

Societies of Control, Compulsory Ecstasy and the Neo-Liberal Subject

THE RISE OF SOCIETIES OF CONTROL

Discussing control within the context of a culture in which flexibility, opportunity, mobility and transformations are tropes of the most banal media text and self-help manual is at best iconoclastic. Popular media are full of promises and recipes for life-transforming experiences and benefits under the guise of re-branding of the self, career plans, management of one's assets and life-style strategies. US magazines such as *Wired*, and *Fast Capitalism*, or New Zealand ones such as *Unlimited* and *Idealog* are cheerleaders for the dominant economic and political discourse of enlightened opportunism. Those magazines do not simply advocate the benefits of a truly meritocratic society facilitated by liberating new technologies but re-cast the work and life of the neo-liberal subject as that of a creative and inventive sports competitor or adventurer.

As these two full-page advertisements from *Wired* suggest, the contemporary corporate subject's life is more akin to that of an explorer and an extreme sport practitioner – a corporate version of Harrison Ford's Indiana Jones – rather than that of the typical corporate employee, the type of which was best



Figure 1: *Wired* 13.09 September 2005, 76.



Figure 2: *Wired* 8.09 September 2000, 243.

captured by Gregory Peck in *The Man in a Grey Flannel Suit*¹ or the chillingly subservient Gregory Peck in the cinematic adaptation of Ayn Rand's *The Fountainhead*².

These last two films both paradoxically reveal, and even embrace, in the case of *The Fountainhead*, the paranoia underlying the subservience to power of the cold-war corporate man. For the contemporary neo-liberal subject, limits, constraints and obstacles are challenges to be overcome as a form of mental, physical and technological self-realisation. The emphasis is on being one's exhilarated manager and life coach rather than calling upon self-abnegation, sacrifice or paranoia. The enormously successful *Who Moved My Cheese? An Amazing Way to Deal with Change in Your Work and in Your Life*³ encapsulates in a populist and pseudo-therapeutic tone the neo-liberal denial of the social and the prescriptive manufacturing of the self as the site of all economic and social tensions. Johnson's self-help book is written as the tale of mice that discover that their cozy access to cheese is threatened by changing circumstances, read re-structuration, outsourcing, lay-off, firing or early retirement. This, at best, inane book constitutes a kind of quick-fix therapy for people about to be laid off or who have just been laid off, or morale-boosting comfort for those who want to measure their superior adaptive skills in response to those inferior employees who still may understand the "precarity"⁴ of their employment and their fate as a form of social injustice. But as the book states "if you do not change you can become extinct;"⁵ what is the social when it's all about your fate as a member of the ever-increasing list of endangered species? Rewards and successes are measured by one's ability to recast evolution at the scale of individual agency.

The age is that of a search, if not of evolutionary blackmail, for the realisation of the self; limitations are no longer obstacles so much as excuses for the weak of mind and heart. In his attacks on neo-liberalism, Pierre Bourdieu specifically pointed out the recklessness of the project and the systematic undermining of the social. The rhetoric of natural selection and evolution is barely concealed under the powerful laws of the market, de-regulated capital flows and dismantling of social structures:

The movement toward the neoliberal utopia of a pure and perfect market is made possible by the politics of financial deregulation. And it is achieved through the transformative and, it must be said, destructive action of all of the political measures (of which the most recent is the Multilateral Agreement on Investment (MAI), designed to protect foreign corporations and their investments from national states) that aim to call into question any and all collective structures that could serve as an obstacle to the logic of the pure market: the nation, whose space to manoeuvre continually decreases; work groups, for example through the individualisation of salaries and of careers as a function of individual competences, with the consequent atomisation of workers; collectives for the defence of the rights of workers, unions, associations, cooperatives; even the family, which loses part of its control over consumption through the constitution of markets by age groups.⁶

The traditional bounds of sclerotic institutions have been torn away by the liberating forces of neo-liberal utopia. Any remaining vestiges of control are associated with antiquated institutions which have failed to convert to the virtues of de-regulation revealed as the laws of natural selection.

