on three major themes – guns, mental health, and violent media. This discourse may be supplemented by considerations of individual and sociological causes, including the roles of family, religion, and community. These latter topics, however, play a supporting role to the stories' main cast of issues around which to frame school massacres.

While these stories are presented to the public in a neat, succinct news package or article, the reality is that it's not quite so simple. Rarely can events so unpredictable and difficult to explain be reduced to a simple narrative; yet this doesn't stop the media and politicians from trying. This chapter explores the discursive construction of school shootings stories, from how the media covers these events to the themes interwoven through the political rhetoric. Specifically, we examine three prominent school shootings – 2012's Sandy Hook as well as it's equally infamous predecessors Columbine (1999)[2] and Virginia Tech (2007)[3] – and how relatively short-lived, random events have turned into unprecedented "media spectacles" (Kellner, 2003, 2008a, 2008b) and moral panics (Burns & Crawford, 1999; Schildkraut, Elsass, & Stafford, 2013; Springhall, 1999).

We Interrupt This Program with Breaking News of a Shooting…

When news of a school shooting breaks, the media rush to the scene to begin a barrage of coverage that can

last days and even weeks. News stations, particularly 24-hour news networks such as CNN, Fox News, and MSNBC, cover every facet of these stories throughout their wall-to-wall coverage (Elsass & Schildkraut, 2013). Newspapers capture audiences with sensationalized headlines and are able to generate more stories between printings through their digital counterparts (Elsass & Schildkraut, 2013). The end result is that these relatively uncommon events are highly sensationalized, thereby making them appear considerably more common than they are (Kellner, 2008a; Surette, 1992).

Following Newtown, journalist David Carr (2013) wrote that "[our] job as journalists is to draw attention, to point at things, and what we choose to highlight is defined as news." As most people will never experience a school shooting, the media become their only outlet to these phenomena (Jewkes, 2004; Mayr & Machin, 2012; Robinson, 2011). Researchers have shown that for up to 95% of the general public, any information they receive, particularly about crime, comes via the media (Graber, 1980; Surette, 1992). It then appears that the media must operate under the motto, as Uncle Ben told Peter Parker in Spiderman, "with great power comes great responsibility" (Ziskin, Bryce, & Raimi, 2002). Yet does this happen?

In a 2013 article, New York Times opinion columnist Ross Douthat tackled this quandary. In his analysis of partisanship in the media, Douthat (2013) suggests that the mainstream media act "as a crusading vanguard while denying, often self-righteously, that anything of the sort is happening." Though this statement was made in the context of the nation's fiscal crisis, he goes on to link it to the recent Newtown shootings:

> The trouble is that when you set out to 'lead' a conversation, you often end up deciding where it goes, which side wins the arguments and even who gets to participate. (Douthat, 2013)

This trouble is often the result of the discord between journalistic neutrality and editorial choices (Douthat, 2013). He discusses two particular editorial choices that are especially relevant to the public's understanding of school shootings.

First, Douthat (2013) notes some stories receive continuous, or "wall-to-wall," coverage, while others are buried. Columbine, for instance, became the biggest news story of its year, as well being one of the most followed stories of the entire decade (Pew Research Center for the People & the Press, 1999; Robinson, 2011). Similarly, Virginia Tech was also the biggest story of a news week that included coverage of the war in Iraq, a Supreme Court ruling on abortion, and the upcoming presidential election (Pew Research Center for the People & the Press, 2007). Sandy Hook was the second most followed story of 2012, falling just short to that year's presidential election (Pew Research Center for the People & the Press, 2012). The end result is that the media focus on several high profile cases, which can give viewers a misinformed understanding of the frequency of occurrence (Burns & Crawford, 1999; Kellner, 2008a; Muschert, 2007a; Muschert & Ragnedda, 2010; Newman, 2006). In reality, school shootings occur at an average of less than 10 events per year (Schildkraut, 2012a).

Beyond where the story ranks in terms of perceived importance, the sheer volume of coverage these events receive also greatly influences public understanding of these events as the continuous coverage makes these events all but inescapable. For the first month following Columbine, for example, three of the major networks – ABC, CBS, and NBC – devoted a minimum of half their evening news coverage to the shooting, totaling 319 stories (Robinson, 2011). Another study (Maguire, Weatherby, & Mathers, 2002) found similar results when examining the first week of coverage of Columbine compared to 13 other shootings. The same three major networks aired 53 stories and four hours of coverage on Columbine, while the remaining shootings combined totaled nearly the same amount of coverage (Maguire et al., 2002). Following the Virginia Tech shooting, particularly after NBC News released Cho's multimedia manifesto, the backlash from the volume of coverage was so pervasive that NBC executives limited their coverage of the event to 10% of total airtime (Schildkraut, 2012b). Prior to this, however, CNN and Fox News had registered 1.4 million and 1.8 million viewers respectively on the day of the shooting (Garofoli, 2007). By comparison, these networks typically averaged 450,000 (CNN) and 900,000 (Fox News) daily viewers in the year prior to the shootings (Pew Research Center's Project for Excellence in Journalism, 2006).

