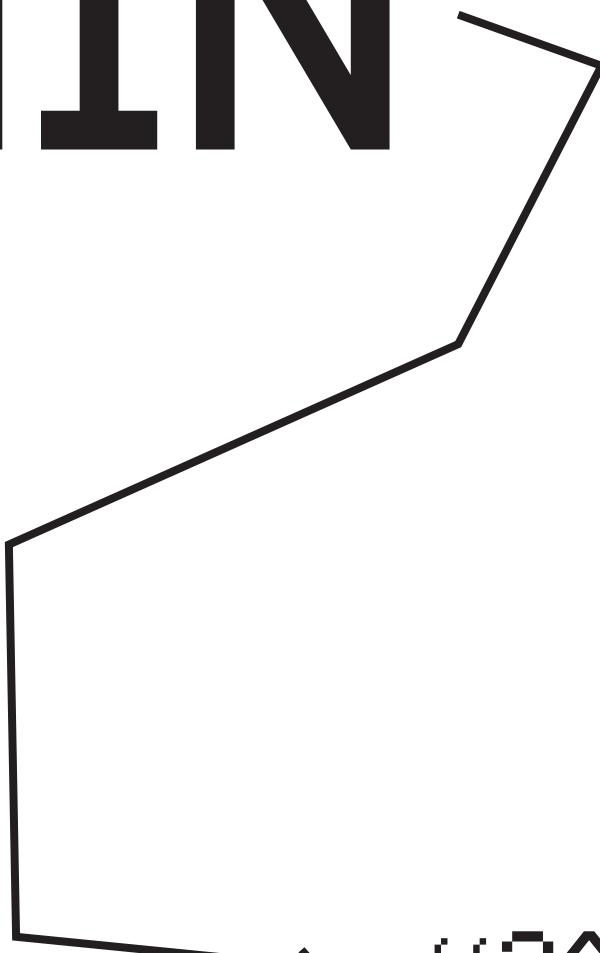


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*Assembled for*

*RADMIN - A festival of Administration*

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# Making Use: Life in Postartistic Times: The Museum of Modern Art in Warsaw

Artistic practice in a 1:1 scale uses “the world as its own map,” just like in the story about the work of cartographers in Lewis Carroll’s book *Sylvie and Bruno* from 1893. Artists, former artists, and non-artists working in a 1:1 scale undermine the legitimacy of creating artificial models or mock-ups of reality in spaces reserved for art. They work in real life: they open antique shops and their own museums, find employment in offices, become consultants and therapists, propose solutions to economic issues, conduct experiments in science labs, and so on. Art in a 1:1 scale is difficult to recognise, since the fundamental aesthetical concepts, which allow one to capture, name, and submit it to an evaluation by an art historian or critic, become supplanted. The 1:1 scale also allows for a celebration of the real effects of such practices, even if they cannot be conflated with socially utilitarian art. Artistic practice in a 1:1 scale is exemplified by the actions of the Estonian-American conceptual artist Raivo Puusemp, who in 1975 was elected as the mayor of the city of Rosendale. The artist effectively solved the infrastructural problems of the city – by eliminating the city council and giving up his function. Puusemp’s term could be defined as an application of artistic competence to solve political issues. Artistic practices in a 1:1 scale have a two-fold ontological status. They are “this and that,” art and life, performance and a normal job, an artistic and a political process. In this sense, they defy the art world’s rule demanding a definition of whether a given case is art or something else.

# Reading notes: FoAM

"I think there is something deeper going on here, and it turns on the very nature of bureaucratic systems. Such institutions always create a culture of complicity. It's not just that some people get to break the rules—it's that loyalty to the organization is to some degree measured by one's willingness to pretend this isn't happening. And insofar as bureaucratic logic is extended to the society as a whole, all of us start playing along. All bureaucracies are to a certain degree utopian, in the sense that they propose an abstract ideal that real human beings can never live up to.

I think it's safe to say that no population in the history of the world has spent nearly so much time engaged in paperwork. Yet all of this is supposed to have happened after the overthrow of horrific, old-fashioned, bureaucratic socialism, and the triumph of freedom and the market. Certainly this is one of the great paradoxes of contemporary life, much though—like the broken promises of technology—we seem to have developed a profound reluctance to address the problem.

What ultimately lies behind the appeal of bureaucracy is fear of play. Bureaucracy enchants when it can be seen as a species of what I've called poetic technology, that is, one where mechanical forms of organization, usually military in their ultimate inspiration, can be marshaled to the realization of impossible visions: to create cities out

of nothing, scale the heavens, make the desert bloom. For most of human history this kind of power was only available to the rulers of empires or commanders of conquering armies, so we might even speak here of a democratization of despotism.

We must make our freedom by cutting holes in the fabric of this reality, by forging new realities which will, in turn, fashion us. Putting yourself in new situations constantly is the only way to ensure that you make your decisions unencumbered by the inertia of habit, custom, law, or prejudice—and it is up to you to create these situations."

— David Graeber  
in *The Utopia of Rules*

"There was formerly a capacity for light-heartedness and play which has been to some extent inhibited by the cult of efficiency. The modern man thinks that everything ought to be done for the sake of something else, and never for its own sake."

— Bertrand Rus-  
sel in *In Praise of Idleness*  
[https://libarynth.org/in\\_praise\\_of\\_idleness](https://libarynth.org/in_praise_of_idleness)

"The conditions for convivial work are

structural arrangements that make possible the just distribution of unprecedented power. I choose the term “conviviality” to designate the opposite of industrial productivity. I intend it to mean autonomous and creative intercourse among persons, and the intercourse of persons with their environment; and this in contrast with the conditioned response of persons to the demands made upon them by others, and by a man-made environment. A convivial society would be the result of social arrangements that guarantee for each member the most ample and free access to the tools of the community and limit this freedom only in favour of another member’s equal freedom. What is fundamental to a convivial society is not the total absence of manipulative institutions and addictive goods and services, but the balance between those tools which create the specific demands they are specialized to satisfy and those complementary, enabling tools which foster self-realization. The first set of tools produces according to abstract plans for men in general; the other set enhances the ability of people to pursue their own goals in their unique way. Learned and leisurely hospitality is the only antidote to the stance of deadly cleverness that is acquired in the professional pursuit of objectively secured knowledge. I remain certain that the quest for truth cannot thrive outside the nourishment of mutual trust flowering into a commitment to friendship”

**Ivan Illich** in Tools for Conviviality

“Unable to appeal to the authority of art, you begin again, with whatever skills you have gathered along the way and whatever help you can find. You do what it takes to make work that has a chance of coming alive in the spaces where we meet, to build those spaces in such

a way that it is safe to bring more of ourselves.”

**– Anna Björkman and Dougal Hine** <https://aschoolcalledhome.org/>

“Precarity is the condition of being vulnerable to others. Unpredictable encounters transform us; we are not in control, even of ourselves. Unable to rely on a stable structure of community, we are thrown into shifting assemblages, which remake us as well as our others. We can’t rely on the status quo; everything is in flux, including our ability to survive. [S] taying alive—for every species—requires livable collaborations. Collaboration means working across difference, which leads to contamination. Without collaborations, we all die.”

**– Anna Tsing** in The Mushroom At The End Of The World

“Unstructured groups may be very effective in getting women to talk about their lives; they aren’t very good for getting things done. It is when people get tired of “just talking” and want to do something more that the groups flounder, unless they change the nature of their operation. Occasionally, the developed informal structure of the group coincides with an available need that the group can fill in such a way as to give the appearance that an Unstructured group “works.” That is, the group has fortuitously developed precisely the kind of structure best suited for engaging in a particular project. While working in this kind of group is a very heady experience, it is also rare and very hard to replicate. Once the movement no longer clings tenaciously to the ideology of “struc-

turelessness,” it is free to develop those forms of organization best suited to its healthy functioning. Mostly, we will have to experiment with different kinds of structuring and develop a variety of techniques to use for different situations. But before we can proceed to experiment intelligently, we must accept the idea that there is nothing inherently bad about structure itself – only its excess use.”

**– Jo Freeman** in the  
Tyranny of Structurelessness  
<https://www.jofreeman.com/joreen/tyranny.htm>

“By grasping the mechanisms of anti-fragility we can build a systematic and broad guide to nonpredictive decision making under uncertainty in business, politics, medicine, and life in general—anywhere the unknown preponderates, any situation in which there is randomness, unpredictability, opacity, or incomplete understanding of things.

**– Nicholas  
Taleb** in Antifragile

“The key question in assessing any strategy is whether it’s likely produce more benefits or harm as the intensity of a shock increases (up to a point). In other words, do you have more upside or downside? If the upside increases, you have positive asymmetry and a convex strategy. If the downside increases, you have negative asymmetry and a concave strategy – something to be avoided at all costs.

Strategies for antifragility:  
1. Pursue barbell approaches 2. Focus on options 3. Be curious 4. Get out of your comfort zone  
5. Focus on the edge 6. Conduct lots

of experiments and tinker 7. Don’t get consumed by data  
8. Focus on building/accessing tacit knowledge rather than rationality and explicit knowledge  
9. Focus on subtractive knowledge 10. Collaborate and trade 11. Respect the old  
12. Beware of wealth, debt and reputa-

**John Hagel** on  
Taleb’s Black Swan and Antifragile  
[https://edgeperspectives.typepad.com/edge\\_perspectives/2013/04/getting-stronger-through-stress-making-black-swans-work-for-you.html](https://edgeperspectives.typepad.com/edge_perspectives/2013/04/getting-stronger-through-stress-making-black-swans-work-for-you.html)

# Reimagining the Art Institution as an Open Source Civic Organisation

Teresa Dillon 2017

## Introduction

Historical Free Libre and Open Source Software (FLOSS) refers to different approaches to licensing that are bounded in debates over the nature of knowledge and information exchange, which emerged from the UNIX and hacker cultures at the universities of Berkley and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) from the 1970s-90s. Traditionally the term ‘open source’ refers to what has been described as the “bill of rights for the computer user” (Perens, 1999). In other words, the rights that describe how the source code, the system and symbols that a programmer writes in order to make a software work, are shared and distributed.

With the explosion of the commercial software market in the 1980s the closure of source code became common. What this meant is that only a few people, most often the original authors, could legally copy, inspect or alter the source code. As a result the upgrade and repair of computers and other forms of technology (smart phones and cars etc.) became more difficult as it was not possible to 'get into the engine' of the machine. Closing the code also meant that modifications and customisation was also unlikely. Ethically this turn towards closure negated the view that information sharing is a powerful, useful and positive, social and common good.

Caring about these changes and the effects of closure on the software scene and industry. Harvard graduate, MIT programmer and hacker, Richard Matthew Stallman developed the four freedoms of software: the freedoms to use the software as you wish; change it to suit your needs; distribute it to anyone else and distribute altered versions. These freedoms were outlined in the "GNU Manifesto" (1989) and the Free Software Foundation (FSF) was established as a vehicle for implementing the manifesto. In order to preserve these freedoms permanently, Stallman inverted the legal system of copyright – by developing what is known as copyleft and in doing so created a licence that protects the commons from private appropriation, and gives power back to the user. Today various forms of FLOSS licences exist, including Creative Commons and its derivatives (Lessig 2004).

Considering the potential misinterpretations of the term 'free' as in gratis versus 'free' as in unhindered in use, Eric Raymond in his book 'The Cathedral and the Bazaar' (1999) discussed how bottom-up, free software approaches can lead to high quality, secure software. Raymond argued that the term open source is a more beneficial and less ambiguous way to describe the approach and its differ-

ent forms and would encourage more businesses to adopt the method. Given this, the term Free Libre and Open Source Software (FLOSS) emerged as a means to enable people to understand the direct and wider relevance of Free and Open Source Software.

Today the ideals and values that inform FLOSS are applied not just to computer code but have been used within the fields of governance (Lathrop & Ruma, 2010), architecture (Ratti & Claudel, 2015), community development (Tuomi, 2000), licensing (Lessig 2004; Stallman 1992) and economics (Benkler, 2016; Khalak 2000, Lerner & Tirole, 2000). In this respect FLOSS is best understood as a value system that underpins a particular way of making and doing. This is also referred to as the 'open source way' which, as outlined on the website opensource.com<sup>1</sup>, includes the following values: Open exchange: we can learn more from each other when information is open; Participation: collaboration helps us to solve problems, we cannot solve on our own; Rapid prototyping: we learn best by doing, testing and experimentation; Meritocracy: when everyone has access to the information, collaborative team effort enhances the chances that the best ideas can emerge.

### Applying FLOSS values to the Art Institution

Distilling the values of FLOSS and the open source way, the following is a set of activities aimed at supporting an established contemporary arts institution to transition from a hierarchical, closed system into a more open source civic organisation. Specifically this institution is imagined as a national or regional centre with important local significance and a highly regarded international profile. The institution would typically be in existence for at least 25yrs, own or rent its own building and employ between 20-60 people (full and part-time) to run its various divisions (e.g., gallery, education and outreach programme, bookshop, café,

studios and or residency programme). The institution is also imagined as one which is experiencing difficult financial or managerial issues, partly due to internal politics, leading to a loss of confidence in its public audience, funders and/or board members. Further drops in public funding and austerity measures extenuate these problems.

However the institution has built its reputation on supporting leading contemporary artists, thinkers and creators. It prides itself on taking risks and, given this, it is prepared to open its process up to experimenting with FLOSS models as a means to explore new operational approaches. Central to this exploration is working with artists, who are familiar with FLOSS values. The following section, 'Acts of Transition', describes a process whereby the values of Free Libre and Open Source are collaboratively explored with the institution's staff and executed across and within the organisation's teams over a 6-month period .

### Acts of Transition

**1. Enculturation – Taking the position that senior staff may not know about FLOSS,** the first step is to provide a mechanism through which this can happen. For example, the organisation could create regular and informal ways to meet, so that mutual understanding and trust can form; develop visual material, which illustrates the history, key terms, licence models and modes of participation; host a salon on the topic and invite guest speakers who have experience of working in a FLOSS manner; create a hospitable environment which can provide space for discussion and conversation.