Gilles Deleuze, in an essay on the demise of disciplinary societies, characterised by “vast spaces of enclosure”⁷ and the rise of societies of control saliently illustrated by the corporation “a spirit, a gas,” argues that institutions such as the factory, the school, the church, and the family no longer function as efficient sites of control. The association between a specific architectural, discursive and social space as described by Foucault is, according to Deleuze, giving way to a discourse of the self as location of control disguised as a liberative exaltation. The model of the subject disciplined by an institution and awarded a position and a voice through the naturalisation of the institution’s discursive authority no longer works in a context where the source of knowledge and action has been shifted to the self as agent of transformation. As Deleuze argues, the monolithic institution empowered by naturalised notions of a hierarchical and compartmentalised social order is under threat from the dispersive logic of post-industrial capitalism. The transition that Deleuze describes is that where the subjugation and subjectivisation of the individual under capitalism is no longer located within the confines of the institution and disciplined within its spatial imaginary but rather “the operation of markets is now the instrument of social control”. It’s nowhere and everywhere at the same time. The fluctuations of the market and the reactive logic of its simultaneous and networked events require constant mobilisation, what Bill Gates calls a “digital nervous system.”⁸ If the subject in a disciplinary society could fantasise of a communal liberation as in René Clair’s *A Nous la liberté*⁹ where a workers’ rebellion overthrows their capitalist oppressors, or King Vidor’s *Our Daily Bread*¹⁰ where the combined forces of displaced migrants create an agrarian utopia, the subject of a control society cannot conceive of emancipation since control is inscribed in all form of actions or more exactly re-actions. Deleuze explains: “the disciplinary man was a discontinuous producer of energy, but the man of control is undulatory, in orbit, in a continuous network.”¹¹ The problem however is that “in the disciplinary societies one was always starting again (from school to the barracks, from the barracks to the factory), while in societies of control one is never finished with anything.”¹² What changes in the advent of control society is the modalities of counter-action or the absence thereof. There is no externality, no architectural outside of the institutions since the institution has been replaced by integrated circuits of endless flows. As the second image on page 27 suggests, the discourse of new technologies is of course central to the enabling forces of neo-liberalism.

NEO-LIBERALISM AND TECHNO-POPULISM

Gilles Châtelet, in an untranslated pataphysical treatise *Vivre et penser comme des porcs*¹³ describes the emergence of a new techno-populist aristocracy responsible for, or at least complicit with, the discourse of “European becoming” through the lifting of social regulations, the abandonment of social causes and the belief in the scientific and rational processes of markets, in other words the advent of a post-social utopia. He specifically parodies the enthusiasm of the French post-Mitterand left in which the historical duties of socialist politics or at least the engagement with the idea of the social have been replaced by a fixation with the establishment of a fluid, exhilarated and supposedly enlightened capitalism. Neo-liberalism deploys administrative, institutional, scientific and rational discourses to justify the social cost of economic reforms, the removal of social protection and the acceptance that the price of individual success is the marginalisation of large groups of people.¹⁴ The State in the neo-

liberal conception, when it is not actualising and enforcing social divisions through spatial demarcations, is no longer an instrument of social progress but an impediment and even the cause of social injustice. This is expressed in the title of a discussion paper by New Zealand's National Party, *Saving the Next Generation from Welfare Dependency*¹⁵ which reflects a very common rhetoric in neo-liberal circles throughout Western societies and states:

The numbers of people on welfare have grown beyond the wildest dreams of the architects of the Welfare State. As a consequence, it is National's view that rather than be part of a dependence solution, the welfare state has become part of the problem.¹⁶

Under the guise of a pursuit of efficiency and productivity, the logic of economic markets asserts that the opportunity of individual economic gains is a salubrious task and a means of saving society from irremediable physical and moral collapse as the title of the above-mentioned study unequivocally proposes.¹⁷ In the National Party's analysis of social welfare we see the notion of moral collapse in the insinuation that welfare dependency is a form of substance abuse and the recipient of social welfare a pathetic junkie. In a speech by John Key in his role as new leader of the conservative National Party and reported on the front page of *The Dominion Post* on 31 January 2007, the assimilation of poverty, social welfare and addiction is made explicit and at the centre of his party's socio-political project. John Key specifically mentioned the case of a street of Hamilton where the public housing inhabitants embody all the attributes of the neo-liberal nightmare: they are unemployed, addicted, with families of single mothers in a permanent state of moral and psychological dead end.¹⁸ Such rhetoric is of course common in many Western states since Thatcher's Britain of the 1980s. The social welfare reform programmes now doxa among most Western countries holding that people on the dole should be made to work is the logical outcome of this: coercion is justifiable for the good of the individual who has lost a sense of direction and needs.