Following Columbine, over 10,000 stories about the shooting appeared in the nation's top 50 newspapers (Newman, 2006), including 170 articles published in the New York Times alone (Chyi & McCombs, 2004; Muschert & Carr, 2006). Over 130 articles were published between the Times and the New York Post following Virginia Tech (Schildkraut, 2012a). Coverage of Sandy Hook in the New York Times in the month following the shooting also reached over 130 articles excluding op-eds and blogs (Schildkraut & Muschert, 2013). Increases in media coverage also can be observed through online coverage statistics. Following Virginia Tech, for instance, MSNBC.

com registered 108.8 million page views (Garofoli, 2007). On an average day, the site registers around 400,000 page views (TheWebStats.com). What is perhaps most staggering about these numbers is that other shootings, such as the 1999 Conyers, GA shooting (one month after Columbine), the 2008 Northern Illinois University shooting, or the 2012 Chardon, Ohio high school shooting, have failed to garner equitable media attention. This confirms Kellner's (2003, 2008a, 2008b) "media spectacle" related to Columbine, Virginia Tech, and Sandy Hook, each of which have become iconic and archetypal of school shootings in their own right.

Douthat (2013) also notes that a conscious decision is made to cast one side as aggressors and the other as the aggrieved.4 This is perhaps easier to discern when examining mass murder in schools – there is a clear aggressor (the shooter) and aggrieved (the victims). With the media, however, the conscious decision is less about who is cast in which role and more about which actor gets the most coverage and airtime. While a considerable amount of coverage of the Columbine victims appeared across major news outlets, such as the New York Times, Associated Press, ABC News, CNN, and PBS News (Muschert, 2007b), the majority of the coverage centered on the shooters, Eric Harris and Dylan Klebold (Muschert, 2007b; Schildkraut & Muschert, 2013). One of the most iconic images to be published of the shooting was a still frame of the shooters in the school's cafeteria, which made the December 1999 cover of Time magazine (Schildkraut & Muschert, 2013).

A similar disparity in coverage between the aggressor and the aggrieved also was noted in the case of Virginia Tech. In 113 articles examined from the New York Times and the New York Post, there were a total of 413 references (177 and 236, respectively) to the shooter, Seung-Hui Cho (Schildkraut, 2012a). By comparison, there were less than 100 references combined between the two papers for all 32 victims (Schildkraut, 2012a). Further, in both Muschert's (2007b) and Schildkraut's (2012a) examinations of the coverage of these events, it was observed that the media created further disparity with their reporting of selective individuals. In each case, only a handful of victims received an increased amount of attention, whereas most victims received only one or two mentions, if they were covered at all (Muschert, 2007b; Schildkraut, 2012a).

While the coverage of the Sandy Hook shooting also clearly defined the aggressor (shooter Adam Lanza) and the aggrieved (the 20 first grade students and six of their educators), this coverage visibly departed from the framework laid out by the earlier events (Schildkraut & Muschert, 2013). Specifically, a considerably larger amount of coverage focused on reporting on the victims rather than the shooter (Schildkraut & Muschert, 2013). While additional research is needed to understand the full impact in this new reporting trend, Sandy Hook marked one of the first shifts from "offender-centered reporting" to "victim-centered reporting" (Schildkraut & Muschert, 2013, p. 22), a developing discourse that dovetails with effects to identify who (or what) is responsible for such attacks.

Who Is To Blame?

Perhaps one of the more interesting discourses that have emerged following each of these school shootings is the idea that the cause of the event must be bigger than the shooters themselves. It is not acceptable just to say that one or two angry young men went into a school and committed homicide. Instead, there has to be some greater reason that these events have occurred in order to make what has happened understandable, or possibly even manageable. While the media fuel this speculation, they often do so by serving as a vehicle for politicians, pundits, and the public to weigh in. The sources of these events have manifested themselves into two different camps – proponents of individual causes and proponents of social causes.

Individual Responsibility

It is possible that, although the answer cannot be as simple as "they were angry," the shooters themselves can be held responsible for their actions. What is perhaps more noticeable in this discourse, however, is that this accountability is more the result of some sort of individual defect that has turned these young males into killers. These arguments tend to deny the influence of the social world, and place the blame solely on the offenders. By doing so, it becomes unnecessary to acknowledge any shortcomings in the sociological structure, and less necessary to demand that there is change in such a realm.

One such sentiment suggests individual affect or personality defects as causative. For example, Dan Quayle in the wake of Columbine, commented that "The overriding issue isn't really gun control – it's self-control" (in Seelye, 1999). Vikki Buckley, the Colorado Secretary of State at the time Columbine occurred, was quoted as saying

"Guns are not the issue. Hate, what pulled the trigger of violence, is the issue" (in Seelye & Brooke, 1999). Similar sentiments followed Newtown: "A gun didn't kill all those children, a disturbed man killed all those children" (Scott Ostrosky, in Moss & Rivera, 2012).