**2. Community Works – In parallel with the first step, consider the arts institution as a community of practice, which has its own set of routines, behaviors, habits and rules. Take time to learn about current working practices. Understand funding models and key stakeholders positions.**

**Use this knowledge to help run the workshop as outlined in step three.**

**3. Generate Together – Run a workshop or series of workshops, which are open to all members of staff. Divide the teams into their everyday groups (e.g., catering, technical, curatorial, educational, bookshop). Invite a FLOSS expert as a support guest to join each team. Open the workshop by welcoming and introducing everyone. Provide a summary of FLOSS and the values of the 'openway'. Create a set of activities, which can help people embody, perform and express the ideals of FLOSS. Design a set of activities, through which each team can brainstorm how a FLOSS approach can be implemented within their team. From this discuss the merits of each idea and vote on 1 or 2 to take forward. Refine the selected ideas, working through the pros, cons, and realities. Present the final idea/s to the wider group and vote collectively on which ideas are suitable to go forward for a 6-month pilot implementation (ideally there should be at least 1 idea per team).**

**4. Test & Tweak – Post the 'Generate Together' workshop, allow for a period of 1 week-10 day's for the ideas to rest in the minds of each team. Then meet with each team for an update session and discuss how implementation will begin. Develop a plan together, which plots out the course, discussing potential pitfalls and issues. Sign-off on the implementation plan with the team and associated senior members, ensuring that there is enough support for the team to carry it out. Meet the team regularly (every two months) to discuss how ideas are developing. Encourage teams to keep a journal or weekly log-book, which documents successes and challenges.**

**5. Open Exchange - In order to gain critical and supportive feedback, discuss with teams and senior members of staff**

**how and who can be included within this process. For example, at the end of the 6-months, meet collectively and present the outcomes of the ‘Test and Tweak’ step. Invite FLOSS experts, critical friends and audience members to join. Discuss strengths, weaknesses and next steps. Acknowledge points of conflict and difference. Make it possible across the ‘Test and Tweak’ phase for audiences or other key stakeholders to feedback or become involved.**

**Create an in-house, open day for specific audiences and stakeholders to feedback on the working process.**

**Conclusions:** Moving towards a Commons-Based Peer-Production Model for the Arts FLOSS approaches are considered as examples of commons-based peer-production (CBPP). CBPP refers to the collaborative efforts and outcomes of a large number of people working incrementally on a problem or artifact without being organised on either a market-based, managerial or hierarchical model (Benkler, 2016, 2006, 2002). Benkler, like many others (Lessig 2004; Stallman 1992; Boyle 2010) considers CBPP as an emerging “third model of production” (Benkler 2002), which harnesses human creativity through the use of ubiquitous computer communication networks. In essence the network effect brings about a dramatic change in the scope, scale and efficacy of peer production.

Across the arts there exists multiple examples from individual artists to group practices, institutional approaches, projects and programmes, which already use the values of FLOSS, the ‘open way’ and CBPP. To name but a few, the international group unMonastery explicitly adopts open source approaches to create what they refer to as a social clinic for the future. Championing open source and peer-based approaches to art, Furtherfield , London, promote and support artistic practices in which people be-

come active co-creators of their cultures and societies, likewise RIXC in Riga run on similar principles. Major international events such as the 13 th edition of the Venice Architecture Biennale explicitly led with the theme ‘Common Ground’ and open source (Rodger, 2012). Artist groups such as irrational , Platoniq , Open Group, Chto Delat and CAMP focus on open democratic systems, commons and peer-to-peer processes as means of creating their work, while festivals such as OPEN SOURCE London adopt the term to highlight the focus on inclusive and community focused artistic practices.

The arts therefore are not without their FLOSS or CBPP examples. However larger national or regional art institutions are more hesitant to adopt such practices. There are multiple reasons for this, which are not the focus of this paper. Instead the aim is to present examples from an approach whereby artists lead on this conversation with the institution in a manner that takes the organisation itself as the living material through which the artistic practice is carried out. In taking this approach the artist and the institution enter into relationship, whereby the ‘Acts of Transition’ become themselves works of art, which operate at an organisational, open and civic-minded level.

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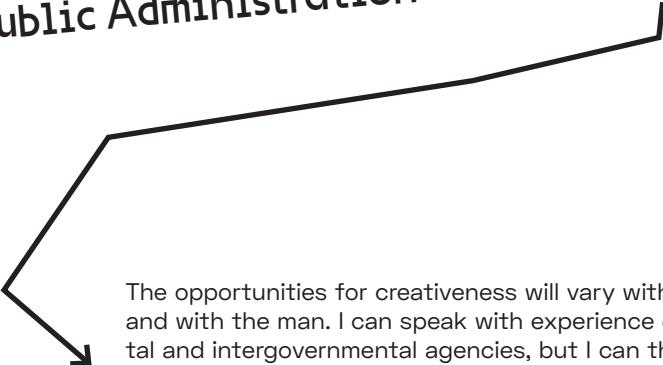
*Author Biography* Teresa Dillon is an artist and Professor of City Futures, University of the West of England, Bristol. Her performative and sound works, curatorial explorations and texts, symbolically and critically examine the techno-civic systems, modes of governance and material conditions, which affect and shape everyday survival. [polarproduce.org](http://polarproduce.org)

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# C. E. Beeby, Director of Education, New Zealand Administration as an Art: An address given to the Wellington Branch of the Institute of Public Administration 1957 (extract)



The opportunities for creativeness will vary with the organization and with the man. I can speak with experience only of governmental and intergovernmental agencies, but I can think of none where a lively administrator could not find some of the satisfactions of creative work, dreary though it may seem to the outsider.

The claim that the public servant administrator has a right, and indeed a duty, to create raises immediately a most difficult problem. The artist practising one of the accepted arts is commonly thought of as a man with vision, with a vision if you like; he sees some aspect of reality a little more clearly than other men and can 'fix' his vision in some concrete form in words or paint or stone. When we say that administration is creative in this sense, does it imply that the public servant has a right to a vision of his own that he can seek to have embodied in concrete form, in institutions, laws or practices? It is an accepted principle that policy is laid down by the Government and the Minister, and that the business of the public servant is to carry it out. Does this mean that the administrator's creativeness must be exercised only in finding ways and means of carrying out the policy given him, or, at the most, in advising his Minister when changes of policy are contemplated? If so, What right has the public servant to any kind of vision of a world that might be made in some small degree better by his administrative action? Has he a right to be creative in any wider sense than is inherent in his duty to make his 'administrative machine' more efficient to carry out the tasks given it from above?

The question cannot be put quite as simply as that. It may be taken for granted that the public servant's first duty is to carry out loyally the policy laid down by his Minister. If he cannot bring himself to do that, his only alternative is to resign. There is no complication here. The only complication arises from the fact that, in many cases, policy is not and in the nature of things cannot be, laid down from above as finally and definitely as is sometimes imagined. There certainly are instances where policy decisions can be given from above in a form that leaves no room for doubt or gloss, but there are other fields of major importance where policy may be said to evolve rather than to spring from one conscious act of creation. It is here that we find our third

resemblance between administration and the arts.

In an art a knowledge of the end evolves in the process of approaching it. Michelangelo is said to have seen the finished statue in the rough block, and to have released it with his mallet and chisel. If the story is true, it may be that such clear and perfect vision of the end is a mark of genius. But few artists, and fewer administrators, are geniuses, and the process of artistic creation seems to consist more generally of an intelligent and sensitive groping towards a goal seen dimly in the distance. As his work proceeds and the artist draws closer, the goal becomes more clearly defined and is found to be in some respects unsatisfying. So direction changes a little, and a new goal is chosen more in line with his emerging purpose. Something of the same process can be seen in the arts of politics and administration.

The painter can paint what he likes how he likes, provided he is prepared to see his canvases go unsold. The architect is less free to choose his own ends; it is pointless for him to draw plans that no individual or organization is willing to use. The public administrator stands at the far end of the scale of diminishing freedom. His ends and purposes must arise from the community's needs, however dimly they may be felt. His task is to find a concrete expression of a social need that is both workable and acceptable. [...] An even greater difficulty is that practically all the administrator's creative work must be done through other people. Here again, the painter has the advantage over him, since no hand but his own comes between his vision and what he makes of it, and his pigment, once placed upon canvas, does at least stay where it was put. The administrator works through human beings and on human beings; his tools and his medium have wills and purposes of their own, and legislation, even if it

were his to command, can direct only in some degree the restless surgings of the material with which he works.

Quite apart from the restlessness of the medium, creative administration can never be an art for the individual alone. Many of those who work for you and with you have purposes and ideas of their own, and their own creative urges to satisfy. Kill them and in effect you kill your own, for everything goes dead and limp around you. The wise administrator soon discovers that, in a democracy at least, he cannot impose his purposes on his subordinates unless they can be led to accept them in part as their own.

To give of his best a good officer must have some freedom and a feeling that his own purposes are not without some weight, and yet there must be a consonance of all purposes within the pattern laid down by official policy. The analogy of the orchestra comes to mind, except that in administration the score is often sketchy and broken, and the second violin, turning a page to find it almost blank, must be trusted to improvise without discord until he comes to the next authoritative passage. This is the meaning of teamwork at its best, that each man is a responsible human being, with freedom to manoeuvre within fair limits and with such understanding of and sympathy for the common purpose that even in an emergency, when ordinary rules no longer apply, he can be relied upon to make the right decision. If the art of administration is the art of getting the best out of other people, the core of it lies somewhere near here. Every man of ability should be helped to see his own work as creative and given the freedom to exercise his powers, within the framework of official policy and guided by his feeling for the common purpose.

We can now return to a study of the special problems to be met in teaching administration as an art. If it be true that the art component of the administrative act cannot be broken down into simple factors without destroying its essential meaning, we are deprived of the usual teaching technique of analysing a situation into its parts, teaching each part separately, and then gradually building up to the complete whole again as the student becomes master of the isolated elements. The young administrator must be taught the art component of his job in complete, living situations, with all their confusing and often irrelevant complexities. This is, of course, exactly what he does in 'learning by experience', but, while no one would deny that practical experience is essential, it is surely possible for us to devise ways of directing the learner's attention to certain factors in the complex whole that lead to success or failure, of making him more sensitive to the intangibles in the administrative situation, and of helping him develop his own administrative style fitted to his temperament and his powers.

None of these topics is simple, and our existing research techniques in the social sciences are particularly inadequate in this field. Yet, in view of the endless volumes written on the scientific aspects of administration, it is difficult to accept as inevitable the paucity of serious work on the equally important art component. It is altogether too easy to explain the non-scientific component in terms of intuition or a flair for administration. The distinction between a science and an art does not lie in the difference between knowledge and intuition, between discipline and lack of discipline, but between two different types of discipline both capable in some measure of being consciously analysed and consciously taught. What Pope said of the art of writing is equally true of administration:

**True ease in  
writing comes  
from art, not  
chance and  
those move  
easiest who  
have learnt to  
dance.** ←

# Organization as a mode of existence, SPEAKING ABOUT ORGANIZATION OR SPEAKING TO ORGANIZE.

Bruno Latour 2013

When we engage in organizing, we are simultaneously above the story and under it – but never completely, ...and never at exactly the same time and the same capacity. It's such a strange situation that I will designate by the word "script". Let me exemplify this definition with a typical example taken from my life as a dean.

This morning we are in a crisis and the board of directors has assembled to decide what strategy to follow and which other dean to hire to hold the helm of our School more firmly. As one director has just argued, an administrator would certainly be more in our tradition, but it might also be more suitable this time to fall back, at last, on some sort of academic. "Fine", one of us says, "but if we look back to Emile Boutmy's original 'blueprint' for our institution, such a choice would mean that we forget that our founder always showed the utmost diffidence against straight academics". And he adds: "It's in the DNA of our institution to hire only hybrids and never to confide anything to scholars" —by which he means the professional profiles of "universitaire" who have brought French universities to their dire present state. He then proceeds to suggest the name of a hybrid character who is neither a straight professor nor an administrator, he is a sort of "academix". It is at this moment that, following his gesture, we all turn to the bronze bust of Emile Boutmy, the founder of our school which sits on the mantel of the room chimney.

At this point, naturally, no one expects the energetic head on its pedestal to nod in approval or to react indignantly like the statue of Don Juan's father whose iron grip drags the womanizer to Hell... We are all aware that the allusion to the "essence" of our school is not something that can be proven beyond any doubt: no one actually demands to "please unfold the blueprint" or to "decrypt the code of this DNA" for us. It is perfectly plausible to imagine that we would have all turned our heads toward the bust even if the speaker had made a completely opposite claim and had said that "because times have changed, now is the time to depart from Boutmy's diffidence of academics and to hire at last a true 'universitaire'".

We are all well aware that talking of "the DNA of the institution" – a biological metaphor – or of "a blueprint" – a technical metaphor borrowed from the world of engineers and architects – are only ways to designate the continuity in time of our school; that is, its series of discontinuities that we could call its heritage. And we all know that when we say that our school possesses an "essence" that should "dictate" our present choice, this essence is so little assured and commands our behavior with so little clarity and so weak a pressure that we simply don't know what to do.

What is binding us then? It would be totally false to say that we are not bound at all and that we can "freely" modify at will the genealogy, history and development of our school without any reference to what it is now, what it has been, and the reason why it was founded in the first place: an anti-university to resist French academic corporatism and archaism. But it would be just as silly to claim that its past and present reality is so assured that we just have to follow what it is at time  $t$ , to be certain of what it will be at time  $t+1$ .

The best proof that it is a highly peculiar type of situation is that we have assembled in the council room to decide how to carry on the same organization to time  $t+1$ . You don't usually do that for stones, for mugs and for mats... There is such a hiatus, such a gap in between time  $t-1$ , time  $t$  (the reference point of the present) and time  $t+1$  (tomorrow) that we are meeting in order to carry the school one step further, beyond the gap, beyond the hiatus. It won't go by itself. It won't jump the gap by the force of its own inertia. Contrary to celestial bodies, there is no inertia at all in an organization. You stop carrying it on: it drops dead. As Garfinkel has shown so well, you have to achieve it, so that it goes to what he marvellously called "the next first time" – it repeats itself until the next time, which is always the first time [Garfinkel 2002]. Repetition, in other words, is never repetitive [Butler 2009 [1878]].

This is what makes the life in our board of directors so hard: We simultaneously have the feeling that this school is as solid, weighty, obdurate, obstinate, as a hundred ton pyramid that sits on our weak shoulders paralyzing and stifling us; and that, at the same time, or in the next moment, it could dissipate like a flock of sparrows – we have to work hard to bring it together so that it could last for another span of time, the duration of which remains totally unpredictable (the next crisis could be tomorrow, tonight or in ten years) [Powers 1998].

If we have some difficulty in answering the question “what’s the story”, it’s thus because it is not all a story but a highly specific type of entity whose continuity does not resemble that of stones, mugs or mats more than it does novels or fables. One of its many peculiarities is that we are simultaneously under its enormous weight as well as above it so that it remains weightless in our hands. It has its own consistence, its own resilience, its own obdurate presence to which we can point with a gesture just as ostensive as when we point at stones, or mugs, or cats, or mats, and yet if we are no longer performing it, the whole organization will come to a halt.

This is why, in the thick of being an organizer, it is utterly impossible to distinguish organization and disorganization. There is no way to make a distinction between being organized and being disorganized, or between being well-organized and badly organized – which has no meaning for those who are in the middle of it. The state of crisis where you catch up and patch up one crisis after the other is the normal state of affairs, as Weick’s quote at the beginning points out so well. They might not all lead to a crisis meeting in the council room and to soul searching inquiries as to what Emile Boutmy “really wanted.” But they are crises all the same, for a simple reason that is directly linked to one of the features of the scripts: they have variable deadlines so that, even in the best of times, at any given moment some may require you to shift from being now “under” them to being now “over” them, while at the same time you are still “under” many other scripts and are ready to “launch” still some other new ones coming to fruition at different times...