Neo-liberal conceptions assert that the individual is (and should be) a free agent who makes rational decisions based on an economic course of action. The individual is allowed to calculate its best sets of outcomes; societal structures are there only to ensure a certain degree of fairness but not to deter individual initiative. In other words there is, in the nature of neo-liberalism, something which appeals to the ludic. As Johan Huizinga argued

it is through this playing that society expresses its interpretation of life and the world. By this we do not mean that plays turn into culture, rather that in its earliest phases culture has the play-character.¹⁹

As Châtelet illustrates, neo-liberalism does not offer itself as an ideology but as a set of rules and fields of intervention to empower the individual's exploration, risk-taking and initiative. It encourages the liberation and experience of intense, if not altered, states of mind as a form of individuation (an argument made by those studying contemporary psycho-pharmacology).

The neo-liberal individual positions himself at the intersection and as a conduit of transformative forces. Commitment to that cause does not manifest itself through the expression of convictions but rather, and this is one of the foci later in this paper, an economy of affect, a disciplined and disciplinarian deployment and management of intensities. What Châtelet especially attacks is the blackmail of the subject inherent in neo-liberal conceptions,

which, as I pointed out earlier in relation to self-help books, is that one must not simply change along a teleological axis but preferably must transform and reformulate. The modalities of this transformation involve an escape from the social and a re-programming of affects and emotions as a form of evolutionary development. Gains in the neo-liberal play can only be achieved by taking risk with the multiplication of “limit-experiences” – like the climber hanging by a few fingers in the advertisement included earlier – recast as strategic and competitive advantages. The paradox of this discourse is evident: far from being the composed and rational subject, the neo-liberal explorer must be a risk-taker always ready to re-invent him or herself through the experience of altering and affective forces. The task is caught in a double-bind best articulated in the complementary meanings of the fix as seen in this other advertisement from *Wired*: on the one hand the fix suggests that something is broken down and that repairs can be provided by a tool. On the other hand the fix is an answer which suggests, with its obvious reference to drug culture, that the experience of individuating intensities and specifically for this purpose, the encounter with technology, can be the paradoxical remedy to what is articulated as a generalised symptomatology of identity.

TRANSFORMATIONAL MODALITY 1: RECOGNISE AND ACCEPT THE SYMPTOM

Because neo-liberalism is a discourse of change and promise, it has to first identify those forces that resist its implementation. As I pointed out above, the notion of welfare dependency is one of the most common pronouncements about the pathology of social welfare and of the destitute. Problems are not systemic but rather formulated at the level of personal failings, psychological limitations, lack of self-motivation and illness.

In the neo-liberal moral order not all pathologies are created equal. Between the epistemology of the alcoholic homeless person and the hyperactive and ebullient caffeinated executive there is a distinct hierarchy. However, the underlying assumption is that pathologies convey a sense of authenticity and legitimacy and shift the grounds from the realm of the social to the scene of the individual’s illness.

As Ulrich Beck has argued in *Risk Society: Towards a New Modernity*, neo-liberal societies have now accepted the fact that there can be no social and economic progress without a certain amount of social cost. Risk societies do not solve social problems but rather displace the scene of their resolution:

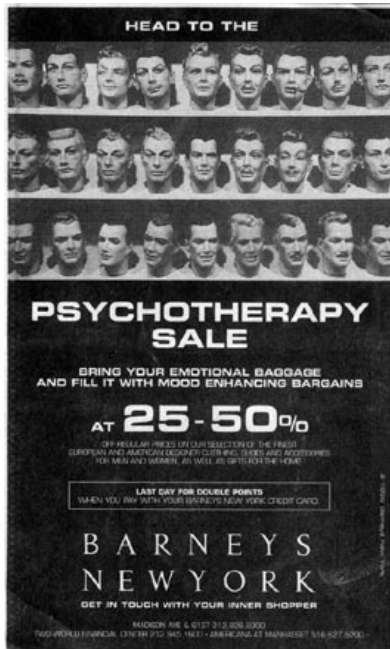


Figure 3: *Wired* 8.09 September 2000, 185.