In other instances, it is not so much the presence of a negative characteristic as much as it is the absence of ones considered to be positive. One of the main points of argument in this instance is religion. This discourse was the most prominent following Columbine, particularly as the area is extremely religious and amidst rumors that two of the victim, Rachel Scott and Cassie Bernall, were killed for affirming their beliefs in God to the shooters (Muschert, 2007b). Dan Quayle opined "A child who loves God, honors his parents and respects his neighbors will not kill anyone" (in Seelye, 1999). In an interview on Larry King Live following the event, then-Vice President Al Gore elaborated, saying:

> We have with our power of conscience, with our beliefs in God, if we have those, as most of us Americans do, we have the ability to – to overcome those impulses with higher ones. We have the ability to overcome evil with good. (in Walker, 1999)

Interestingly, following the Virginia Tech shootings, discussion of religion was notably absent, with the exception of a single line in an editorial:

> Over the next few days, we'll ponder the sources of Cho Seung-Hui's rage. There'll be no shortage of analysts picking apart his hatreds, his feelings of oppression and his dark war against the rich, Christianity and the world at large. (Brooks, 2007)

This statement, though not directly implicating religion (or a lack thereof) in the shooting, is indicative of how people dissect these events and their perpetrators looking for answers.

Following the Sandy Hook shooting, the minimal amount of discourse centered on how religion benefits those who are healing:

> It is a failure of community, and that's where the answer for the future has to lie. What religion has to offer to people at moments like this -- more than theology, more than divine presence – is community. (Greg Epstein [Harvard's humanist chaplain], in Freedman, 2012)

What is particularly interesting about the Sandy Hook case is that, unlike Littleton which was heavily skewed towards Christian evangelicals (Muschert, 2007b), Newtown was more diverse in religious beliefs. More importantly, this suggests that Adam Lanza was potentially excluded from this community (which is discussed in the next section).

The shooters were not the only source of blame following these events. Perhaps one of the greatest lightning rods for criticism in the school shootings discourse has been the National Rifle Association (NRA). Formed in 1871 to promote marksmanship and shooting as a sport, the NRA has grown into "America's longest standing civil-rights organization," seeking to protect the Second Amendment right to bear arms and promote firearms education (NRA.com). What is most interesting, and easily overlooked in this ongoing feud between the two sides, is that responses to these shootings from the NRA have not been markedly different from the responses from others.

In fact, the NRA was even scheduled to hold their annual meeting and exhibition in Denver in the weeks following Columbine. Out of respect, the exhibitions were cancelled and only the annual business meeting was held (Seelye & Brooke, 1999). In his statement presented at the meeting, NRA president Wayne LaPierre stated "We believe in absolutely gun-free, zero-tolerance, totally safe schools" (in Seelye & Brooke, 1999). Similar statements also were made following the shooting at Virginia Tech. When asked about legislative improvements for reporting mental health issues to background check systems, LaPierre responded, "We are not an obstacle. We're strongly in support of putting those records in the system" (in Luo, 2007). Still, when the public, the media, and politicians are looking for a source at which to point their finger, the NRA has been an easy target.

Collective Responsibility

Some proffered causes for school shootings are simply too broad to target just one individual or group. Instead, the focus shifts to social causes, and ultimately, the need for social change. These discussions imply that there is something wrong with the social environment. By extension, therefore, the only way to fix the "problem" of school massacres is to restructure parts of our collective sociology. As Utah Senator Orrin Hatch mused after Columbine, "We all know this is a much more complex problem than guns" (in Bruni, 1999).

One of the most prevalent social causes blamed for these mass shootings is community. This not only refers to community in the traditional sense of neighborhoods and towns, but also to the communities within communities,

such as schools and their subcultures. Following Columbine, the typical culture of cliques seen in high schools around the nation was immediately fingered as one potential cause for the shooting. Like many other schools, Columbine placed a heavy emphasis on its athletic programs, and rumors suggesting that Harris and Klebold had specifically sought out jocks in their rampage did not help to dispel this myth (Larkin, 2007).

The role of subcultures within schools was heavily blamed as the cause for Columbine. Harris and Klebold were named as members of the Trenchcoat Mafia, which was rumored to be a group of misfits who didn't subscribe to the traditional high school culture of proms and pep rallies, and instead opted for "Goth rock" and black duster jackets or camouflage, military-style clothing (Frymer, 2009; Larkin, 2007; Springhall, 1999). As one Massachusetts principle summarized:

> In these big high-powered suburban high schools, there's a very dominant winner culture, including the jocks, the advanced-placement kids, the student government and, depending on the school, the drama kids or the service clubs. But the winners are a smaller group than we'd like to think, and high school life is very different for those who experience it as the losers. They become part of the invisible middle and suffer in silence, alienated and without any real connection to any adult. (Carol Miller Lieber, in Lewin, 1999)

Beyond the divide within the school's walls, some have mused that suburban communities also are to blame for the shootings. Columbine and other school shootings represented a shift of violence from an inner-city problem to a threat to the safety suburban and rural communities were believed to provide (Schildkraut et al., 2013). As one writer noted:

> Created as safe havens from the sociological ills of cities, suburbs now stand accused of creating their own environmental diseases: lack of character and the grounding principles of identity, lack of diversity or the tolerance it engenders, lack of attachment to shared, civic ideals. Increasingly, the newest, largest suburbs are being criticized as landscapes scorched by unthoughtful, repetitious building, where, it has been suggested, the isolations of larger lots and a car-based culture may lead to disassociation from the reality of contact with other people. (Hamilton, 1999)

Another problem associated with suburban communities is the lack of presence by the parents. In many instances, children of suburban families become latch-key kids as one or both parents commute into the nearest big city for work. Politicians campaigning on family values after Columbine, such as George W. Bush, seized the opportunity to ponder this impact: "The fundamental issue is, Are you and your wife paying attention to children on a day-by-day, moment-by-moment basis?" (in Seelye, 1999).

While the community design of Littleton was targeted as a cause for the Columbine shootings, an opposite discourse emerged following the Sandy Hook shooting. Newtown has been touted as a picturesque community, the kind of community that is ideal to raise children. With its sprawling homes (some even complete with picket fences and a dog in the yard), Newtown has even been described as "tak[ing] its child-friendly, Norman Rockwell ambience seriously" (Dwyer & Rueb, 2012). In discourse that followed the Sandy Hook shooting, the community aspect was most prominently featured in coverage about healing and restoration, rather than as a catalyst for Lanza's rampage. As with many other facets of the story, Newtown's community aspect was portrayed as a case where they did everything right.

While high schools provide fragmented communities, and suburban communities have been credited with furthering such isolation, colleges and universities also have been labeled as ostracizing environments for school shooters. While institutions of higher education also are considered to be communities, they do not function in the traditional sense of the word. Due to their size and heterogeneity (in respects to demographics, majors, and a bevy of other factors), post-secondary schools are bound to create barriers to forming strong ties to one's "community." For Cho, this was furthered by his social disorder (selective mutism) and a disdain for mainstream student culture at Virginia Tech (Schildkraut, 2012b).

"Round Up the Usual Suspects"[5]

Beyond the specific individual and social causes that have been pinpointed in the political discourse, three specific culprits have emerged as the trifecta of causes of school shootings: violent media, mental health, and guns. These issues not only are consistent in discourses following each of these events, but also transcend the individual,

community, and even macro-social levels of concern. What is perhaps most interesting, as Dr. Jeffrey Fagan notes, "Any one of these three risks separately does not produce a violent event. It's their convergence and interaction that produces an event" (as quoted in Stolberg, 1999). It is, as Muschert (2007a) notes, the perfect storm for school shootings. Thus, in the public discourse about school massacres, these have emerged as the go-to causes, the three ring circus of blame, so to speak.

Violent Media

A causal factor appearing in reportage of school massacres has been a focus on the shooters' reported consumption of violent media. In an editorial following Columbine, Bob Herbert (1999) summarized how our culture regards violence in the media:

> Welcome to America, a land where the killing is easy. ... We make it exciting. We celebrate it, romanticize it, eroticize it, and mass-market the weapons that bring murder within easy reach of one and all. It's no big deal. Just pick up that handgun and drive down to the video store for a couple of exciting flicks about killing women. And if somebody cuts your car off along the way, shoot him. ... We are addicted to violence. It sustains and entertains us.

Details released as part of the Columbine investigation indicated that both boys, but particularly Eric Harris, were fans of "Goth rock," such as Rammstein, KMFDM, and most notoriously, Marilyn Manson. He was, in fact, scheduled to have a concert in Denver just after the shooting, but cancelled the tour date once he was linked to the shooting and people began boycotting the show. In an op-ed piece in Rolling Stone magazine, it was Manson (1999) who actually turned the tables on the media:

> From Jesse James to Charles Manson, the media, since their inception, have turned criminals into folk heroes. They just created two new ones when they plastered those dip-shits Dylan Klebold and Eric Harris' pictures on the front of every newspaper. Don't be surprised if every kid who gets pushed around has two new idols. We applaud the creation of a bomb whose sole purpose is to destroy all of mankind, and we grow up watching our president's brains splattered all over Texas. Times have not become more violent. They have just become more televised. (Emphasis added)

Although there were few, if any, links between Cho and Lanza and their consumption of the violent media, this did not stop people from speculating that it was still a cause. Some posited that Cho drew his inspiration from the South Korean film Oldboy, which features a scene in which the main character exacts retribution on his tormentors (Hendrix, 2007; Schildkraut, 2012b). He was never linked to any violent video games. Lanza was rumored to have played World of Warcraft (Lichtblau, 2013); this, however, has yet, if ever, to be confirmed. It also is possible that this speculation is actually the by-product of the media's linking of James Holmes, the perpetrator from the Aurora, Colorado movie theater shooting just five months earlier, to the same game (Lichtblau, 2013). Still, absent concrete evidence, politicians seized the opportunity to call out the media. Following Newtown, Chris Christie, the governor of New Jersey, stated