So even when everything works “according to plan”, chaos follows necessarily from the many “roles” you have to fulfill: playwright, actor, character, rewriter, shadow writer, props, accessories, stage, all at once. But this “normal” state of chaos is always compounded by the fact that since there is no such thing, as we shall see, as a super- organism, most if not all of the scripts will be at worst contradictory, and at best ambiguous or incomplete (remember Wittgenstein’s demonstration that it is impossible to make a rule completely explicit).

It would already be bad enough to have to answer many different

scripts with different end points in different capacities; but in addition, you have to deal with incompatible instructions that are targeting many possibly opposite personae in you, some utterly implausible... The battle of Borodino described by Tolstoi in his masterpiece WAR AND PEACE is probably the most realistic description of the essence of any organization. Things can get worse, of course, but can they be any better? Now that I am also a dean (after having been somewhat of a recluse and irresponsible academic for forty years) I very much doubt it... (And this is not, I hasten to say, because I have fallen into a badly organized school)...

To put it in less dramatic

terms and to take stock of the obvious fact that the field of battle is not always littered with dead bodies, we could say that to organize is always to re-organize. The little prefix "re" is there to remind us of the gap which is always yawning (or smiling) at us between time t and time t+1 and that no momentum will ever allow us to cross without pain. There is the same difference between organizing and reorganizing as between "the first time" and "the next time". A description should be careful to avoid the false transcendence of super-organism, but just as careful to avoid ignoring that tiny little transcendence, that little cleft through which any organization should, so to speak, gain its subsistence. To act organizationally (horrible word I know) is to situate oneself at this growth point: that's where the obstacle lies over which the horse should learn to jump. Either you recognize it and you act as an organizer or you don't and then you simply talk "about" an organization.

This is well known even in the analysis of a very menial job: constant adjustments have to be done for any course of action to be carried through to its completion; but it is exactly as true at the top (except of course organization has no "top" but only rooms in which the buck sometimes stops) where "constant adjustments" are now called, depending on the characters of the leaders, "innovation", "flexibility", "charisma", "improvisation", "arcane", or "outright mess"... There might be no real difference between organization and disorganization – contradictory scripts come to maturity at any time and under any shape – but there is a huge difference between taking up again the task of organizing and ceasing to do so: in this case the institution dissolves for good.

No substance will come to its rescue. As to the essence, it will fade away. Whatever he said in his time, Emile Boutmy will be betrayed – that is, translated.

To sum up this first section, organizations possess an original mode of existence – a term that I use to point out the various types of agencies that circulate in the multiverse (James 1996 [1909]). When you use the ontology of one mode as a touchstone to evaluate the agency of another, it produces category mistakes as if you wanted nature to speak directly without the institutions of science or flowers being delivered directly through the wifi (Latour 2010)... Organizing might generate strange beasts but it is not a reason to exaggerate their strangeness...

# IU Workshops on the open brief: New Professional Functions for the Incidental Person

*Founded in 2016, the Incidental Unit (IU) was developed with original members of the Artist Placement Group (APG, 1966 - 1989) and its successor Organization + Imagination (O+I, 1989 - 2009). As the name suggests, the Artist Placement Group was organised around the idea that artists are ‘placed’, which is to say their work responds to and resonates in a specific context. More often than not, the work of artists resonates in the world(s) of art. However, the APG was radical in modeling ways that artists might be differently placed. This included putting them to work in what was called ‘industry’ in the UK of the 1960s, when the group of visionary artists and others formed as the APG. Founding member Barbara Steveni organised placements in contexts including British Steel Corporation, Scottish Television and Ocean Fleets. The APG’s sensibility has inspired many practitioners to self-organise their own placements in sectors across society.*

Drawing on the APG’s lineage of radical and rigorous artistic practice, the IU foster contemporary approaches that interrupt institutional codes and develop new patterns in law, health, education, administration and other sectors of society.

At RADMIN the IU’s Educational Working Group will discuss historical and current practices that dissolve boundaries between art and the work of the administrator as well as other kinds of labour. We will think through the language, ethos and methods advanced by APG and O+I in a practical workshop on their format of the Open Brief.

On this occasion the IU’s Educational Working Group is led by Marsha Bradfield and Polly Wright and includes Sarah Andrew, Tessa Marchington, Anthony Schrag, Louise Webb and Joshua Y’Barbo. Some Terms and Conditions: Intergenerational Glossary + Indicative Bibliography

The glossary and the bibliography that follow anticipate the IU's workshop for RADMIN as relevant resources. Most of the glossary is core speak that has been integral to forming the conceptual ground of the APG-O+I-IU lineage of radical artistic development and continues to be fundamental for ways of producing today. By refreshing these terms in our immediate context of the UK in 2019, the IU aims to raise awareness of this language and use it to produce intergenerational knowledge - especially understanding that bridges generations of practice.

### **Incidenitality**

Although prevalent in the work of the APG and the IU, 'incidenitality' is not a term that either iteration readily defines in a prescriptive manner. We can, though, get a sense of the concept's significance in John' Latham's Event Structure and its description of what an incidental person does:

Incidental Person is an individual who, when confronted by two opposing ideological fixes, 'takes the stand of a third ideological position which is off the plane of their obvious collision areas. The function is more to watch the doings and listen to the noise [...] In doing this, [s]he represents people who would not accept their premises, timebases, ambitions, formulations as valid, and who will occupy the scene later'. (Latham, 1981, back cover)

The IU also uses the term 'incidental' to mean occurring without a predetermined intention. In other words, incidenitality is independent of special interests, namely commercial, industrial, government and institutional premise. Incidental also refers to what Barbara Steveni identifies as the "not knowing" experienced by an individual who enters an unfamiliar context or chooses to critically examine their own. The IU encourages approaches

that interrupt existing institutional codes and therefore create the opportunity to develop new patterns in education, administration, planning processes and more.

### **Incidental Person (IP)**

The APG's adoption of the term 'incidental person' coincided with the expansion of negotiation of placements of IPs to encompass not just industry but also government bodies, including APG member John Latham's placement with the Scottish Office (1975-76). APG's shift from industrial placements to government placements was made possible by conceptual creator and APG co-founder Barbara Steveni's negotiation of the seminal Whitehall or Civil Service Memorandum with the U.K. government in 1972. The role of the IP was further expanded by APG's successor Organization and Imagination (O+I, 1989-2009) and their Southwark Education Research Project (SERP) with the Southwark Education Department.

Central to the APG's notion of the IP was that they had an interest in organisational structures and operating critically and creatively in this context. Whether that organization be an industry, government body or educational institution, the IP commands their own language, material or approach.

Within the organizational structure, the IP's activity is not predetermined. In fact, it is importantly undefined. Therefore, the IP has the advantage of critically observing aspects of organizations that individuals immersed in their everyday routine cannot always recognise. While the IP's objective always begins as undefined, their intention is to critically question and prioritize long-term benefits over short-term gain for the betterment of society as a whole.

## **Incidental Unit (IU)**

The Incidental Unit (IU, 2016 - present) continues the tradition of the Artist Placement Group (APG) and Organization and Imagination's (O+I) concept of the incidental person (IP) and/or incidental-ity. It does so by creating a collaborative critical discussion space to support and define the role of and/or what it means to be an IP now. The IU seeks to encourage and foster IPs in their approach that interrupts existing institutional code and therefore create the opportunity to develop new patterns in education, administration, planning processes and more.

The IU is recognised by the APG and O+I as the practice's current iteration. The IU provides critical support space in which to discuss and exchange ideas with artists, curators and IPs without the expectations or evaluative frameworks of an artistic commission, gallery briefing or social project. To this end, the IU draws out key ideas, methods, process and rationale for maintaining the independent and critical work of artists and curators, connecting the historical legacy of the APG with the complex nature of social practice now.

## **Incidental Meetings (IM)**

The IU was formed out of a series of incidental meetings (IMs), which were initiated by Barbara Steveni, Gareth Bell-Jones, Marsha Bradfield, Neal White and Tina O'Connell in 2016-17. The aim of these meetings was to informally share information about the APG (1966-89), as well as O+I (1989-2009), whose revolutionary work on 'the artist placement' and the idea of being incidental within a societal context remained an urgent concern for all. The meetings have shared just one open agenda item: 'unfinished business'. The meeting structure evolved in intention and purpose to become the

IU, with the aim of reconnecting the rigorous approach of APG with wider concerns around the brief given to socially engaged art today. IU have since hosted a wide range of artists, collectives and others who are given a critically supportive space in which to discuss and exchange their ideas without the expectations or evaluative frameworks of an artistic commission, gallery briefing or social project.

## **Incidental Futures (IF)**

Having co-founded the APG in 1966, Barbara Steveni and other members of the IU have developed the Incidental Futures programme. It explores the ongoing relevance of APG's ways of working through six public meetings led by artists at public institutions in Birmingham, Bristol, Edinburgh, Liverpool, Manchester and Newcastle. These events will be followed by a large-scale public gathering of 100+ artistic practitioners in London at South London Gallery with special contributions from The Centre for Research and Education in Arts and Media (CREAM) of the University of Westminster. An online resource will disseminate some of the outcomes which are developed. Incidental Futures considers the impact of APG on recent practice while introducing a broader public to the group's ethos of artist 'placements' to explore the role of art in society.

The project is supported by Arts Council England, CREAM, Flat Time House and University of the Arts, London. Incidental Futures is managed and coordinated by the pre-IU, a core group that includes Barbara Steveni, Gareth Bell-Jones, Marsha Bradfield, Neal White and Polly Wright, who is also the coordinator.

# The Open Brief (OB)

We have refrained from trying to define this vital term in this version of the glossary. The IU workshop at RADMIN will work with the open brief through practice.

## Indicative Bibliography

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Always begins as undefined, their intention is to critically question and prioritize long-term benefits over short-term gain for the betterment of society as a whole.

background

- 1 Up to early 20th century times it was accepted by societies that a person worked by his own choice for a sum arrived at through the market availability for labour.
- 2 In the growth and expansion of concerns that this principle brought about, it became possible for labour to get better terms by collective bargaining and the Trade Union movement came about.
- 3 The principle of ~~free~~ collective benefit, accruing to all who contributed brought about the socialist state. However:
- 4 The process has eliminated one set of vital ingredients necessary for continued civilised life.  
 The set includes the concepts of intuition, personal input, long-term and community-based direction, motivation.  
 The metaphysics of money, economics as conceived, and certain academic attitudes have reinforced the effect.  
 In some countries the consequences of this have been offset by canonisation of the head of state.
- 5 Failure to generate a strategy to facilitate public determination in regard to their future amounts to a betrayal of history, as well as a ticket to oblivion, endless frustration, poverty.

Proposal

A principle and a method whereby an approach to the problem can be made and cultivated within the social structure has been worked out by the Artist Placement Group and proved to some extent in practice.

It is proposed that a development programme be undertaken by the National Enterprise Board without delay.

References:

Proposals have already been put to the Scottish Development Agency by the Scottish Office who have already carried out a feasibility study. Data(1)

Other examples have been tested, eg. with the DoE, and the Department of health (2)

The APG's immediate objectives, limited objectives and financial requirements. (3)

Other data (4)



the  
incidental person

admit, one

The Royal College of Art, Kensington Gore, SW7.  
 Thursday 27th October 1977 09.30-16.00.

**Top:** John Latham, *New Professional Function for the Incidental Person: The Problem of Motivation in Post-Capitalist Societies*, undated (mid/late-1970s?)

**Bottom:** Ticket for APG seminar *The Incidental Approach to Government*, Royal College of Art, London, 27 October 1977

CHRIS WATTS.

Fig. 1. The IU's workshop for RADMIN takes its name from the document below, New Professional Functions for the Incidental Person: The problem of motivation in post-capitalist societies. This page comes from The Portable John Latham and is reproduced here with generous permission from the John Latham Foundation and the book's editors, Antony Hudek and Athanasis Velios.

**R**

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# Warren Nilsson, Organization Unbound, Working Paper, August 2007 The Geometry of the Center

## Centres Not Sides

William Isaacs (1999) writes about Dialogue in the tradition of Martin Buber and David Bohm. In this tradition, Dialogue is a collective conversational practice intended to help people move beyond their current assumptions in order to think together in a truly collective and creative way. Isaacs calls Dialogue “a conversation with a centre but no sides.” He means that Dialogue doesn’t focus on bounding the conversation in order to achieve consensus. Instead, it creates a sense of shared meaning – a centre– powerful enough to hold together any number of apparently diverse perspectives. Part of this practice is the search for connections between frames and belief systems that seem to contradict each other on the surface. Much of dialogue takes place in the conversational subsoil, the place where roots intertwine and common currents feed even the most disparate paradigms. What’s particularly interesting about Dialogue is that it is not just a way of making people feel connected. It has a generative power. Powerful new perspectives seem to spring unbidden from the simple act of suspending judgement and looking for points of contact in ideas that at first feel alien to us. And these perspectives often lead to tangible results – fresh ways of expressing ourselves, innovative projects, or novel modes of organizing.

Dialogue is one example of what we might think of as the geometry of the centre, a geometry in which things are held together not because they are contained by borders or categories, but because they are all drawn to the same thing. It is a gravitational geometry, a geometry based on attraction. Imagine an organization whose fundamental principle was the centre not the side. What would this mean? What would it look like in practice?

Let’s start by defining a “centre” as a focal point of interaction. A centre is essentially an ongoing conversation. The conversation may appear to revolve around a typical function like accounting, or around a specific project or initiative. It may, however, be more subtle - grounded in a question that might not seem to have much to do with formal organizational goals. The “conversation” need not be explicitly articulated. It might be tacit and experiential. We don’t need to be talking about cooking or accounting or community-building; we might simply be doing those things together in a sustained way. In fact, the Latin roots of the verb ‘to converse’ mean ‘to live with’ or ‘to dwell among’. The shift of meaning to emphasizing speaking instead of living is relatively recent (Oxford English Dictionary).

### **Gravitational**

What differentiates a centred conversation from a bounded conversation? That is, how do we know that something like accounting is being structured via attraction rather than via typical role and group boundaries? We can deduce two key principles, which, not coincidentally, also map neatly onto oneness and fullness.

### **Structure**

**A centre is infinitely radiant.** Each centre exhibits field-like properties in that it is understood to affect and be affected by all bodies, no matter how far they might appear to be from that centre. The force of a centre extends endlessly in all directions, which is just another way of saying that, at the level of intention, no one is excluded from the conversation. In order to prevent the kind of social identity closure and comparison typically associated with groups, the centre cannot fundamentally be understood as a group at all by the people visibly participating in it. No one is outside of the boundary of the conversation – even people who would not normally be considered part of the organization – because the conversation has no boundary. No one belongs to the conversation more than anyone else. This property has nothing to do with visible form. Perhaps only four or five people typically participate in the planning for a particular project or in a certain organizational function. But at the level of intention, each participant in the conversation understands that it affects everyone, even if only diffusely, and that everyone is a latent or potential participant. One day someone who has never indicated an interest in the project might ask a question, or offer an idea, or sit in on a meeting, or join an activity. Recognizing such latent participation is the intentional stance that allows a group to escape the social identity trap and to stay attuned to the underlying hum of interconnectedness or oneness that I have

argued is an essential dimension of human engagement.