Inequalities by no means disappear. They merely become redefined in terms of an individualization of social risks. The result is that social problems are increasingly perceived in terms of psychological dispositions: as personal inadequacies, guilt feeling, anxieties, conflicts, and neuroses. There emerges, paradoxically, a new immediacy of individual and society, a direct relation between crisis and sickness. Social crises appear as individual crises, which are no longer (or are only very indirectly) perceived in terms of their rootedness in the social realm.²⁰

The cost and remedy for this crisis of the individual is no longer articulated as a collective or social responsibility. Alain Ehrenberg has argued, for instance, that the rise in depression in the Western world is, in great part, related to the relative increase of emphasis on the responsibilities and expectations of the individual rather than of the collective.²¹ In other words, social inequities are not resolved, rather psychologised and individualised. Thus the symptomatology and the crisis of the self is not simply a by-product of neo-liberalism and its emphasis on individual agency, it is the fuel of its transformational engine. The self has to be put in crisis or, to use a term Châtelet particularly resents, the self needs a “challenge” (please pronounce with a French accent).

The recognition and acceptance of the self as a symptomatic battlefield is the necessary condition for the liberatory discourse of neo-liberalism. In the neo-liberal moral order, however, not all pathologies are created equal. One needs the right kinds of symptoms. As argued earlier, between the epistemology of the alcoholic homeless mother and the hyperactive and ebullient caffeinated (if not cocained or methamphetaminated) executive there exists an irreconcilable gap. The underlying assumption, however, is that pathologies do convey a sense of authenticity and legitimacy and shift the grounds from the realm of the social to the site of the individual’s pathology. Popular media examples of the universalisation and the banality of the symptom abound. In this advertisement from *The New York Times*, the humour is entirely based on the familiarity and acceptance of the dysfunction of the self and the necessity of self-management, self-prognosis and self-prescription: “Psychotherapy sale: bring your emotional baggage and fill it with mood enhancing bargains.”



The call to alter one’s mood through a participation in consumer culture is a step further than the popular bumper stickers which encourage the reader to “shop till you drop”²² or which proclaim the driver “born to shop.” It is both the banality of the statement and its aristocratic self-awareness, thus its humour (the assumed luxury to indulge and the familiarity with the

Figure 4: *New York Times*, 13 June 1999.

discourse of psychopathologies as an authentic expression of the self) which constitute the specific function of this advertisement.

Another example of this emphasis on the acceptance of the symptom as existential condition is an advertisement (see alongside) for Cisco from the *New Yorker* magazine with the title “restlessness.” This is a less obviously immediate text than that of the *New York Times* advertisement which invites a knowing complicity between reader and text. As evident in many other advertisements for management systems, this Cisco advertisement features an individual outside of the office. The office as institution and architectural space has disappeared while remaining a point of reference:

Cubicles in the form of wide-open spaces.
Corner offices that look like company cafeterias. No matter where you wander to find inspiration, the wireless, self-defending networks of Cisco let you access the office anytime, anywhere.²³

The office is present as a virtualised space. This transformation of the office specifically traces the passage Deleuze described between societies of discipline and societies of control. The disciplinary architectural regime which interpellated the subject within specific spatial confines has been replaced by the roaming subject: both solitary wanderer caught in an introspective moment and anxious worker never leaving his tasks and responsibilities. The employee’s restlessness is here not so much proposed as an inarticulated need for efficiency but more precisely as the necessary condition for his creative wandering. Inspiration, rather than duty or responsibility, is cryptically associated here with, and initiated by, restlessness. It is an epistemology: out of the experience of restlessness emerges a form of productivity. Cisco is there to facilitate experiencing the symptom of the unsettled mind; it’s not there to resolve the experience of the symptom but to embrace its transformational potential.

This double articulation of the symptom as both a generalised condition of existence and the source of understanding and action is remarkably illustrated in the film *Fight Club*²⁴. The film details the transformation of a dysfunctional, emotionally and intellectually drained man who embraces his symptoms and his pathology to the extent that he lives as two people at the same time and finds salvation by organising a hyper-masculine militaristic group of men dedicated to awakening themselves by engaging in fist fights. By the end of the film, the group’s mobilisation turns to anti-corporate uprising, while the character catches up with his destructive alter ego. At the beginning of the film a voice-over of the main character details his symptoms of mental exhaustion. Lying in bed, the character speaks directly to the viewer in the mode of a *film noir* character, paranoid and desperate, but also speaking as if in confession, or in the therapeutic scene:

Back up, let me start earlier. For six months I could not sleep. I could not sleep, I could not sleep, I could not sleep. With insomnia nothing’s real. Everything’s far away. Everything is a copy of a copy of a copy.



Figure 5: *New Yorker* 2 May, 2005, 47.