> I don't let games like Call of Duty in my house. You cannot tell me that a kid sitting in a basement for hours playing Call of Duty and killing people over and over and over again does not desensitize that child to the real-life effects of violence. (in Lichtblau, 2013)

What seems to escape this discourse is the consideration of all of the people who consume these different media and don't become school shooters. Marilyn Manson has sold over 50 million albums worldwide (Blabbermouth.net, 2010). Natural Born Killers grossed over $11 million in its opening weekend alone (BoxOffice.com, n.d.). It has been estimated that around 10 million people played DOOM, the game of choice for Columbine shooter Eric Harris, during the first two years of its 1993 release (Doom, n.d.). More recently, Call of Duty: Black Ops 2 sold over 11 million units in its first week of release (Kain, 2012).

Still, despite the millions of consumers who flock to these products for entertainment and don't, as Agger (2007) noted about Cho, "pump three bullets per victim," these coincidences have somehow become a soapbox for why violent media need to be outlawed. David Geffen, a record executive and film producer, questioned this platform, noting:

> Why not blame the libraries? They're full of violent books. If you're looking for violence, what about the evening news? America is bombing Yugoslavia; it's on every day. It's not a movie, it's real. (in Broder, 1999)

Perhaps Alicia Silverstone's character Cher in Clueless said it best: "Until mankind is peaceful enough not to have violence on the news, there's no point in taking it out of shows that need it for entertainment value" (Rudin et al., 1995).

Mental Health

A second factor associated with causing school shootings is the frequent discussion of mental illnesses or disorders on the part of the shooters. Reports circled that Columbine shooter Eric Harris had been taking the antidepressant Luvox at the time of the shooting, which commonly is used to treat obsessive-compulsive disorder. Despite the fact that Harris wrote caustically about his hatred of his peers at Columbine, it was not until the coverage of the Virginia Tech shooting that the mental health debate became more prominent. Inquiries into shooter Seung-Hui Cho revealed that he had a lengthy history of mental health issues. Aside from the selective mutism (and a later diagnosis of major depression) that had plagued him since his family emigrated from South Korea when he was eight, Cho had left a number of clues about his mental state along his path at Virginia Tech. His writings became increasingly violent, and his behavior so bizarre that one professor had him removed after other students stopped attending out of fear (Virginia Tech Review Panel [VTRP], 2007). He was extremely withdrawn, claimed to have a girlfriend named Jelly (a model), and in the rare instances he did attempt to communicate with anyone, usually a female student on campus, he did so through his alter-ego "Question Mark" by leaving random scrawling on their dorm room message boards (VTRP, 2007).

Following an incident in December 2005, in which the Virginia Tech Police Department (VTPD) were called to Cho's dorm after he randomly appeared at one student's door dressed in sunglasses and a hat, Cho threatened suicide to one of his suitemates, who then called the VTPD (VTRP, 2007). Cho was taken to the station, where he was screened for mental illness intake by a member of the local community-service board (VTRP, 2007). The screener determined that Cho was mentally ill, refused to seek treatment voluntarily, and posed an imminent danger to himself or others, and contacted a magistrate to secure a detention warrant (Bonnie, Reinhard, Hamilton, & McGarvey, 2009; VTRP, 2007). Cho was then transferred to St. Alban's Behavioral Health Center, where he underwent several examinations by independent, licensed mental health professionals prior to a commitment hearing (Bonnie et al., 2009; VTRP, 2007). Despite that these additional psychiatrists deemed Cho "an imminent danger to himself as a result of mental illness," the special justice presiding over the commitment hearing still ordered Cho to undergo outpatient treatment as a result of overcrowding at the state's facilities (VTRP, 2007, p. 48; see also Bonnie, 2009).

At the time, the Virginia code (see § 37.2-819) required anyone who had been admitted to a mental health facility (either voluntarily or involuntarily) or who had been detained by a legal order to be reported to the Central Criminal Records Exchange (CCRE) (Schildkraut & Hernandez, 2013). For Cho, his stint at St. Alban's was never reported, and subsequently, when he went to purchase his firearms, he was not flagged in the background check system (Roberts, 2009). When this information surfaced, then-Governor Timothy Kaine signed an executive order requiring immediate reporting to the CCRE (Schildkraut & Hernandez, 2013) and additional legislation to improve reporting was passed in 12 other states (Brady Campaign Press Release, 2011). The following year, President George W. Bush signed into law the NICS Improvement Amendments Act and designated nearly $1.3 billion in federal grants to improve, update, and establish reporting systems (Schildkraut & Hernandez, 2013).