### **A centre is perfectly gradient.**

There are an infinite number of relative locations one can occupy with respect to a centre. Again, the field-like metaphor fits nicely here. There are no discrete categories of participation in a field, no separate degrees of in or out. In organizations, this means that a person may locate herself at any “distance” from a conversational centre. That is, she may invest as much or as little energy and attention in the thing as she sees fit. The more she invests, the “closer” she is to the centre. This is a difficult structure to envision. Even if we want a particular project or function to be open to everyone, we generally predefine categories of participation. “You’re welcome to be a part of this initiative, but you must come to meetings twice a week, or agree to give a certain number of hours,” etc. Perhaps, if we are sophisticated, we offer several options for participation. But this is a far cry from the idea that a person may contribute in the manner she wants to and to the degree she sees fit. Such freedom is precisely what true fullness requires: organizational conversations that allow us to invoke the various parts of ourselves if, when, and how we are moved to. Fullness does not imply that we are using all dimensions of ourselves in every context; it merely implies that we have access to those dimensions, that we are not cut off from them.

Let's call the principles of radiance and gradience gravitational principles. Gravity is radiant in that it excludes nothing. We live in a universe in which everything is attracted to everything. It is neither exaggerated nor in the least romantic to say that I have a relationship with even the most distant star. It is a scientific fact. And gravity is gradient. The degree of attraction one body has on another is inversely proportional to distance. Gravity is always at work, but the closer we are to something the more we feel it. If these gravitational principles were fully imbued in an organization, conversational centres would become energy centres. The work being done around a given focus would create energy for the organization and nourish its participants. Why? Because conversational centres would be sustained as people were attracted to them. If the conversation were not feeding something important, people would simply move away from it. (I address the question of what would happen if no one wanted to be involved in a seemingly indispensable function below.) Much organizational interaction works in the opposite way; it drains those involved of their engagement and enthusiasm, leaving them tired and in need of re-charging from some other source. We can think about an energy centre as essentially a vital and ongoing conversation, a place of mingled curiosities and interests, a place where self-expression turns into relationship. It might take time for the organization to develop the level of transparency necessary for people to be able to see what they are drawn toward. And it might take time for individuals to learn how to act gravitationally. We carry so many pre-existing frames with us into our organizational lives that it might be difficult to move away from thinking about what we are supposed to do in order to think about what we want to do, what we feel called to do. But let's assume for the moment that this habit can be cultivated, personally and organizationally.

One consequence of a gravitational approach would be that strategy and growth would be based on engagement rather than on opportunity assessment. The organization would grow where there was energy for growth, seeking to discover and nurture new energy centres. This would call for an intuitive rather than an analytical approach to development. What might make sense from a traditional strategic perspective might make no sense at all in terms of engagement. We might see the need for a new project or new strategic direction, but if there were no intrinsic human energy to support the project, either it would fail or it would succeed at the cost of engagement. A gravitational organization would need to learn how to pay attention to and develop the conversational centres that harboured enough latent energy to grow.

# Community Plumbing - Places Journal, July 2018. How the hardware store orders things, neighborhoods, and material worlds.

*Shannon Mattern*

The Franquinhas have been selling hardware on Metropolitan Avenue in North Brooklyn since 1962. Brothers Joe and Manny started off in a narrow storefront now occupied by a record shop. In time they bought up five lots across the street, and Crest True Value Hardware grew into its current 5,000 square-foot space. Manny's son, also named Joe, added the garden center out back, where in good weather you'll find Finlay the African gray parrot and Franklin the pot-bellied pig. As Williamsburg changed around it, Crest was always there, a beacon. The younger Joe now owns the store. As he told me, "It's big, it's bright, it's red," and there are hundreds of potted plants out front. It's hard to miss.

I grew up in a hardware store, too, so Joe and I had a lot to talk about. As we chatted in the upstairs office, I sat in the chair his mom, Catherine, uses when she

helps with the bookkeeping. On her desk was a flowerpot filled with a couple dozen uniformly sharpened pencils. Manny's death last summer, at the age of 89, was deeply felt in the community he maintained for over half a century. "He never turned down a school in need, a church in need," Joe said. When a neighbor, the artist Gene Pool, was looking for a venue to showcase his work, Manny gave him space in the shop windows. "Before you know it," Joe said, "Gene was inviting all these other artists into the store to showcase their work." And that's how the Crest Hardware Art Show was born.

The annual exhibition of hardware-themed art ran originally from 1994 to 1999. After Joe took over the store in 2007, he brought the art show back for another long run. It "got killer press" and attracted international visitors, but Joe always framed the show as a neighborhood affair. He kicked things off every season with Crest Fest, a street festival attended by several thousand people, and donated the proceeds to local institutions like the Reliquary museum and Macri Park. The store also hosted pumpkin carving contests, film screenings, and concerts. None of it made much sense "from a retail perspective," Joe said, because "we were shuffling all this stock around in order to make a place for art." But it made sense from a civic perspective. "The community has seen us investing in them, so they're willing to invest in us."

At the same time, Joe reimagined the store's layout and merchandise. In the aughts many North Brooklyn business owners embraced an apothecary aesthetic, opening straight-razor barber shops and artisanal cocktail bars. Joe saw an opportunity to reclaim the original meaning of the general store — to "tell the story," he said, of Crest Hardware as a "common ground" and gathering space. Now, when you walk through the front door and step onto the wide, weathered floor planks, the first thing you see is a big, wraparound checkout counter that Joe calls the "command

post.” It feels a bit like the library service desks of yore. (Some early libraries were even in hardware stores!) The new display shelves, black with wood-tone peg board, convey that the goods have been curated with care. Questions are answered at a long wooden service counter along the back wall. [...]

This is a vision of the hardware store as episteme. It holds (and organizes) the tools, values, and knowledges that bind a community and define a worldview. There’s a material and social sensibility embodied in the store, its stuff, and its service, and reflected in the diverse clientele. That might sound a bit lofty for a commercial establishment that sells sharp objects and toxic chemicals. But the ethos is palpable. (And profitable, too. The store is always busy, and Joe has been lauded by the North American Retail Hardware Association.)

Headlines proclaiming the death of neighborhood retail remind me of all those articles a few years back that wrongly predicted the end of the library. Despite competition from big-box stores and the internet, many local hardware stores are doing all right. In 1972, the United States had about 26,000 hardware stores. Their number dropped to 19,000 by 1990 and 14,000 by 1996, but for the past two decades it has been fairly steady. Hardware Retailing reports a slight annual drop in the number of independent stores, but sales are strong (even increasing) at the ones that remain. Why should we care about the survival of these quotidian spaces, with their ten-cent goods, at a time of crisis when many American cities lack affordable housing and clean water? I’d argue that the hardware store is more than a “common ground.” It’s a place of exchange based on values that are evidently in short supply among our political and corporate leaders: competence, intention, utility, care, repair, and maintenance. In an era of black-boxed neural nets and disposable gadgets, hardware stores promote a material consciousness and a mechanical sensibility. They encourage civic forms of accreditation, resistant to metrics and algorithms. At some neighborhood stores, you can stop in for a couple of screws and be waved off from paying at the register. [...]

To understand how American hardware stores have shaped communities, and vice versa, it helps to trace an earlier genealogy: the rise of the general store [...] The general store’s inventory reflected — and often shaped — community needs and values. The social roles performed by storekeepers likewise varied. Historian Diane Wenger has traced economic relations in Schaefferstown, Pennsylvania, a village of 500 people where Samuel Rex opened a country store in 1790. Two years before Congress passed the Mint Act, bartering was still a common practice. For certain goods Rex turned to local suppliers, purchasing tobacco products, earthenware, nails, hides, shoes, rakes, and barrels from the potters, smiths, tanners, cobblers, and coopers around town. Much of his business, however, involved regional trade. Local craftspeople sold Rex their butter, lard, beeswax, tallow, pork, iron, and whiskey in exchange for store credit, and then he worked through agents to trade those goods in Philadelphia for city wares that were not locally available. The store thus “connected Schaefferstown to the wider Atlantic economy.” Iron bars made by local smiths became currency when exchanged for merchandise at Rex’s store, and he made loans to the ironmasters and allowed them to use store credit to pay their employees. 15 Other

customers, too, used their store accounts to take out loans. So Rex the shopkeeper was also Rex the banker. He blended community- and market-based exchanges and networked the mine, farm, town, and city to build an early logistical system. [...] Pretty much everywhere, the storekeeper wore multiple hats. In Schaefferstown, Rex provided legal and writing services and served as a liaison to postal riders. Many general store owners were official postmasters. Others made space for the barber, the tax collector, and the election pollster. Clark holds the Southern storekeeper to a particularly high standard: he was “all things to his community” — a “steward, railway agent, fertilizer salesman, social adviser, character reference, politician, lodge master, and general community ‘obligier.’” He was a social orderer, and his store was “the hub of the local universe”: “market place, banking and credit source, recreational center, public forum, and news exchange.” The front doors and porch pillars served as bulletin boards. “Largely because of the store,” Carson concurs, “a clutch of houses became a town,” and even more, a community. There was typically an open area around the stove where the (mostly male) patrons could gather for “gabbling, yarn spinning, chewing, [and] dipping.”

Here jokes and stories and dialects were rehearsed, news and gossip were circulated, and opinions on local and national events were solidified. Long sees “democracy at work,” and Clark (again, writing in 1944) claims that the general store was the most inclusive space in town, where a black man would find his “money was as good as that of the white man.” Yet as much as we might like to imagine the general store as a public space where all were welcome, it was ultimately a “place of [white] male refuge.” In the Jim Crow South, stores were often segregated, and even when black customers were welcomed there was no guarantee of safety. We have to remember that Emmett Till’s encounter with Carolyn Brant, which led to his lynching in 1955, took place at her family’s store in Money, Mississippi. The same conditions that made the general store a powerful space of social ordering could make it dangerous for those who transgressed its codes. [...]

Country stores are still social hubs in many areas of the United States, but their proprietors rarely buy goods from the customers. They don’t often make loans or trade in alternative currencies. Brooks Blevins observes that the stores that have survived in the Ozarks have done so by focusing on basic needs: “feed and fertilizer, gasoline and farm diesel, tools and local gossip ... benches and a warm stove.” But they also depend on customers honoring a tacit social contract, “at least occasionally paying a few dollars more” for groceries (which may, in fact, be foods bought at the regional Walmart and marked up) in recognition of the store’s value to the community. Hardware stores began to diverge from general stores around the turn of the 20th century, when proprietors extracted “hard” merchandise and left behind the “soft” lines like textiles and food. Yet that “hardness” still accommodated tremendous variety. [...] In an 1894 issue of *The Hardware Dealer*, columnist Tenpenny Thinker wrote:

I think that there are few lines of trade which require so close a personal attention to details as that of the retail hardware dealer. The average customer has a very indefinite idea of the name or nature of the device he requires, and therefore depends largely upon the intelligence of the dealer to supply the necessary and proper article. Even the everyday door knob and old-fashioned loose joint butt require intelligent attention and repeated explanation to make certain that the spindle is the right length, and whether the door swings to the right or to the left, and does the customer intend to use a rim or mortice latch. Then the length of the screws has to

be considered, and, perhaps, the distance from the spindle to the keyhole must be ascertained, all of which seems of little importance to the customer, but must be understood by the dealer to render satisfactory service.

Many of these same goods were sold by new competitors, like department stores, drug stores, chain variety stores, and mail-order houses. How hardware stores responded to this competition foretold their ability to later withstand the rise of big-box and online shopping. In the 1940s, some hardware stores banded together to form retailers' cooperatives. Hardware Wholesalers (1945) and Cotter & Co (1948) later became the Do It Best and True Value co-ops. Ace went co-op in 1973. Locally-owned member collectives benefited from centralized purchasing power, and they received assistance with expansion, remodeling, merchandising, financing, employee training, secession planning, inventory management, market research, and advertising. When Home Depot arrived in the late 1970s, many small hardware stores were strong enough to compete, thanks to their affiliation with a co-op. Stores like Crest Hardware have also survived because of their commitment to customer service, their investment in the community, and the fact that they offer instant availability in a high-touch industry. As Joe Franquinha put it, "You gotta give them a reason to come in here."

He eloquently described how the ethos of service carries forward:

If people need a specific lightbulb, there's a question that comes along with it. ... "Will this burn down my house? Will this be bright enough? Can I use this in my fridge?" As far as a nut and bolt goes, they ask, "Can I use this outside?" No, you cannot. You need a stainless-steel nut and bolt. ... [The service counter] feels like a pulpit at times. It feels like a lab table at other times. It's an opportunity to experiment, to learn something at little to no cost.

When Crest was planning its renovation, Joe sought out the advice of True Value's specialists. "The first blueprint they gave me had no back counter," he said. The consultants advised that his plan to keep all the nuts and bolts behind the counter was not an efficient use of space. "Says who?" he protested. "Do you have any idea how many times I get returns of ripped-open nuts-and-bolts packages ... because customers bought the wrong one the first time, because there was no one helping them and they just grabbed it? Now they go to the back counter, because it's the only place we sell nuts and bolts, and they get the right thing the first time." That exchange has a value that doesn't show up on the balance sheet, Joe said. The customer "might've only spent a dollar-fifty, but they walked out with a wealth of knowledge, with exactly what they need, and with the confidence knowing that the next time they have a project, they have a place that they can rely on." Here he makes an argument that is extremely rare today, an argument against the casualization of labor and against the "responsibilization" of consumers to be self-sufficient. How many store owners will follow Crest Hardware's example and resist the efficiency experts? Every year, the National Hardware Show unveils new products and predicts market opportunities. As a kid, I attended a few of these conventions with my dad, marveling at the fancy cordless tools and miracle adhesives. This year's offerings included a "smart home virtual reality experience," a "tiny home" demo, and an "emergency preparedness and disaster recovery" display for the prepper market.

Yet the fundamentals of the hardware store are pretty old-school: hammers and hex screws and houseplants. It is a “repository of literally centuries of knowledge and experience,” and its wares include “some of the most artfully — and practically — engineered items in existence.” There’s quite a legacy sitting on those shelves. Joe Franquinha’s revival of the general store is about the basics: “You need nuts and bolts to fix things. Without that, those things fall apart. And those operations are boiled down to their purest form. It’s this metal that connects, that serves one specific purpose: keep it together.”