While articulating the symptoms of his crisis, we see him in a variety of office scenes, and then engaged in a bureaucratic and jargonistic conversation with a supervisor. Then he is home and sitting on his toilet; he is ordering something – talking to a customer service person on the phone as he thumbs through a catalogue: “Like so many others I had become slave to the Ikea nesting instinct... What kind of dining set defines me as a person?” He is both deeply aware of his status as a consumer and of the shallowness and feeling of entrapment this produces. He cannot feel anymore. As he walks through his apartment the camera pans to follow him while objects he has purchased appear on-screen with the caption from the catalogues from where he has purchased them. The “psychotherapy sale” does not work for him any more. However, there is no alienation (which implies a social order); there is boredom: the greatest of crimes because it implies the lack of affective stimulation. After a hard cut to his doctor’s office he is begging for something to relieve his pain (“Can you please give me something?”), understood here as requesting a remedy for insomnia, exhaustion, boredom and affectlessness. All the doctor suggests is for him to see “real” pain (“see the guys with testicular cancer”). Progressively, we come to know that he has joined several support groups for extremely sick and in some cases terminally-ill people. The status conferred by a “real” ailment and the sympathy directed his way is a substitute for having an existence of his own. He thrives on the baroque and emotional overloading of confessional and unselfish final pronouncements of incurably sick people. The care for the self here has been replaced by the maintenance of the self by embracing vicariously the affective intensities of pathologies.

Like other texts of popular culture which seem to capture something of the spirit of the time, *Fight Club* is best as concentrated and highly-focused assessment. It is remarkably perceptive in its depiction of the epistemology of the symptom by taking seriously the premise of the central character and constructing a world around him. It also demonstrates the social capital and strategic advantage attributed to psychopathologies. The acuteness of its prognosis is achieved by realising the central significance of the symptom in the production of affect. In the film even masculinity is a pathology and it is exactly why the main character decides to embrace it: masculinity becomes valid and authentic because it is a symptom and as such allows for the alteration of the mind and body in order to create intensities, the only possible transformational modality. The storyline involving the anti-corporate plot of the film seems very much like a pretext, despite the fact that it suggests the potent link between the corporatisation of the world and the economy of affect.

TRANSFORMATIONAL MODALITY 2: ECONOMY OF AFFECT

As the three examples suggest in different ways, the discourse of symptoms is not associated with aberrations or with inauthenticity. Symptoms are the source and the logic of transformation as required in the liberated neo-liberal world. What results is an economy of affect: intensities are required to generate the necessary adaptive leap. As Brian Massumi has discussed, affect is unqualified intensity, a stimulus that unleashes neural and physical reactions but without inscribing them in narrative or biographical contexts.²⁵ Rather, affect requires an expenditure which functions outside of traditional sensory-motor schemas based on stimulation-reaction-action. Essentially, emotions structure experience; affect opens up to the new, the not-already experienced. Just as the characters of *Fight Club* need to bash each other’s faces to a pulp in

order to awaken, to empower themselves and to find clarity of mind, the neo-liberal subject must espouse, generate and compete for the transformational modalities of affect. The three advertisements I discussed at the beginning of this essay illustrate this imperative: one must dispose oneself to the altering forces of physical and mental exertion.

As Paul Virilio has discussed extensively, one of the components of the economy of affect is speed.²⁶ The classical notion that authority emanates from a closed system and a disciplinarian form of control has been replaced by the ascendance of “ultrarapid forms of free-floating control.”²⁷ The paradox is that in this contemporary conception of speed, it is seen both as the “natural” occurrence of a free society and an object of constant invisible control. Power is not embodied in the body of the despot or in the legitimacy of abstract institutions (school, church, state...); it lies in the hyperactive, schizophrenic logic of speed. The contemporary notion that speed culture is leading to substantial changes, either for the worst or for the best, is based on the assumption that new practices and technologies are not simply changing aspects of our lives but they are transforming our cultures and consciousnesses, irrevocably blurring the lines between the human, the inhuman and the posthuman. The most common justifications for this belief are to be found in the perceived effects of the development of the internet and the digitalisation of culture, the hyperactivation of popular culture into a reactive and affective system of individual connections, and the evolution of consumer culture into an intensity-based exchange. Therefore speed culture is less a set of observations about the hyperbolic increase in digital, communication and human connectivity but more a set of rhetorical, symptomatological and aesthetic forms whose deep contradictions are the measure of its predominance. Once again an advertisement from *Wired* magazine (see alongside) captures the rhetorical banality of this: “Espresso or the new economy? What gets you wired? If you’re excited about the shift to a digital, networked world, you’re ready for the new economy – one where industry is fueled more by ideas than machines, and people work with their brains, not their hands.”