Following the Newtown shooting, it was reported that shooter Adam Lanza had Asperger's syndrome, which is a high functioning form of autism. This concern was immediately thrust into the discourse of the event and prompted fear and worry in others with the condition. In reality, as one doctor noted, "aggression in autism spectrum disorders is almost never directed to people outside the family or immediate caregivers, is almost never planned, and almost never involves weapons" (Dr. Catherine Lord, as in Harmon, 2012). Further, research has shown that no Asperger's patients (of those studied) had ever used a weapon and only about 2% had been aggressive toward someone outside their family (Harmon, 2012). Still, as Lori Shery, president of an Asperger's advocacy group, noted:

> The media's continued mention of a possible diagnosis of Asperger syndrome implies a connection between that and the heinous crime committed by the shooter. They may have just as well said, 'Adam Lanza, age 20, was reported to have had brown hair.' (in Harmon, 2012)

Guns

There is perhaps no greater or more controversial culprit in the blame game of school shootings than firearms. In the aftermath of these events, the NRA and like-minded gun proponents have suggested that more guns, and

subsequently less restrictions on guns (such as easing campus bans prohibiting concealed weapons), would help to protect the good guys from the bad guys. Following Columbine, Charlton Heston, then president of the NRA, suggested that "If there had been even one armed guard in the school, he could have saved a lot of lives and perhaps ended the whole thing instantly" (in Verhovek, 1999). Despite that there was a school resource officer on campus the day of the shooting, Minnesota Governor Jesse Ventura added that Columbine "supports conceal-and-carry because of the fact that what happens when a group of unarmed individuals are confronted with people with weapons like this, you have no defense" (in Verhovek, 1999). While pro-gun advocates were virtually silent following Virginia Tech, as the main discourse, even when guns were involved, focused on mental health, the debate was immediately recharged after Sandy Hook. Wayne LaPierre, current president of the NRA, responded to the shooting by saying, "The only thing that stops a bad guy with a gun is a good guy with a gun" (in Bilton, 2013). He then suggested that every school should have armed guards by the time classes resumed in the spring (Bilton, 2013).

Conversely, those in opposition have claimed that it is the ease and availability of guns that led to the shootings in the first place. Some even suggest that besides being unrealistic in terms of manpower and financial resources, placing armed security guards or law enforcement at every single school nationwide would do nothing to prevent such attacks:

> There were two armed law enforcement officers at that campus [Columbine], and you see what happened – 15 dead. (Senator Diane Feinstein, in Bilton, 2013)

> People like Mr. LaPierre want us to believe that civilians can be trained to use lethal force with cold precision in moments of fear and crisis. That requires a willful ignorance about the facts. Police officers know that firing a weapon is a huge risk; that's why they avoid doing it. In August [2012], New York City police officers opened fire on a gunman outside the Empire State Building. They killed him and wounded nine bystanders. (Rosenthal, 2012)

The volatility in the back-and-forth argument between gun control and gun rights activists continued to grow as the state of New York passed one of the strictest gun control packages within a month of the Sandy Hook shooting, and President Obama convened a panel on mass violence, led by Senator Joe Lieberman. With the support of the usual champions – California Senator Diane Feinstein, New York Congresswoman Carolyn McCarthy, and New Jersey Senator Frank Lautenberg – a number of gun control measures were introduced. Still, given the partisan divide of Congress, it is unlikely that many of these measures will be enacted into law, as witnessed with Columbine (Schildkraut & Hernandez, 2013; Soraghan, 2000).

A Rhetorical Ouroboros?[6]

In the movie National Lampoons: Van Wilder (Abrams, Levy, & Becker, 2002), the main character opined "Worrying is like a rocking chair. It gives you something to do, but it doesn't get you anywhere." While this may seem to be an outrageous proposition in the context of school shootings, it does put the discourse in a perspective of sorts. In the aftermath of school shootings such as Columbine, Virginia Tech, and Sandy Hook, legislative bill after legislative bill are rushed to the floor, yet few (if any) pass. Following Columbine, over 800 bills aimed at regulating gun ownership and gun shows were introduced, yet only about 10% of these bills were enacted into law (Soraghan, 2000). It didn't bode well for legislators that the very issue they were trying to address had been figured out by high school youth (Schildkraut, 2012b). In a 1998 class paper, Eric Harris identified the gaps in the Brady bill for the control of gun sales that eventually enabled him (or more precisely, his friend) to purchase guns: "the biggest gaping hole is that background checks are only required for licensed dealers … not private dealers … private dealers can sell shotguns and rifles to anyone who is 18 or older" (Jefferson County Sheriff's Office, 1999, p. 26,538).

After Virginia Tech, and following the passage of the NICS Improvement Amendments Act, the majority of the funds made available were never claimed and millions of records still have not been added to background check systems, leaving many people who should be disqualified eligible to legally purchase firearms (Brady Campaign Press Release, 2011; Witkin, 2012). These lapses in reporting also enabled other mass shooters, including Jared Loughner (who recently pled guilty to the Tucson, Arizona shooting of Congresswoman Gabrielle Giffords and others, despite spending a year and a half being "incompetent to stand trial") and James Holmes (who shot 70 people at a midnight showing of The Dark Knight Rises and, nine months after the shooting, has decided to claim the insanity defense) to purchase their guns legally. These reporting systems, however, are predicated on the fact that a person has seen a

professional, either as an in-patient or out-patient, to be declared to have a mental illness; it fails to account for the millions of people who go undiagnosed each year (Schildkraut & Hernandez, 2013). It also stigmatizes those with mental illnesses who do not try to purchase weapons but instead try to lead normal lives. As David Shern, the chief executive of Mental Health America, noted, "This is a classic example of a well-intentioned effort that's going to have almost no effect and, in fact, is going to do harm" (in Luo, 2007).