That mantra — keep it together — poses a challenge to independent retailers. Who will succeed the current generation of owners? When my dad and his brothers were ready to retire, there was no one to take their place. (My cousins, my brother, and I were dedicated to other careers.) So they sold the family hardware store. Not long ago, I asked the sibling-owners of a neighborhood store here in New York what would happen to their business, family-owned since 1925, when they retired. The predicted outcome: “Mr. Developer comes along and buys us out.” Joe Franquinha’s story runs in the opposite direction. Growing up, he had no plans to stick around; he was going to be an actor. Yet he kept working in the store, and eventually, he said, “I saw that I could make this my life.” My brother and I never had Joe’s epiphany. A part of me will always regret that. And what can we learn from those stores that don’t keep it within the family? When Kanakrai Mehta, owner of Halsted Hardware on the south side of Chicago, was ready to retire, he couldn’t find anyone to take his place. In a distant echo of the origin story of the Crest Hardware Art Show, Mehta ended up selling to his neighbor, the artist Theaster Gates, who relocated the inventory to the Fondazione Prada in Milan, an old gin distillery transformed by Rem Koolhaas’s OMA into a premier art venue. In an installation called, appropriately, True Value, Gates organized all 30,000 items — tape measures and extension cords and paint rollers — chromatically on peg-board stands. In the store’s reincarnation, the utilitarian order becomes an aesthetic one.

Gates says the work is a “reckoning” with the fact that “there are objects of power that are only powerful when one who knows that system manages the tool.” The tools and supplies sold at hardware stores represent the expert knowledge of electricians and plumbers and maintenance workers, whom Gates regards as the “shamans” of the everyday built world. They are the fixers who maintain the sublime systems necessary for our very survival, and they have skills and understandings that the rest of us lack, accustomed as we are to flat-packed furniture, black-boxed gadgets, and smart cities. The hardware store owner, the one who curates this collection of generative and reparative parts, understands “the importance of the constant and daily care necessary to make this slowly eroding world hold up a little longer.” Gates says that True Value “is a testament to them.” Their story is about “order and power, structure and city.” Here, amidst the nuts and bolts, we cultivate the potential to order things, places, communities, politics, and values — we might even say, to build and repair worlds.

# Selected emails to Cube-Cola, The Early Years

Date: Tue, 27 Nov 2007 14:50:44 -0000  
From: DES SAR-SS (Ross)  
To: kate rich  
Subject: RE: Cube Cola

**Kate, hope all is well,**

**It's a while since I popped over to pick up some cube concentrate - I'm the chap who fixes helicopters?**

**We had great fun making Cola and everyone really liked it. I was looking for the bottle to bring it back to you but I think my girlfriend may have accidentally put it in the recycling box - really sorry.**

**Also, I was wondering, had you tried making the syrup using less water so that it was thicker? That way you could get more fizz? Or do you have problems getting the sugar to dissolve?**

**Take Care and Speak soon**

**If you ever need a hand with any cube cola stuff give me a shout.**

**Sqn Ldr**

**SAR-H Safety and Support Manager**

Date: Tue, 29 Apr 2008 20:55:00 +0100 (BST)  
From: matt  
To: kate rich  
Subject: Re: [Cubeadmin] cube cola

**sorry kate,**

**had just got back from the last meeting and the group decision was made not to order cube cola, i think they want to stick to cans or a cheap nasty version. i tried to push it through but the decision was 12 votes to 4. i think most people want an easy life.**

**Im really sorry to mess you around as it did look like we was going to take it, i think everyone has a lot on their plate.**

**so at least it would make your life less stressful. Deepest apologies again**

**matt**

Date: Tue, 02 Sep 2008 15:51:59 +0400  
From: Thord  
To: [cola@sparror.cubecinema.com](mailto:cola@sparror.cubecinema.com)

Subject: agent for cube cola

Dear girls!

We read about your amazing produkt in a Swedish articel.

Toda our small company just started to import essences to Russia. These essences one mix with vodka to produce ones own Gin, Rom and so on. Your Cube Coloa mix could be a perfect combination in our product mix.

We are clearly interseted in to be your Exclusive Agent in Russia but even in the whole former Soviet Union. It is to early to have any opinion of volumes. But for the essences are we planning for 8-12 million 20 ml. bottles per year during the first three year period.

We are also able to buy in bulk and fill on place.  
Please give me an answer as soon as possible.

For OOO Profitek  
160031 Vologda  
Russian Federation

Date: Mon, 3 Nov 2008 15:01:21 -0600  
From: bat rastard  
To: [cola@sparror.cubecinema.com](mailto:cola@sparror.cubecinema.com)  
Subject: mounting resistance in the cola wars

hello cube cola!

having recently built a home carbonation system, i have been fascinated and inspired by the cube cola website. i'd like to order the large kit for use as a control while developing my own brew from your instructions... but given the crumbling american economy, wonder if 15 bucks and change will even cover one of your postage stamps by the time it arrives.

thx,  
ben

Date: Tue, 18 Nov 2008 13:43:28 -0700  
From: Hernando  
To: [cola@sparror.cubecinema.com](mailto:cola@sparror.cubecinema.com)  
Subject: Distribuitior

Date: Fri, 27 Feb 2009 14:47:25 -0500  
From: Marcela  
To: Cola <[cola@sparror.cubecinema.com](mailto:cola@sparror.cubecinema.com)>

Subject: web site

Dear Cola

If you're wondering why you're online business is not doing as well as you would like \_ the answer is web traffic. Basically \_ you need a lot more visibility. Email us today. We will take a look at your site and give you an assessment free of charge. It doesn't have to cost a fortune to make business happen online. Be sure to include all of your URL(s) and how you prefer we contact you.

Sincerely,  
Marcela

Date: Sun, 12 Apr 2009 00:06:59 +0100

From: Sarah

To: cola@sparror.cubecinema.com

Subject: Cube Cola

Hi,

I was given a little pot of the cube cola concentrate a while ago, and within a month it had corroded a hole in the bottom of the container, and leaked all over the fridge...Is is usually this fearsome?!

Anyway, I still want to have a go at making it, and would like to know how to order it please?

Many thanks

Sarah

Date: Tue, 16 Jun 2009 18:40:00 -0600

From: Lucas

To: Cube Cola <cola@sparror.cubecinema.com>

Subject: results from your kit

hi,

I received the large kit yesterday. i mixed it up with 0.750L of filtered water and 1.5kg of granulated white sugar. This amount of sugar was about 7.25 cups in volume (58 fl. oz.).

oddly, the resultant syrup was about 1.6L in volume; not 2.4L as the instructions said it should produce. However, instead of using two shots (2 fl. oz.) per 12 fl. oz. serving,

using about 1.7 fl. oz. per 12 fl. oz. seems to produce a good drink.

i'm very happy with the final cola product, however i am a bit perplexed about the difference between my total syrup volume and what you guys get. Perhaps it has to do with elevation (i'm at 5,000 ft.) or with the type of sugar (affecting the syrup density). any thoughts?

i'm going to take a sample to my favorite local cafe and give the owner a sample. :)

cheers,  
lucas

Date: Wed, 28 Sep 2011 21:24:43 +0800

From: jason

To: kate rich

Subject: Re: jason from shenzhen

On the pepsi wiki, it claims they use both citric acid and phosphoric acid. Our current goal is to use the original open cola recipe to create a control group, then my chemist friend will make the syrup for me. After that, he will create variations and I will attempt to replicate them in china. If you could join us on irc, we hang out on the freenode server under the channel #eon . If it works out well, you can come visit us in china.

Jason

Date: Sat, 17 Dec 2011 17:21:22 -0800

From: Barry

To: cola@sparror.cubecinema.com

Subject: Media Request.

I am just inquiring,

Would it be possible, if you could send us a media sample of your Cube-Cola KIT VERSION 2.0. I am the owner of an I.T and general gadgets review website, Called I.T Geeks. Our new website is under construction but I already have received samples and wrote reviews for Microsoft, NEC, SVP, Saitek, Motorola, Nokia, Olympus, Amazon and others. I can supply a reference from a company we have reviewed a product from, If required. If you are interested please reply as soon as possible. If not, Could you send us a quick reply, Just so we know for our own reference.

**Yours Sincerely,**

**Barry  
I.T Geeks,  
IRELAND**

Date: Mon, 22 Jul 2013 15:20:41 +0100

From: Louise

To: "COLA@CUBECINEMA.COM" <COLA@CUBECINEMA.COM>

Subject: Trinity College Dublin-New Financial Information System

**For the attention of the Finance Department, CUBE-COLA  
Trinity College Dublin (TCD) are implementing a new Oracle  
Financial Information System from October 1st 2013.**

**As a supplier to Trinity College Dublin we would ask that  
you please read the attached communication and complete the  
attached supplier creation form.**

**Thank you in advance for your co-operation.**

**Yours Sincerely,**

**Louise**

Date: Fri, 18 Oct 2013 15:23:12 +0100

From: Eberhard

To: cola@cubecinema.com

Subject: Bitcoin?

**Hi,**

**I want to know, if you take payment via Bitcoin?**

**Kind regards,  
Eberhard,  
Germany**

# RADMIN: OUT OF OFFICE

From: BBC  
Date: Thu, 20 Dec 2018 at 17:34  
Subject: Automatic reply: RADMIN - festival of administration - 14 to 16th Feb 2018 - Bristol  
To: Edens Half <[edenshalf@gmail.com](mailto:edenshalf@gmail.com)>

Thanks for your message. I am now out of the office and returning on Monday 24th December 2018. For extremely urgent queries which cannot wait for my return, please email: [Radio3ProductionBusinessAffairs@bbc.co.uk](mailto:Radio3ProductionBusinessAffairs@bbc.co.uk)

BBC

Business Affairs Executive,  
Radio and Music

From: the Quietus  
Date: Thu, 20 Dec 2018 at 17:38  
Subject: I Am 000 on family business Re: RADMIN - festival of administration - 14 to 16th Feb 2018 - Bristol  
To: <[edenshalf@gmail.com](mailto:edenshalf@gmail.com)>

Dear Mailer,

I'm out of the office and not checking my mail.

If you have something that absolutely will not wait until my return please contact someone else in the office.

For news, streaming enquiries and premieres, please contact:  
[christian@thequietus.com](mailto:christian@thequietus.com) and [Paddy@theQuietus.com](mailto:Paddy@theQuietus.com)

For advertising and features editorial please contact: [luke@thequietus.com](mailto:luke@thequietus.com)

For music reviews, literature and social media enquiries, please contact:  
[Anna@theQuietus.com](mailto:Anna@theQuietus.com)

For film, art & books features and reviews, please contact:  
[bobby@thequietus.com](mailto:bobby@thequietus.com)

All the best  
The Quietus

Date: Thu, 3 Jan 2019 11:57:36 -0800  
From: LADA  
To: [kate@irational.org](mailto:kate@irational.org)  
Subject: Auto Reply Re: RADMIN

## AUTO-REPLY

LADA is now closed for the seasonal holidays and will reopen on 4th January. I am not back in the office until 9th January.

Happy holidays

Live Art Development Agency

From: news email <news@bcfmradio.com>  
Date: Thu, 20 Dec 2018 at 17:34  
Subject: Thanks for contacting the  
BCfm news team Re: RADMIN - festival  
of administration - 14 to 16th Feb 2018  
- Bristol  
To: <edenshalf@gmail.com>

**Thanks for contacting us. Our news team will pick up your email and action it for use in our news bulletins and general programming.**

**We broadcast original news content every weekday morning on the One Love Breakfast show from 7 - 10am that is also simulcast on Ujima radio. We also have news bulletins on our drive time shows.**

**Even though you may not realise by listening to us, BCfm is run entirely by volunteers and has no regular funding. We cannot, therefore, always be at events or launches that you may wish us to attend due to volunteer availability.**

**However, we will strive through our programming to cover as many local stories as possible and welcome your submission.**

**Thanks for your email.**

**The BCFM News team**

From: Cafe Oto  
Date: Thu, 20 Dec 2018 at 17:34  
Subject: Auto reply: I'm Away Re: RADMIN - festival of administration - 14 to 16th Feb 2018 - Bristol  
To: <edenshalf@gmail.com>

**I am away today but will be back and checking emails again on 20th December.**

**Best wishes,**

**Cafe Oto**

Date: Thu, 3 Jan 2019 19:51:51 GMT  
From: Watershed  
To: kate@irational.org  
Subject: RADMIN organisational bio request!

**Thank you for your e-mail.**

**I'm out of the office until Monday 7th January, and will deal with your enquiry upon my return.**

**Have a good start to 2019.**

# Journal of Geography in Higher Education, Vol. 23, No. 1, 1999, pp. 80± 85

## Queer(y)ing Capitalism in and out of the Classroom J. K. GIBSON-GRAHAM

Recently I attended a conference on globalisation and global regulation which was organised by some left social scientists at a university in the US. One thing I noticed in many of the contributions was the way in which everything was centred on or by capitalism, almost by default. Regulation was seen as focused upon capitalism and ultimately became part of a capitalist formation. Non-capitalist social sites (including the household and the state) were involved in the reproduction of capitalism, perhaps in new forms. Even opposition was situated within capitalism, defined and ultimately coopted by it. Over the course of the conference, what was incrementally produced was an image of a united and univocal social space, the sort of thing that is called a 'capitalist society' or in this case a 'global capitalist economy' or just 'global capitalism'.

It was clear to me that the researchers at the conference were disinclined to explore disharmony, incoherence and contradiction where capitalism was concerned. Yet all of us found the picture we had generated demoralising and depressing. This brought to mind what queer theorist Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick has called the 'Christmas effect'. To Sedgwick's mind what is so depressing about Christmas is the way all the institutions of society come together and speak a with one voice (1993, p. 5): the Christian churches, of course, but also the state (which establishes school and national holidays), commerce, advertising, the media (revving up the Christmas frenzy and barking out the Christmas countdown), social events and domestic activities, a they all line up with each other so neatly once a year, and the monolith so created is a thing one can come to view with unhappy eyes.

Sedgwick points to a similar monolithic formation in the realm of expectations about sexuality where your biological sex, self-perceived gender, personality and appearance, the sex and gender of your sexual object (supposed to be not yourself and not the same as yourself), your sexual practices (including the privileging of certain organs and orifices associated with reproduction, or with insertion and reception), your sexual fantasies, and your principal emotional bonds and domestic arrangements are all expected to come together in predictable associations (Sedgwick, 1993, p. 7). Breaking apart these associations is the theoretical job of 'queering' sexuality and its representation I am particularly attuned to these problems and possibilities because I was myself a producer, in my earlier work as a teacher and researcher, of representations of capitalist hegemony. As a member of a large and loosely connected group of political economists who were interested in what had happened to capitalist economies following on the economic crisis of the 1970s, I had engaged in theorising and teaching about the ways in which industrial production, enterprises, forms of consumption, state regulation, business culture, and the realm of ideas and politics all seemed to undergo a change in the

1970 s and 1980 s from one hegemonic configuration to another. It did not matter that I was very interested in the differences between industries or that I did not see industrial change - even widespread change - as emanating from or rejecting a macrologic of 'the economy'. I was still representing a world in which economy, polity, culture and subjectivity reinforced each other and wore a capitalist face. Chasing the illusion that I was understanding the world in order to change it, I was running in a well-worn track, and had only to cast a glance over my shoulder to see, as the product of my analysis, 'capitalist society' even more substantial and definitive than when I began.