We find the same rhetoric: the emphasis on the parallels between the economic order and a caffeinated mind; the emphasis on reaction and intensities; and the underlying assumption that the next stage of evolution can be manufactured by the logic of the hyperactive brain stimulated by the encounter with digital technology.

Double espresso or the new economy?

What gets you wired?

If you're excited about the shift to a digital, networked world, you're ready for the new economy—one where industry is fueled more by ideas than machines, and people work with their brains, not their hands.

Guinness Flight Wired Index™ Fund
Take advantage of this investment opportunity with Guinness Flight Wired Index Fund, managed to track the performance of *Wired*® magazine's Wired Index.

Contact us for a free research report, *The New Blue Chip: Forget the Dow, Here Comes the New Economy*, and a prospectus for Guinness Flight Wired Index Fund.

1-800-715-6565 ext. 850 www.gflunds.com/850

INVESTEC
GUINNESS FLIGHT

Figure 6: *Wired* 8.07 July 2000, 281.

The reactive and transformational logic of affect is, in the discourse of the 'new economy', closely associated with a form of organisation which corresponds to Deleuze's definition of a society of control. In a book entitled *Business @ The Speed of Thought: Using a Digital Nervous System*, Bill Gates calls for organisation management structures relying on a "digital nervous system." He comments:

I'm not talking about something metaphysical or about some weird cyborg episode out of *Star Trek*. But it is something new and important. To function in the digital age, we have developed a new digital infrastructure. It's like the human nervous system. The biological nervous system triggers your reflexes so that you can react quickly to danger or need. It gives you the information you need as you ponder issues and make choices. You're alert to the most important things, and your nervous system blocks out the information that isn't important to you. Companies need to have that same kind of nervous system – the ability to run smoothly and efficiently, to respond quickly to emergencies and opportunities, to quickly get valuable information to the people in the company who need it, the ability to quickly make decisions and interact with customers.²⁸

While refuting the science-fiction scenario of his proposition, Gates is of course delineating an atopia: the architectural and institutional space of the office has disappeared in favour of a networked and fluid virtual organisation lubricated by a series of affective triggers. It is another version of the "friction-free capitalism" Mattelart discusses in his assessment of the discourse of globalisation²⁹: perfect organisational viscosity in the service of efficiency. The achievements of the individuals are measured by their capacity to experience and to contribute to the flow of capital. The reward for the individual employee is the exhilaration brought about by the transformational experience. In the society of control what counts is not the disciplinarian submission of the subject to the institution but rather his bodily disposition to affective experience which in turns serves the interest of the dominant order. As I have discussed here, advertisements, especially in relation to technology and management systems, abound with images of ecstatic subjects caught in the throes of experiential alterations.

CONCLUSION: COMPULSORY ECSTASY

In a commercial for Microsoft XP operating system released in October 2001 and entitled "Soaring Anthem," a series of individuals who log on to their computers and connect to a wireless network literally take flight above a field, a library, an office, a street, and a restaurant.³⁰ This is what Châtelet refers to as techno-populism, that is to say, the enthusiastic celebration of the liberating potential of digital technologies, and what I have described here as the economy of affect. What matters for the characters of this commercial is not so much the capacity to perform tasks but more particularly to experience intensities. As I discussed previously, the achievements of the individuals are measured by their capacity to experience. The assumption is that the more one opens oneself to the intensities the more one can disconnect oneself from the social but in exchange make oneself available to the forces of change. This is the way in which control operates in the neo-liberal utopia: it is not cast as a discourse of boundaries and limitations but as a radical demand on the individual.

What is remarkable here, and underlines something latent in the ecstatic celebration of new technologies in advertisement, is the reference to altered states of mind and pleasurable bodily experiences akin to drug culture. In what must constitute one of the most trenchant contradictions of our times, the characteristics attributed to this ecstatic neo-liberal subject (stimulation, responsiveness, openness to affective experiences) are also used to describe the degeneration of everyday life mainly through the curse of popular culture. If the caffeinated, multitasking, hyperactive and exhilarated employee is the key to the recasting of economic and political relations in the neo-liberal fairy tale, the intoxicated and dissipated individual may be its illegitimate sibling consigned to a salutary oblivion. We live in a world in which the rhetoric of drug culture has been recuperated by the banal discourse of self-realisation in the service of a neo-liberal economic order.