There are two glaring issues with this continued reaction. The first is that, as Howard Kurtz (2012) astutely notes, "the news business, with few exceptions, pays little attention to the gun issue except in the immediate aftermath of the latest mass shooting in Columbine, Virginia Tech, Tucson, Aurora, or Newtown." As quickly as the media latches onto the issue, something else captures its attention and they move on. The second is the adequate addressing of existing laws. Though he received a tremendous amount of criticism, NRA president Wayne LaPierre raised this issue (Lichtblau & Rich, 2012). Why should politicians continue to crank out new legislation instead of enforcing the existing bills in place from the previous tragedy that failed to prevent the current event? This is the cyclical challenge that likely will not be solved.

Still, the disproportionally high fear of school shootings leads many – parents, students, faculty, politicians, and the media – to worry about when the next event will occur and who will be the target. Following Columbine, schools across the nation saw a surge in metal detectors and identification badges. These are "feel better" responses, but do not actually guarantee that a gun will not get into the school (see Addington, 2014). At airports across the nation, people have been able to get firearms as large as .40 caliber through TSA security screening checkpoints, despite heighten procedures following the September 11th terrorist attacks (see, for example, Quinn, 2010).

What escapes all of the chatter about school shootings is how unlikely it is that a person will be the victim of a school shooting. Between the 1992-1993 and 1997-1998 school years (pre-Columbine), over 50 million children attended schools across the nation (Sanchez, 1998). During that same time period, 226 kids were killed in school-shooting related deaths (Bernard, 1999; Donohue, Schiraldi, & Ziedenberg, 1998). This means that the probability of any student becoming the victim of a school shooting during these years was at less than one in five-ten thousandths (e.g., < 0.0005). These same children had a greater chance of being struck by lightning (Donohue et al., 1998; Sanchez, 1998). But, as Lloyd Christmas (Jim Carrey) pondered in Dumb and Dumber, "So you're telling me there's a chance?" (in Krevoy et al., 1994). Regardless, it doesn't stop people from worrying that they or their children will be the next victim and trying to reduce the possible risk that is assumed. The problem is that once you reduce the odds to a million and one, the next obstacle is reducing them to one in ten-million. Despite the fact that one can never have a risk of zero, it doesn't keep people from worrying, though it gets them nowhere.

So What Is The Answer?

It is clear that we will never truly know "why" these events have happened. The people who can answer such a question are not here. Sure, Cho left a detailed manifesto in which he rambled on about his disdain for wealthy kids and hedonism (Schildkraut, 2012b). For Columbine, there potentially is a similarly documented response straight from the killers. These tapes, infamously dubbed "The Basement Tapes," have been sealed from the public and won't be released until 2026 (at the earliest) out of fear of copycat attacks (Schildkraut, 2012b). So until we can hear it straight from the killers' mouths, we are left to speculate as to their motive. Sandy Hook, however, presents an even greater challenge, as Adam Lanza doesn't appear to have left the same video diary as his predecessors. This gap appears to only fuel the fire of speculation, rather than allowing society to focus elsewhere.

Given the reliance of the public discourse on media reporting of such tragedies, we are perhaps left with more questions than answers regarding the potential causes (and therefore implied remedies) for such cases. Clearly, the three ring circus of violent media, guns, and mental illness are insufficient, even in combination, to explain the complexity of school massacres. The following quote from an editorial by Maureen Dowd illustrates the ridiculous simplicity of characterizing an event such as Columbine as solely related to gun availability and policies (regardless of whether the argument is that there are too many or too few restrictions on firearms):

> As Jesse Ventura said, if only the concealed weapons law had passed in Colorado, students and teachers secretly packing heat could have cut down those two outcasts. The problem is not that bad guys have guns; it's that good guys don't. (Dowd, 1999)

Similarly, in combination violent and fantasy media, guns, and uncontrolled rage cannot be fingered as the cause,

as illustrated in another quote from Dowd's op-ed:

> Just blame Marilyn Manson, Oliver Stone, the Internet, video games, Magic cards, Goths. Here's a good sound bite: Software makes people go nuts, not hardware. Guns don't kill people; trench coats kill people. Guns don't kill people; people who have not reached closure with their anger kill people. (Dowd, 1999)

It is not our position simply to the finger at the news media and/or politicians, and it is obviously pointless to expect the media industry and political apparatus to disregard the relevance of shocking school massacres. As self-reflective media personnel commented after the Columbine incident, it's impossible for media not to cover such cases.