In those exciting early days I had yet to take seriously the 'performativity' of social representations in other words, the ways in which they are implicated in the worlds they ostensibly represent. I was still trying to capture 'what was happening out there', like the researchers at the conference. Students were drawn to the certainty and urgency of tracing the 'emergence of global capitalism' in particular industrial sectors and regions, and the classroom became a site where the new world order was critically 'pinned down'. At that point I was not thinking about the social representation my students and I were creating as constitutive of the world in which we would have to live. Yet the image of global capitalism that we were producing was actively participating in consolidating a new phase of capitalist hegemony [3]. Through my pedagogy and other forms of communication, I was representing an entity called the 'global capitalist economy', and that representation was becoming common sense to a generation of students and activists. Over a period of years this became increasingly clear to me and increasingly distressing.

My situation resembled that of the many other teachers and social theorists for whom the 'object of critique' has become a perennial and consequential theoretical issue. When theorists depict patriarchy, or racism, or compulsory heterosexuality, or capitalist hegemony they are not only delineating a formation they hope to see destabilised or replaced. They are also generating a representation of the social world and endowing it with performative force. To the extent that this representation becomes influential it may contribute to the hegemony of a 'hegemonic formation'; and it will undoubtedly influence students, and other people's ideas about the possibilities of difference and change, including the potential for successful political interventions. In the classroom the excitement of 'identifying' global capitalism was increasingly tempered by the seeming futility of any form of resistance to it, and some students became exasperated and disillusioned by the project.

A feeling of hopelessness is perhaps the most extreme and at the same time most familiar political sentiment in the face of a massive or monolithic patriarchy, racism, or capitalism. Perhaps it is partly for this reason that many social theorists have taken to theorising a hegemonic formation in the field of discourse (heteronormativity, for instance, or a binary gender hierarchy) while representing the social field as unruly and diverse [4]. A good example can be found in Sedgwick's opening chapter to *Epistemology of the Closet* where she counterposes to a heteronormative discourse of sexuality the

'obviousness' [5] of the great and existing diversity of people's relations to sex. In a similar fashion, bell hooks (1992) sets a dominant phallocentric discourse of black masculinity (and black racial identity) against the diverse social field of black masculinities and gender relations [6].

Like many political economists I had heretofore theorised the US social formation and 'the global economy' as sites of capitalist dominance, a dominance located squarely in the social (or economic) field. But a theoretical and pedagogical option now presented itself, one that could make a powerful difference: to depict economic discourse as hegemonised while rendering the social world as economically differentiated and complex. It is possible, I realised, and potentially productive to understand capitalist hegemony as a (dominant) discourse rather than as a social articulation or structure. Thus, one might represent economic practice as comprising a rich diversity of capitalist and non-capitalist activities and argue that the non-capitalist ones had until now been relatively 'invisible' because the concepts and discourses that could make them 'visible' have themselves been marginalised and suppressed.

In this project of discursive destabilisation, the first task is to undermine familiar representations of capitalism as the hegemonic form of economy, as necessarily and naturally dominant. This opens up a space for alternative economic representations, ones in which non-capitalist economic practices are visible and prolific, and not necessarily subsumed to capitalist dominance. With students it is interesting to explore their own engagement in non-capitalist activities in their households and residential areas, or in student organisations such as cooperatives. On field trips to regions traditionally defined in terms of capitalist industrial activities (such as mining or manufacturing) it is instructive to include local speakers from aboriginal economies or the voluntary sector to show how non-capitalist economic activities contribute to regional economic identity. And it is also useful to seek out contemporary illustrations of alternative economic practices that are currently viable. [...]

Of course, destabilising images of capitalist dominance is a big project, and I could not do it by myself. Nor could I do it without queer theory, that incredibly dynamic matrix of contemporary theory whose practitioners are not only theorising about queers but who are also making social theory 'queer'. This latter project can be seen to involve not (or not merely) constituting a minority population based on same-sex desire, set in opposition to a heterosexual norm, but calling into question the very idea of norms and normality, calling attention to the violence entailed by normalising impulses, including the impulse to theorise a social site as subsumed to a hegemonic order [7].

What if we were to 'queer' capitalist hegemony and break apart some of its consolidating associations? We could start by reimagining the body of capitalism, that hard and masculine body that penetrates non-capitalism but is not itself susceptible to penetration (this image conveys some of the heterosexism that structures contemporary social theory). One key 'coming

'together' (a Christmas effect that participates in consolidating a capitalist monolith) is the familiar association of capitalism with commodification and 'the market'. This association, in which all three terms ultimately signify 'capitalism', constitutes the body of capitalism as dominant and expansive (at least in the space of commodity transactions). But how might we re-envision that body as more open and permeable, as having orifices through which non-capitalism might enter? We might argue, as many have done, that many different relations of production - including slavery and independent commodity production and collective or communal relations - are compatible with production for a market. What violence do we do to these when we normalise all commodity production as capitalist commodity production? Surely the market is a mobile and membranous orifice into which can be inserted all kinds of non-capitalist commodities, whose queer presences challenge the pre-eminence of capitalism and the discourses of its hegemony.

Queering our pedagogy means making differences visible and calling normative impulses and forms of social closure into question. This is something that geographic researchers are increasingly doing with respect to a wide range of social and cultural sites and processes, not excluding the 'economic', where differences among industries, enterprises, economic subjects, cities and regions, national and world economies are often highlighted and explored. The fact that one sameness - their capitalist nature - tends to unify all these forms of difference offers a challenge to us as teachers. Can we, with our students, generate different representations of the economic world, ones in which non-capitalist class relations and forms of economy are prevalent and widespread? [8] If we can, what might be the impact of these representations? Might they not help to make anticapitalist activism seem less quixotic and more realistic? Might they contribute to a non-capitalist politics of economic invention?

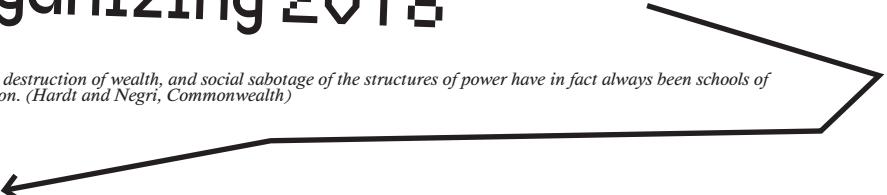
For queer theorists unwilling to accept that it is a 'heterosexual' world in which queers may gain a toehold but will still be ultimately marginal or minoritised, various forms of queerness are everywhere to be found. The domain of the 'normal' retreats to the social and theoretical horizon. Likewise, for economic theorists and teachers who wish to counter the normalising effects of discourses of capitalist hegemony, economic discourse may be hegemonised by representations of capitalist dominance, but the economic world is already queer. We're here, we're not capitalist, get used to it! [9]

## NOTES

- [1] A version of this paper was published in *Organisation*, 3(4) (1996), pp. 555±559 and parts of it appear in the preface to J.K. Gibson-Graham (1996). [2] J.K. Gibson-Graham is the pen name of Julie Graham and Katherine Gibson, feminist industrial geographers who teach at the University of Massachusetts-Amherst and Monash University in Melbourne, respectively. [3] When I heard union leaders exhorting their memberships to accept the realities of the new global economy and act accordingly to maintain their share of the pie, I felt in part responsible for the note of inevitability in their voices. As Fred Block has pointed out, a social theory plays an indispensable role in providing us with a roadmap to our social environment (1990, p. 2). The kind of social theory I was producing mapped a terrain that was structured and governed by global capitalism, and that offered only a few highly constrained political options. [4] Of course, this is a strategy that has its failures and problems as well as its strengths and successes. Just because something is discursive does not mean it is not monolithic or intractable, as Butler points out in her discussion of Irigaray's universalist and crosscultural construction of phallogocentrism (1990, p.13) and her criticism of the way in which female abjection is sometimes treated as a founding structure in the 'symbolic' domain: *a. Is this structure of feminine repudiation not re-enforced by the very theory which claims that the structure is somehow prior to any given social organisation, and as such resists social transformation?* (1995, p.19). [5] An obviousness itself presumably constituted by non-hegemonic or marginal discourses. [6] See the chapter in *Black Looks on black masculinity* (hooks, 1992). [7] I have found that upper level undergraduate and graduate students find this type of questioning an unsettling challenge. Many have enjoyed the creative task of reading the economic development literature, with its normative visions of capitalist growth, through the lens of sexuality and gender relations and have come up with entertaining analyses that cast its normalising impulses into stark relief. [8] Many feminist economists have argued that non-capitalist relations of production prevail in 84households, and that goods and services produced and distributed within households constitute a not inconsequential contribution to the social product. I have found that showing the video *a Who's Counting? Marilyn Waring on Sex, Lies and Global Economics* (based upon Waring's 1988 book, *If Women Counted*, and produced by the National Film Board of Canada) is an excellent way to get this point across to students. One can then raise the point that to call the household a site of capitalist reproduction only, rather than a site of non-capitalist production and reproduction as well, is the kind of discursive violence a 'queer' pedagogy is uniquely positioned to question and contradict. [9] These ideas are developed more fully in Gibson-Graham (1996).

# Martin Parker Shut down the Business School, extract: Chapter 7 The school for organizing 2018

*Revolt, the destruction of wealth, and social sabotage of the structures of power have in fact always been schools of organization. (Hardt and Negri, Commonwealth)*



Hardt and Negri's point, as with much writing about social movements and revolutions, is that it is not only the powerful that organize. It would be understandable if we thought that was the case, because the structures of power are often enough giant institutions, enduring and highly visible sets of social relations, skyscrapers and palaces encased in stone and glass. This makes it look as if organizing is primarily a matter for government, corporations, universities – the places where we find managing, managers and management. Of course, these are forms of organizing, but the most important message of this book is that they are not the only forms of organizing, and that they are dwarfed by the sheer number of other ways in which organization can also happen, on other scales, through other means and for other purposes. People learn to organize, Hardt and Negri seem to be saying, outside and against the sorts of institutions represented by the b-school.

In 2016, a group of academics who were writing an attempt to justify something called the 'Business School Impact System' asked 'what would happen if business schools were to disappear?' It was a rhetorical question in one sense, since it was meant to

propel the reader to an understanding of why it was so important that the 'Business School Impact System' was adopted, but their answer was: not much. Business schools, they said, are largely irrelevant to business, so the only people who would really notice would be students who were gainfully employed rather than paying fees and academics and administrators who would have to go and get proper jobs doing something productive.<sup>2</sup> Their paper was another rattle of the rigour/relevance 'debate', one that failed to ask who they should be relevant for, since the answer was so obvious already.

Let's take this suggestion seriously. How about shutting down the b-school, and opening schools for organizing?

## EXCLUSIONS

As I suggested in Chapter 1, the sorts of doors to knowledge we find in universities are based on exclusions. A subject is made up by teaching this and not that, about space (geography) and not time (history), about collectives of people (sociology) and not about individuals (psychology), and so on. Of course there are leakages, and these are often where the most interesting thinking happens, but this partitioning of the world is constitutive of any university discipline. We cannot study

everything, all the time, which is why there are names of departments over the doors to buildings and corridors.

However, the b-school is an even more extreme case. It is constituted through separating commercial life from the rest of life, but then undergoes a further specialization, a peristaltic contraction which squeezes out lots of other forms of organizing. As we saw in Chapter 2, the business school assumes capitalism, corporations and managers as the default form of organization, and everything else as history, anomaly, exception, alternative. In terms of curriculum and research, everything else is an option, not a core, something for the periphery, not the centre. Now (as we saw in Chapter 4), I am not the only person to have suggested that b-schools are obsessed with certain forms of organization, and that they tend to teach about corporations and free markets, that they are dominated by finance and that one step to improving matters might be to, as some commentators have suggested, 'take the business out of the b-school'. It's a nice phrase but, as with most of those wailing about the sins of their employers, they don't say much about what that might mean. Just that 'something ought to be done', and that something usually requires the deployment of words like ethics, responsibility, morals and so on. But if we do want to take business out of the business school, or rather, want to expand the business school so that it wasn't only focused on one specific form of business, that wasn't only aimed at managers, why not begin by reconsidering the nature of the exclusions that have made this particular door to knowledge?

It is actually really easy to see that there are lots of forms of organization that an alternative 'School of Organizing' might look at in order to learn lessons and teach about possibilities and problems. This means that the

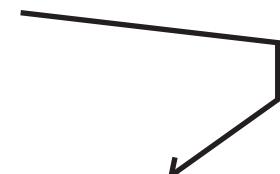
curriculum would not ignore organizations on a different scale, or in different cultures, or from different times, or that don't assume the capitalist economy. 'Organization' simply refers to patterns of people and things that humans arrange in order to get things done, the outcome of the patterning of people, technology and finance. It is a big word, a generous word, and it doesn't need to be reduced to 'management'. The etymology gives us the Latin *organa*, as an instrument or tool for a particular purpose, which in turn comes from *organon*, a Greek word which means something like 'that with which one works'. In English, the musical instrument and part of a body sense of 'organ' are both fifteenth century, as is the sense of organization (*organizationem*) as an action, as something that is done. It is not until the nineteenth century that the word solidifies into a thing, into an institution which is the precondition and/or consequence of a form of labour. The root of the word is some sort of device which effects a transformation, an arrangement which causes one thing to become something else. This is a productive notion and it implies a way of intervening in the world, of making the world different through the use of tools, of organs which produce a world which we can understand and work with.

To simplify considerably, organization, as a verb, produces organizations, as nouns. The shape and size and durability of the nouns then mould the ways in which human beings can organize. We make institutions that shape us, and that shape our understanding of the world and our capacities to effect it. Studying how human beings organize, how they come together with each other and various non-human technologies, is therefore the subject matter of the school for organizing. Organizing is everywhere, and it varies according to degrees of formalization, visibility stability and so on. It is a general verb which includes many specific processes, and a noun which covers multitudes of instances.

One way of expressing this would be a list of nouns then, a list of the outcomes of organizing processes. It could include co-operatives, local markets, kinship systems, groups, swaps, complementary or subaltern currencies, herds, networks, communes, clubs, worker self-management, pressure groups, partnerships, local exchange trading systems, hierarchies, democracies, councils, teams, bureaucracies, trusts, communities, time-banks, collectives, enterprises, professions, swarms, guilds, lineages, trade unions, states, clubs, occupations, social movements, solidarities and associations. That is to say, there are lots of different forms of organizing, and they all articulate different assumptions about hierarchy, economic exchange, tenure, boundaries and so on. Furthermore, they might be informed by anarchism, socialism, feminism, localism, libertarianism, environmentalism and whatever other complex politics human beings bring to bear on their lives. It does include conventional ‘management’ too of course, as well as ‘markets’, but only as two possibilities amongst many others.

# **Creating Living Knowledge: The Connected Communities Programme, community-university relationships and the participatory turn in the production of knowledge.**

## **Keri Facer & Bryony Enright 2016**



### **The problem with money**

Research funding, however, can sometimes cause problems when its implications are not discussed and addressed. In particular, the money can have significant implications for interpersonal relationships. In a context in which research collaborations are often built on previous informal and collegial relations, success in gaining funding can have the unintended consequence of transforming positive personal relationships into contractual instrumental relationships, in which former collaborators are transformed into 'clients' and 'funders/commissioners'.