- 1 Nunnally Johnson, dir., *The Man in the Gray Flannel Suit*, Twentieth Century Fox, 1956.
- 2 Ayn Rand's *The Fountainhead* was published in 1943 and adapted for the screen by King Vidor, dir., Warner Bros. Pictures, 1940. Rand's book is still a favourite of American neo-conservatives indicating the obvious tensions between their paranoid and proto-fascistic discourses and the liberatory rhetoric of neo-liberalism.
- 3 Spencer Johnson, *Who Moved My Cheese? An Amazing Way to Deal With Change in Your Work and in Your Life* (New York: GP Putman's Sons, 1998).
- 4 The term "precarity" is an anglicised version of the French term *précarité* and its use is associated with a movement against the erosion of workers' rights in France and throughout Europe.
- 5 Johnson, *Cheese*, 46.
- 6 Pierre Bourdieu, "The essence of neoliberalism: What is neoliberalism? A programme for destroying collective structures which may impede the pure market logic," *Le Monde diplomatique* Dec 1998. Retrieved 3 January 2007 from <http://mondediplo.com/1998/12/08bourdieu>.
- 7 Gilles Deleuze, "Postscript on the Societies of Control", *October* 59, Winter 1992: 3. Also available at: <http://www.nadir.org/nadir/archiv/netzkritik/societyofcontrol.html> as last visited on 19 May 2007.
- 8 Bill Gates, *Business @ The Speed of Thought: Using a Digital Nervous System* (New York: Warner Books, 1999).
- 9 René Clair, dir., *A Nous la liberté*, Films sonores Tobis, 1931.
- 10 King Vidor, dir., *Our Daily Bread*, King Vidor Productions, 1934.
- 11 Deleuze, *Postscript*, 5-6.
- 12 Deleuze, *Postscript*, 5.
- 13 Gilles Châtelet, *Vivre comme des porcs : De l'incitation à l'envie et à l'ennui dans les démocraties-marchés* (Paris: Exils Éditeur, 1998).
- 14 The social unrest in France in 2005 reminds us that marginalisation materialises in the separation and containment of distinct urban spaces. The social formulates itself and exists in space.
- 15 Catherine Rich, *Saving the Next Generation from Welfare Dependency* 2002. Retrieved 10 February 2007 from http://www.national.org.nz/files/Welfare_dependency.pdf.
- 16 Rich, *Saving the Next Generation*, 1.
- 17 In a very strange yet related turn of affairs a Democratic Senator in the US in March 2007 argued for the withdrawal of American troops from Iraq because the Iraqi government had fallen into a "culture of dependency" upon American presence. Re-deploying the troops would be salutary and akin to the dismantling of social welfare in the West.

- 18 *The Dominion Post*, 31 Jan 2007: 1.
- 19 J Huizinga, *Homo Ludens* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1966), 46.
- 20 Ulrich Beck, *Risk Society: Towards a New Modernity*, translated by Mark Ritter (London: Sage, 1992), 100.
- 21 See Alain Ehrenberg, *La fatigue d'être soi : Dépression et société* (Paris: Poches Odile Jacob, 1998).
- 22 In the process of writing this slogan I discovered there was a television game show named as such and now an Australian magazine.
- 23 *New Yorker*, 2 May 2005: 47.
- 24 David Fincher, dir., *Fight Club*, Art Linson Productions, Fox 2000 Pictures, Regency Enterprises, Taurus Film, 1999.
- 25 Brian Massumi, "The Autonomy of Affect," *Cultural Critique*, 1995, 31: 83-110.
- 26 See for instance Paul Virilio, *The Aesthetics of Disappearance* (New York: Semiotext[e], 1991).
- 27 Deleuze, *Postscript*, 4. Deleuze is making this point in relation to Virilio's writings on speed.
- 28 Gates, *Business*, xvii-xviii.
- 29 Armand Mattelard, "An Archaeology of the Global Era: Constructing a Belief", *Media, Culture & Society*, 1999, 24: 591-612.
- 30 This commercial can be seen at <http://www.methodstudios.com/project/379.html> as last visited on 19 May 2007.

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