> [T]he Sheriff speaks directly with a female reporter at KUSA [unnamed in transcripts] and he suggests that the media coverage sparks the possibility of copycat attacks. "Well, you just wonder how much – when the attention like this media attention gets on it, that this is broadcast all over the United States and other people get the same idea . . ." The reporter responds, "And the conflict is that you can't not cover it. But then again, you know, the dilemma is that 15 seconds of fame of whatever the motive is." Stone concludes, "Yes, I understand" (Savidge et al. 1999).

Similarly, the public expects its leaders to comment on such cases, and therefore public leaders walk a similar line in their responsibility to step up as leaders and spokespersons for their constituencies, and perhaps also to advance their political agendas. After all, public figures will frequently attempt to connect their agendas rhetorically to the events, an action which capitalizes on the affective intensity of riveted audience. As John Velleco commented. "Unfortunately, there are going to be politicians who are going to climb over the bodies of the victims and pursue an agenda" (in Brooke, 1999). Clearly the news media and politicians are both necessary to the functioning of civil society; however, such cases also make both their necessity and limited nature clear.

Even for academicians, the complex causes of school massacres are extremely difficult to pin-point, for various reasons. First, there are relatively few cases of school massacres, and therefore it is impossible to identify a set of nomothetic causes from the examination of a small number of cases. Second, in the case studies that have been conducted, the causes seem to vary from case to case. Therefore, no set of causes has been identified as sufficient to produce a school massacre.7 It is true that the "big three" of violent media, guns, and mental illness often figure into the situation; however, these are insufficient to explain school massacres in themselves. Case in point is the fact that millions of persons may consume violent media, own firearms, and have mental illnesses, often at the same time, yet school massacres are rather rare.

How, then, to clarify the causes of these troubling events? We argue that what is needed is a protracted, extended discourse about school shootings and related massacres, one which explores their cultural meaning and causes. Given the new media's relatively short issue-attention cycle for any specific issue, this apparently cannot take place in the news media. In addition, given the wide array of spheres on which politicians must comment, it is unrealistic to expect such public figures to spend a long time on violence, as it will always be superseded in short order, and public attention and/or media attention shift elsewhere.

However, such a slow and protracted exploration of relevant issues is taking place in various scholarly disciplines in the social sciences, education, and humanities (see Muschert, 2007a & 2010 for a review). But if such exploration is going on in the academic realms, why does it not then bleed over into the popular, mass market discourse of news media and politicians? The divide persists more sharply in the U.S. between the so-called ivory tower and more popular modes of public discourse. In part, the academic discourse in the U.S. is frequently divorced from the public and political discourse, and academics are rarely professionally rewarded for informing news media and politicians. In short, these parties simply do not converse with one another very frequently, and therefore there is little opportunity for academics to inform journalists and politicians as to their findings and thinking about issues, just as there little chance for the opposite conversation to take place. What is needed in the case of school massacres is a discussion among these parties regarding the complex individual, community-level, and socio-cultural causes of school massacres (and violence more generally) (see Henry, 2000 & 2009; Muschert 2007a & 2010; Muschert et al., 2014).

Nonetheless, there may be glimmers of hope. Over the last decades, many academic disciplines have taken strides to make their expertise more public, and politicians and policy makers are increasingly insisting on evidence-based policies and/or independent evaluation of policy outcomes. It is our hope that this trend toward sharing information and cross-fertilizing academic, media, and political discourses will continue, especially in the case of mass violence in various locations, including schools. Such an extended and protracted discussion is necessary, because without

intelligent and informed analysis of social problems, such as school violence, policies may be ineffective (or even counter-productive) in preventing and mitigating the issue, without which we are in danger of continuing to live in disproportionate fear of such tragedies.

Endnotes

1. In this event, 20-year-old Adam Lanza forcefully entered Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown, Connecticut and opened fire. The shooting left 20 first grade students and six educators, including the school's principal, dead. Lanza also had shot and killed his mother Nancy prior to the rampage.

2. On April 20, 1999, Columbine seniors Eric Harris (18) and Dylan Klebold (17) opened fire on their school. They shot and killed 12 students and one teacher before committing suicide in the school's library.

3. On April 16, 2007, Virginia Tech senior Seung-Hui Cho (23) shot and killed two students in the West Ambler Johnston dormitory on campus. After a two-hour break, during which he mailed his now infamous multimedia manifesto to NBC, Cho opened fire in Norris Hall, killing an additional 30 students and faculty. He killed himself as police gained entry to the building.

4. For a discussion of the complexities of assigning culpability to youthful offenders, see Cerulo (1998), Muschert & Janssen (2012), Spencer (2005), and Spencer & Muschert (2009).

5. In Warner & Curtiz (1942).

6. An Ouroboros is an ancient symbol that represents cyclicality. In its current form, it is the idea that there is no beginning or end to a discussion following school shootings, and that this discussion does not lead to any progress toward a solution.

7.Muschert (2007a) points out that individual access to guns are the only necessary cause, for school shootings to occur. However, similar attacks have taken place without guns, and have involved bombs (as in the 1927 Bath, Michigan school massacre) or knives (as occurred in various places in China in 2012, on the same day as the Sandy Hook massacre).

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