In some circumstances, people's informal contributions to communities had been understood as part of a gift economy, in which no remuneration was expected and work was conducted for its intrinsic value to communities and to the individual. When funding becomes available, these contributions are suddenly reframed as part of an economy of exchange. For those who maintain their commitment to a gift exchange relation either intentionally or because of lack of awareness of the possibility of payment, this can result in loss of status and in resentment between team members. In short, the money can see project collaborations transformed from relations of reciprocity to a 'taxi driver' model, in which contributions are made 'on the clock', and collaborators are turned into passengers/clients and drivers/consultants.

The organisation of funding for collaborative research within an RCUK funding programme - in other words, on a project basis rather than as part of the ongoing work of the university - also has implications for interpersonal relations and for the substantive nature of the work. The funding can encourage a move away from partnerships towards projects. In other words, the funding can cause a shift from the development of long term relationships and goals, towards the achievement of the objectives set out in the project documentation. Where such objectives are developed with long term aspirations in mind, this is unproblematic. Where this is not the case, and in particular for small community groups, this can have the effect of diverting attention away from the maintenance of ongoing activities. For example, there can be negative impacts on the support of day to day activities that sustain volunteer and community interest. Project based funding also risks the creation of dependency upon the funders, rather than the creation of a sustainable model for the organisation.

*"Mean honestly I think I had thought it would be that we would be doing more of a practitioner research project together and I think it defaults into a bit more of a client relationship." (Brenda, Co-I Large Grant)*

*"We'd cooked this up together, this project, as fellow local activists [...] and we both wanted to do this [...] But then as soon as the money came in then she felt like she was my employee and treated it like a job where she just does her hours and treated it, no that's not quite right, I mean I could fire her, you know, this is what she was thinking I think. Which to me was inconceivable cos we were partners on the project, you know it was our project, but it just, she didn't see it that way [...] It felt before that it was motivated by interest, and then as soon as the money came in it became a job. Which is very reasonable, of course it should, but the money then ... it then turned into what can I do in this amount of time that you're paying me for – what do I need to deliver, tell me what I need to deliver and I'll deliver it, kind of thing." (Julie, PI on four and Co-I on two CC awards)*

*"Because Connected Communities are 12 month projects – which doesn't really cut it to make something really meaningful with it. So I think something a bit ... you know 3 to 6 year projects I think on them would be a much deeper, better piece of research."*  
*(Pam, Youth Worker, regional community organisation)*

*"Once the funding starts to dry up, the grants start to dry up, then they have to pull back the service. Whereas we've started from the other approach to try and set up a business, and then at the same time trying to do some social projects. 'we're trying to do is just live off what we earn - we don't want to ask for money in the future, so we're trying to grow the amount of earning capacity. Cos fund raising is just hard... its hard work."*  
*(Stephen, Co-ordinator, community development trust)*

The principle of subsidiarity, in which decisions about budgets are devolved to community partners in some projects also has the unintended consequence of producing an intensification of competition between collaborators. This can highlight conflicting motivations for the project – some are focused on finance for their organisation while others are concerned with developing new research and knowledge for their organisation or sectors. This intensification of tensions between partners is also unintentionally exacerbated by the lack of standardisation of payment rates for collaborators, with some operating on the basis of a minimum honorarium or expenses, and others requiring substantial day rates and overheads. While such competition is not a result of the project funding – community organisations and cultural organisations often operate in a context of competition for funding – such relations have the potential to militate against the intention of projects to produce knowledge for a common public good.

The way in which research funding is administered and allocated also risks working against the aspirations of many projects to create more democratic and collaborative research partnerships between university and community partners. The discrepancy in resourcing available to support early stage project ideas tends to mean that academics take the lead in the drafting of research proposals. Where alternative funding models have enabled resource to be available to cover community partner costs for project idea development, this has helped but the requirement for academics to be named as Principal Investigator still reinforces the balance of financial decision making toward the university. Where community partners have had their own resource to shape projects, as, for example, in the very significant collaboration between Connected Communities and the Heritage Lottery Fund we have seen more equitable relations beginning to emerge over agenda setting in the research process.

One significant consequence of the formalised funding of collaborative research projects is that the large differences in costs between universities and community/civil society organisations become visible. The differences in salary, for example, between frontline youth workers and the senior academics they may be collaborating with university. Where community partners have had their own resource to shape projects, as, for example, in the very significant collaboration between Connected Communities and the Heritage Lottery Fund we have seen more equitable relations beginning to emerge over agenda setting in the research process. One significant consequence of the formalised funding of collaborative research projects is that the large differences in costs between universities and community/civil society organisations become visible. The differences in salary, for example, between frontline youth workers and the senior academics they may be collaborating with become striking. The substantial overheads charged by universities on full economic costing, raise questions for participating academics and community partners about whether funding channelled via universities for this sort of work constitutes good value. This is a particularly live debate when academics mistakenly take on roles such as community organising, youth work and events administration that would usually be run more cost effectively and with greater expertise by community partners. Such observations, however, can be beneficial in prompting reflective discussions about the distinctive contributions of different project members.

Success in gaining research funding also necessarily requires the administration of grants. Here, the lack of involvement of professional services staff in the early stages of project development becomes particularly problematic. Funding for expenses and honoraria, while essential to the conduct of the project, for example, tends to require community partners to jump through the substantial and unhelpful hoops of university administration systems. Processes often begin with the university requesting, as a consequence of Home Office requirements, that community partners show their passport and prove they have the right to work in the country if they are being paid a fee for partnership; an initial point of encounter that does little to generate trust and produce positive relations. This is often followed by a byzantine process of form filling, and a timescale for payment of several months that leaves community partners (and sometimes research assistants) out of pocket and deeply frustrated. Legal contracts of hundreds of pages, forms that cannot be completed online, multiple requests for the same information from different departments and faculties, all of these can significantly erode both trust and desire for collaboration. To redress these imbalances and reduce risks, some project teams are beginning to identify middle-man organisations who are able to respond in a more agile and timely manner for payment purposes. At the same time, a number of universities are beginning to take these matters seriously with guidance for community partners, academics and professional services staff and the streamlining of systems. In the meantime, both academics and community partners are expending significant unnecessary energy in finding ways of working with systems that are far from fit for purpose.

*“For one piece of work we got £2000 towards staff costs, and £2000 paid for us for a 4 hours a week worker for a year. And that doesn’t cover ... it would never go anywhere near that in a university would it?” (Pam, Youth Worker, regional community organisation)*

*“Just it’s been very difficult working with the finance office, getting them to pay*

*for childcare ... even though that was you know written into the grants ... getting them to pay the invoices of the community organisation in a timely fashion ... then just wanting everything in this kind of ridiculously rigid form." (Lena, Co-I on 2 CC awards, including Digital Capital Project)*

## **Time and Money – a fictional and symbolic relationship**

The relationship between money and time, how this is imagined and managed on these projects, fundamentally shapes and reflects the nature of the research partnerships in this programme. Participants in the programme consistently tell tales of the discrepancy between their original plans and the amount of time they are committing. The infamous 'J-es Form' on which time is allocated and costed to the quarter hour at the planning stage of projects is widely seen as a fictional document, or at best, little more than guidance to give shape to the relative contributions of participants.

Universities, in particular, seem to treat the J-es form as a loose guidance for the amount of time researchers will be recognised as working on a project in their workload models, with some academics reporting that a 1 day a week time allowance in a budget translates into 2 hours a week in a workload model. This 'fluid' relationship between planned time and lived time on projects seems to be culturally accepted, as younger researchers report being told that working routinely in excess of costed hours is just a feature of academic life'. Community partners also routinely report that project costings bear little or no resemblance to the actual time that they dedicate to projects. In some cases, individuals and organisations are well able to bear the cost of this cultural norm; for others, the implications are negative and significant.

*"I think to be honest with you I think that AHRC money is prestigious, it's good for careers and CVs, and of course some component of that, it would be disingenuous to suggest otherwise. I mean for us AHRC money was something we'd not had before, we'd had ESRC framework stuff and all that kind of stuff, but it provided a longevity which was important." (Carl, Co-I Large Grant)*

This fictionalisation of the relationship between time and money, in some circumstances is intentional and accepted. The funding is treated by some project teams less as a material resource than as a symbol. It is seen as a way of justifying work and activity that individuals and organisations would want to carry out whether resource was available or not. The function of the money is to provide a warrant, some breathing space, and some justification for the activity. The symbolic function of the funding is also to publicly demonstrate the existence of the collaboration, something that in itself is seen as valuable.

The fictionalisation of the relationship between time and money, in other circumstances, brings sharp and negative consequences. The nature of collaborative research is that it is particularly 'time- intensive'. It requires the slow building up of trust and relationships, the careful nurturing of time and space for conversations. It requires a responsiveness to circumstances and to needs beyond the confines of the working week; it requires participants to get involved in and create activities that fit around communities' own schedules and constraints. The urgent needs of many communities participating in the

programme also create an imperative to respond to requests for support and contributions that can be difficult to resist. The work-life boundary is blurred through the work, and while this can offer huge personal and professional rewards, it can lead to significant negative consequences. The costs of what Lauren Berlant 29 calls ‘intimate labour’, the personal and political engagement involved in this work, can be high for both university and community partners.

*“I felt like I wasn’t doing it properly at times. And that’s all very well if you’re skimping on you know your own research, but when you’re working with an organisation and you’re working with a vulnerable group of people, you know, you really don’t want to let anyone down.”*

(Lena, Co-I on two CC Awards including Digital Capital Project)

*“The interesting thing about the women’s side of all this I think is ... You know because a lot of this work is about emotional labour, and it’s hidden stuff and it’s like you know making things happen ... all that stuff I was saying about the bus tickets and is [so and so] coming to give me my 20 quid ... a lot of male academics I know would not be arsed with all this sort of stuff.”* (Bernadette, PI on three awards and Co-I three awards including Large Grant)

For those academics who have moved into the university sector from the community, such commitments are often associated with feelings of guilt and anxiety at having left behind frontline work and the need to ensure that they are still making a contribution. Such academics often find it hard to discuss the requirements to produce academic outputs from research projects and to prioritise such activities within the confines of the project. As a consequence, ‘writing up’ projects becomes an activity conducted in evenings and at weekends, a personal contribution to the knowledge landscape. This is also a particular concern for those early career researchers, working on fractional contracts, who are often over-committed on practical and logistical work on these projects.

*“And I’ve chatted to people who’ve worked on like, they jump from project to project, having not written up anything from any of them, or have written very little, maybe one publication at most. Like for research posts, particularly ones that are only 12 months long, you just don’t get the opportunity. And when you’re applying for jobs often we’re told what people will look at are publications, and when you’re on short term contracts which you’re only employed to be research based – how are you going to find the time to write it unless you do it in your own spare time.”* (Cameron, Early Career Research Assistant, Large Grant)



There are two prominent traditions through which social and economic research is married to the critique of capitalism. The first is critical theory, in which knowledge and judgement are turned upon the conditions and practices of domination, following in the tradition of Marx. The second is liberal republicanism, in which knowledge of alternative, non-dominating institutions is collected and publicised, following in the tradition of (say) Mill. But I wonder if we can add a third: the analysis of the surprising frailties of dominant institutions.

David Graeber's recent articles have got lodged in my mind, as examples of social science optimistically down-playing the power, durability and authority of the status quo. Graeber highlights the fact that contemporary capitalism is so lacking in authority or hegemony, that a huge amount of resources are diverted towards simply propping it up. This inverts the perspective of critical theory, which, by contrast has traditionally viewed power as totalising and suffocating (I guess Graeber has the benefit of an anarchist tradition, which has long committed to playfulness and laughter). Luc Boltanski's departure from critical sociology occurred in a parallel way, focusing on the unlikelihood of sustained institutional domination, rather than its inevitability.

In this vein, I have a proposition: twenty public-spirited lawyers could change the world. Capitalism, as a political-economic system, is an attempt by certain individuals - entrepreneurs and financiers - to dwell in the future, through a system of promises and plans. Its durability derives partly from the fact that, by the time the rest of us reach next week, it has already been occupied by those who were parcelling it up the week before.

## **Capitalism is the German beach towel that we find already laid out on the sun lounger at 9am.**

But what is it that allows this conversion of future promises and plans into a lived reality, that the rest of us have to abide by and view as 'real'? It is pieces of text, backed up by the sovereign state - contract backed by law. Without law, without lawyers, entrepreneurs and financiers would be nothing but a throng of Big Lebowski's, pledging and scheming, but never getting anywhere. "Hey, dude, I totally thought of that idea first." "Look, man, you totally promised me you'd obey me". As anarchists might agree, it's all somewhat laughable.

# 20 public-spirited lawyers could change the world

Napoleon said that “an army marches on its stomach”. Nye Bevan said that the NHS would need to “stuff the doctors’ mouths with gold”. And is it any surprise that lawyers are so handsomely paid, when they occupy a pivotal position in the enforcement of a future that few of us have had any say over. Imagine if they went on strike!

Law is a form of symbolic and discursive violence. Through the foggy complexity and uncertainty of a modern society, law enables individuals and institutions to send laser beams (of varying quality, depending on cost) from one point in time and space to another, saying “this is what will take place; this is what we agree has happened; this is what must happen; these are the conditions of co-operation”. Law, more than the media, allows money to be converted into publicly-agreed and enforceable statements.

Imagine if this capacity were diverted to alternative ends. Imagine a lawyer - and not simply a civil rights or legal aid lawyer, as noble as those are - who was not interested in getting rich. We obsess over ‘social’ entrepreneurship, but entrepreneurship only determines particular qualities of capitalism, whereas law determines its general form. This, potentially, is a far more potent object of innovation and reform. This is exactly what the ordoliberal lawyers in Freiburg realised during the 1930s, 40s and 50s (for some excellent research on this, see Werner Bonefeld’s ESRC project and papers). They hoped to reform the very basis and form of capitalism, not through tinkering with economic policy-making, and less still through economics, but through drawing up a new blueprint for its rules. This blueprint was instrumental in the design of the German social market economy, albeit following wartime devastation and then Allied reconstruction.

The area that I’ve witnessed this critical-legal potential most closely is in an area where I’ve done some work in the past, namely ownership and control of firms (my work on this is collected here). Last summer I had the pleasure to work closely with Cliff Mills, a lawyer who has become an integral part of the co-operative and mutuals movement in the UK, and on whom a large number of existing ‘public service mutuals’ depended for their advice and constitutional design. Cliff and I did much of the drafting of a document for the International Co-operative Alliance, offering a Blueprint for a Co-operative Decade.

What I found enlightening about this experience was the discussions we had about core instruments of capitalism - equity, voting rights, debt, share, audit - and how far they can be tweaked in various directions, before they become something else. In the process, one starts to imagine a wholly different economy, simply through considering how freedoms, powers and responsibilities might be combined differently, via subtly redesigned legal instruments.

But for the most part, Cliff is on his own. Another lawyer, Graeme Nuttal, carried out a review of employee ownership for the government last year, and no doubt there are others scattered around. Though I understand that some people are tired of his messianic demeanour (or is it just his disciples that bother people?), Lawrence Lessig has also shown what an individual with a political critique and a legal training can achieve. What we need is something like a new or-doliberalism (which is not so far from saying we need a new neoliberalism...), that is, a group of lawyers intent on transforming the framework of capitalism and non-capitalism, through a concerted, not-for-profit effort.

Governments and policy-makers are now more ready to admit how little can be done to transform the fabric and norms of society, beyond the state. The 'Big Society' meant far more as a negative category than a positive agenda: these are the areas of social improvement that government can't really help with. Entrepreneurs are expected to pick up some of the slack, through personality and charisma alone. Why not lawyers? If economics 'performs' markets, as Michel Callon has argued, it's only a slight exaggeration to say that law 'performs' society. Written rules are one necessary ingredient of a society that hangs together in a certain way. Coming up with alternative rules, making them available to the public, giving them plausibility, is one path to an alternative future. As much as anything, this would highlight the contingency and exoticism of the status quo, which we deem unmovable but is in fact just the practical work of the professions which slavishly - or make that, lucratively - repeat it, year after year.

In April 2011, after lengthy negotiations with HMRC VAT agent Jim Spencer, the Cube Cinema Ltd secured an exemption from charging VAT on admissions to Music and Cultural Events, back-calculated to July 2007. This activity netted it a £24,749.00 lump sum VAT reimbursement, that formed the seed of the fundraising campaign to purchase the Cube buildings and land.

## Guidance Admission charges to cultural events (VAT Notice 701/47)

Find out which admission charges to cultural exhibitions and events are exempt from VAT.

Published 1 September 2011  
From: HM Revenue & Customs

### Detail

**This notice cancels and replaces Notice 701/47 (December 2003).**

#### 1. Overview

##### 1.1 This notice

This notice explains when admission charges to certain cultural exhibitions and events can be exempted from VAT, and by whom. It also covers the exemption of fund raising events by certain cultural bodies.

##### 1.2 Changes to this notice

This notice has been restructured and rewritten to improve readability and replaces the December 2003 edition. Other main changes are the removal of:

paragraph 8

paragraphs 9 to 11, these paragraphs referred to the revised policy related to the interpretation of 'managed and administered on an essentially voluntary basis' which was introduced on 1 June 2004, this information has either

been amalgamated into the new notice or removed as details on transitional arrangements are no longer needed

#### 1.3 Who should read this notice

You should read this notice if you charge for admission to venues, sites, events or performances of a cultural nature.

#### 1.4 The law

This notice covers the following areas of the VAT Act 1994:

admission charges to cultural events, set out in Schedule 9, Group 13

fund-raising events, set out in Schedule 9, Group 12

#### 2. Qualifying services

##### 2.1 Exempt admission charges

The exemption of admission charges is restricted to:

public bodies  
other cultural bodies that satisfy certain conditions - these are referred to as 'eligible bodies'

## **2.2 Admission charges that qualify for exemption**

Only admission charges to museums, galleries, art exhibitions and zoos and theatrical, musical or choreographic performances of a cultural nature qualify for exemption.

## **2.3 Definition of a museum, gallery, art exhibition or zoo**

This has to be judged by reference to the normal everyday meaning of the words, taking into account indicative evidence such as the nature of the collections, objects, artefacts, site and exhibits on show. However, for the avoidance of doubt, a botanical garden does not qualify for exemption.

## **2.4 Meaning of theatrical, musical or choreographic performance of a cultural nature**

Each event has to be judged on its individual merits. However, where live performances of stage plays, dancing or music are considered to be cultural (as they generally are) they'll qualify for exemption.

## **2.5 Programmes**

Programmes, which are normally the most closely linked goods, are already zero rated as printed matter with the result that exemption of programmes would be of no benefit.

## **4. The exemption for eligible bodies**

This section describes how a cultural body that is not a 'public body', as explained in paragraph 3.1, can qualify for treatment as an 'eligible body' enabling it to exempt admission charges of a qualifying nature.

### **4.1 Conditions for qualification**

To exempt admission charges to qualifying activities, an organisation must, as an eligible body, satisfy all of the following conditions. It must:

- be a non-profit making organisation
- apply any profits made from exempt admission fees under this provision to the continuance or improvement of the facilities - see paragraph 4.5
- be managed and administered on an essentially voluntary basis, and by people who have no direct or indirect financial interest in the activities of the body

### **4.2 Qualifying for exemption**

Non-profit making organisations which charge for admission to the qualifying services described in section 2 may qualify.

### **4.3 Bodies that do not qualify for exemption**

A body which fails one or more of the conditions detailed in paragraph 4.1 may not qualify. For example, a body which:

distributes or covenants profits to a third party, including parent or associated companies (see paragraph 4.4 for the meaning of distribution)

applies profits from admission fees to activities unrelated to the continuance or improvement of the facilities to which the admission fees are charged

has at least one person who manages and administers it at the highest level and exercises a right to a commercial rate of remuneration

### **4.4 Non-profit making organisation**

This is an organisation that does not systematically aim to make a profit and which, if profits nevertheless arise, must not distribute them.

A body whose constitution or articles of association preclude it from distributing surpluses of income over expenditure to its members, shareholders or any

other party (other than in the event of a liquidation or cessation of activities), and which as a matter of fact does not distribute any profit, will normally be accepted as having satisfied this condition for the purposes of this exemption.

For the purposes of this exemption, distribution of profit does not include grants or donations made by charities in pursuit of their wider charitable objectives.

#### **4.5 Satisfying the application of profit condition**

To qualify for exemption, all profits arising from exempt admission fees must be:

used for the continuance or improvement of the facilities made available to the fee-paying public by payment of the exempt admission fees

applied in connection with the making of related cultural supplies (such as research or conservation projects)  
If profits are applied to any other activities of the body than those above, the body is not eligible for exemption.

#### **4.6 Establish whether you're a body**

managed and administered on an essentially voluntary basis and by people who have no direct or indirect interest in the activities

To determine whether this twofold condition is met, you need first to:

consider who manages and administers the body - see paragraph 4.7

establish that those who are identified as managing and administering the body have no direct or indirect financial interest in the activities of the body - see paragraph 4.8 and establish if they do so on an 'essentially voluntary basis' - see paragraph 4.12

#### **4.7 Managing and administering the body**

In determining who manages and administers a body, you should only consider

those members who take the decisions of last resort concerning the policy of a body, particularly in the financial and strategic areas, and carry out the higher supervisory tasks. In other words, those who determine what a body will do and how it will do it. For the purposes of this condition, persons who carry out purely executory tasks (those who implement, rather than take high level decisions) can be ignored.

To determine who takes the decisions of last resort, you should consider:

the constitution or articles of association to identify the members of the directing organs and their specific tasks

what actually happens in fact, in other words, you should also consider those persons who, without being so designated within the constitution, take rather than implement policy decisions at the highest level

#### **4.8 Meaning of direct or indirect financial interest in the activities of a cultural body**

A person can have a direct or indirect financial interest in the activities of a body if they receive or have a right to remuneration; take up an 'as of rights' provision (as defined in paragraph 4.11), or are in any other way rewarded directly or indirectly by the body, or have any other financial interest in the body. This financial interest has to be actual not potential.

A person who's managing and administering the cultural body on a voluntary basis can be seen to have an actual financial interest in its activities only when:

the person receives any payments for services supplied to the cultural body above the market rate, paid as routine overheads, or the payments made are profit-related (whether below, at or above market rates)

there's a link between the payments and the person's participation in the direction of the cultural body's activities

#### **4.9 Remuneration**

For the purposes of this notice only, remuneration means a commercial rate of pay or profit-related payment. Hence the making of a token payment only or payments solely to reimburse out-of-pocket expenses wouldn't disqualify a body from exemption provided all other conditions were met.

#### **4.12 Check if a body is 'essentially voluntary'**

To satisfy the condition governing the management and administration of a body, a body need only be essentially, not exclusively, managed and administered on a voluntary basis by persons with no direct or indirect interest in the activities of the body. Therefore, having identified those persons who manage and administer the body, and have a direct or indirect financial interest in its activities, consideration needs to be given to the issue of 'essentially voluntary'.

The fact that remunerated staff take part occasionally or peripherally in the adoption of the decision of last resort will not, in itself, disqualify a body from exemption.

However, if one or more persons identified as managing and administering the body at the highest level receives remuneration, then the body won't qualify for exemption.

In the case of 'as of rights' provisions, the issue is one of degree - that is, the frequency, number and size of any payments made - and each case will turn on its own facts. It's recommended that if you consider that your continued eligibility or otherwise for exemption turns on payments made under an 'as of rights' provision, that you seek a ruling

from HMRC. The helpline will be able to provide the address of the office to where the information should be sent  
5. Scope of the exemption for fund raising events

Read Your Charter to find out what you can expect from HMRC and what we expect from you.

Help us improve this notice

If you have any feedback about this notice please email: [customerexperience.indirecttaxes@hmrc.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:customerexperience.indirecttaxes@hmrc.gsi.gov.uk). You'll need to include the full title of this notice. Do not include any personal or financial information like your VAT number.

Putting things right

If you are unhappy with HMRC's service, contact the person or office you've been dealing with and they'll try to put things right.

If you are still unhappy, find out how to complain to HMRC.

How HMRC uses your information

Find out how HMRC uses the information we hold about you.

Published 1 September 2011



## MANIFESTO

FOR MAINTENANCE ART 1969!

*Proposal for an exhibition "CARE"*

## MIERLE LADERMAN UKELES

show your work—show it again  
 keep the contemporaryartmuseum groovy  
 keep the home fires burning

Development systems are partial feedback systems with major room for change.  
 Maintenance systems are direct feedback systems with little room for alteration.

-2-

MAINTENANCE ART

- I. IDEAS
- A. The Death Instinct and the Life Instinct:

The Death Instinct: separation; individuality; Avant-Garde par excellence; to follow one's own path to death—do your own thing; dynamic change.

The Life Instinct: unification; the eternal return; the perpetuation and MAINTENANCE of the species; survival systems and operations; equilibrium.

- C. Maintenance is a drag; it takes all the fucking time (lit.)  
 The mind boggles and chafes at the boredom.  
 The culture confers lousy status on maintenance jobs = minimum wages, housewives = no pay.
- clean you desk, wash the dishes, clean the floor,  
 wash your clothes, wash your toes, change the baby's diaper, finish the report, correct the typos, mend the fence. Keep the customer happy, throw out the stinking garbage, watch out don't put things in your nose, what shall I wear, I have no sox, pay your bills, don't litter, save string, wash your hair, change the sheets, go to the store, I'm out of perfume, say it again—he doesn't understand, seal it again—it leaks, go to work, this art is dusty, clear the table, call him again, flush the toilet, stay young.

D. Art:

Everything I say is Art is is  
 Art is Art "We have no Art, we try to do everything well." (Balinese saying).

Avant-garde art, which claims utter development, is infected by strains of maintenance ideas, maintenance activities, and maintenance materials.  
 Conceptual & Process art, especially, claim pure development and change, yet employ almost purely maintenance processes.

- B. Two basic systems: Development and Maintenance. The sourball of every revolution: after the revolution, who's going to pick up the garbage on Monday morning?
- Development: pure individual creation; the new; change; progress; advance; excitement; flight or fleeing.
- Maintenance: keep the dust off the pure individual creation; preserve the new; sustain the change; protect progress; defend and prolong the advance; renew the excitement; repeat the flight,
- E. The exhibition of Maintenance Art, "CARE," would zero in on pure maintenance, exhibit it as contemporary art, and yield, by utter opposition, clarity of issues.

MIERLE LADERMAN UKELES	-3-	MAINTENANCE ART	4.	MAINTENANCE ART
<b>II. THE MAINTENANCE ART EXHIBITION: "CARE"</b>				
Three parts: Personal, General, and Earth Maintenance.				
A. <i>Part One: Personal</i>				
I am an artist. I am a woman. I am a wife. I am a mother. (Random order).				
I do a hell of a lot of washing, cleaning, cooking, renewing, supporting, preserving, etc. Also, (up to now separately I "do" Art.				
Now, I will simply do these maintenance everyday things, and flush them up to consciousness, exhibit them, as Art. I will live in the museum and I customarily do at home with my husband and my baby, for the duration of the exhibition. (Right? or if you don't want me around at night I would come in every day) and do all these things as public Art activities. I will sweep and wax the floors, dust everything, wash the walls (i.e. "floor paintings, dust works, soap-sculpture, wall-paintings") cook, invite people to eat, make agglomerations and dispositions of all functional refuse.				
The exhibition area might look "empty" of art, but it will be maintained in full public view.				
MY WORKING WILL BE THE WORK				
B. <i>Part Two: General</i>				
Everyone does a hell of a lot of noodling maintenance work. The general part of the exhibition would consist of interviews of two kinds.				
1. Previous individual interviews, typed and exhibited.				
Interviewees come from say 50 different classes and kinds of maintenance "man," maid, sanitation "man," mail "man," union "man," construction worker, librarian, grocerystore "man," nurse, doctor, teacher,				
2. Individual interviews, typed and exhibited.				
-what you think maintenance is; -how you feel about spending whatever parts of your life you spend on maintenance activities; -what is the relationship between maintenance and freedom; -what is the relationship between maintenance and life's dreams.				
2. Interview Room—for spectators at the Exhibition:				
A room of desks and chairs where professional (?) interviewers will interview the spectators at the exhibition along same question as typed interviews. The responses should be personal. These interviews are taped and replayed throughout the exhibition area.				
C. <i>Part Three: Earth Maintenance</i>				
Everyday, containers of the following kinds of refuse will be delivered to the Museum:				
-the contents of one sanitation truck; -a container of polluted air; -a container of polluted Hudson River; -a container of ravaged land.				
Once at the exhibition, each container will be serviced:				
purified, de-polluted, rehabilitated, recycled, and conserved by various technical (and / or pseudo-technical) procedures either by myself or scientists.				
These servicing procedures are repeated throughout the duration of the exhibition.				

- How can we actively practice the commons together in our everyday work and life?
- What is the purpose of art, and the role of the artist in all this?
- What is the relationship between an art institution's vision and engagement in cultural production, and its administrative and managerial ethos?
- Why are we always so busy?
- How do we dismantle the feeling of always being too busy?
- How can we value reproductive labor as an essential part of productivity?
- How can we unlearn the form of productivity that feeds on busyness?
- How can we feed the collective imagination towards unlearning capitalism?

# Unlearning

If art and cultural productions express a desire for social change, then doesn't what we show need to be reconnected to the conditions in which our artworks and shows are made possible, so that this process might become leverage for the change itself?

*Exercises*

*Unlearning Exercises: Art Organizations as Sites for Unlearning*

Casco Art Institute: Working for the Commons. Binna Choi, Annette Krauss, Yolanda Van der Heide (eds) (2018).

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Radmin // 2019