This issue of PARSE Journal is dedicated to the memory of Mark Fisher (1968–2017).
A brilliant thinker and writer, a comrade and a friend.

Introduction

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MANAGEMENT IS USUALLY TREATED as a separate domain to the field of contemporary creative practice in the sense that those employed to manage and administrate institutions and those who supply the "content" to or in those institutions (be they artists, musicians, performers or, perhaps to a lesser extent, designers) are separated not simply through the virtues of culture, but also logistically, financially, spatially, in terms of rights and freedoms. How does such a political and social separation of the tasks of "making" and "managing" inhere to an isolationist mechanism, in which management is seen as both an oppressive and lower status form of "doing"? Histories of modernism suggest that the artist/ performer/ crafter/ designer/ actor/ composer/ musician/ writer is managed and at the same time resists – or refuses to take responsibility for – their own management. Is this refusal and/or resistance a survival mechanism, and a performative critique of the governmentalisation and privatisation of the cultural industries? Or is it a naive calling upon art's possessive autonomy – a resistance in fact to the responsibility of care of the self within an administered world? Conceptualising management as troublesome and uncreative allows us to externalise the rhythms and protocols of macro-politics against our own (mythologised, personalised) micro-politics. But, in fact, and increasingly within the gig economy, many of us spend most of our time managing our administrative as well as aesthetic relations to the world. Cultural processes and productions are situations that not only require personal management, but also depend upon cooperation, coproduction, delegation and various collective efforts. In the often cited words of Fred Moten and Stefano Harney, it is in the administration of our own affairs, situated in communities, co-operations, organisations and institutions and saturated by practice, teaching, researching in the "planning" – where forms of aesthetic solidarity between organisers may lie. But while Moten and Harney ennoble the planner as possessing the sly civility of a co-worker, an undercommons collaborator, they leave no space for the policy-maker. What of the policymaker; are they not capable of redesignating forms and hierarchies of working power too?[1]

In his article "Accelerate Management!" Mark Fisher asks the pertinent question: "… what if the problem with contemporary capitalism is not that there is too much management, but too little?" Management, he argues, should not be confused with contemporary managerialism. Managerialism, a neo-liberal capitalist product that pervades all institutions and ideology in its desire to optimise workers output, has striven to micro-control and accelerate work, partially by subjugating workers to self-surveillance and a 24/7 work presence and availability enabled by communication technologies. Current subjugation of workers is achieved through the linking of libidinal, communicational and technological infrastructure, which Fisher calls "communicative capitalist realism". The effect is addiction to work and a pathological sense of never being able to live up to ever-increasing demands. The extreme individualisation of work prevents any form of collective agency and solidarity. A way out of managerialism, Fisher suggests, is not neo-anarchist folk politics in the form of horizontal self-organisation that sees trade unions and political parties as obsolete. Rather than withdrawing and opting out, what is needed is that workplaces of all kinds need to become better at management.

In their feminist reading of the critique of administration, Andrea Francke and Ross Jardine show how the administrator tends to be de-subjectified and made invisible, how she is also seen as blocking the artist or the teacher and their perceived meritocratic position. Francke and Jardine highlight the commonality between discourses on administrative and domestic labour. In both cases the work – most often carried out by women – is made invisible, downgraded, excluded from the public sphere, denying the political potential of such work. Justice 4 Domestic Workers (J4DW), a mostly female-run

1. See Moten, Fred and Harney, Stefano. *The Undercommons: Fugitive Planning and Black Study*. New York, NY: Minor Compositions. 2013.

migrant domestic workers grassroots organisation, Francke and Jardine point out, provide "an [political] arena in which to create and discuss counter discourses to those their employers and governments have given them" precisely through their way of organising and administrating. Subaltern counter-publics are enabled through conversations, workshops and dance classes, which in turn gives J4DW members the opportunity to reformulate their identities, needs and interests, which can then be brought into the dominant political sphere. Central to the work is the unpacking of and countering of the employers' language. As long as immigrant domestic worker are not seen as valid subjects by the state system, legal bodies and the media they will be treated as pets that have no access to the public sphere.

Christopher Newfield asks if under the current economic regime liberal arts education can claim "real intellectual or ethical autonomy" by comparing and contrasting the newly established Yale-National University of Singapore in Southeast Asia and Yale, New Haven. He describes how several episodes at Yale-NUS have "placed on trial" whether the college can guarantee "freedom of speech as exercised by those in New Haven". Both Singapore and North America have seen the emergence of educational policies that have forced the liberal arts to become part of the knowledge economy. In Singapore, this form of knowledge economy sees problems foremost as technical while downplaying their political and ethical dimensions. Education in such a situation asserts creative freedom over financial and political contextual knowledge production. The neo-liberal student in this knowledge regime is neither a "*homo oeconomicus* seeking to maximise his self-interest" nor a political subject engaged in defining "life in common". Instead, what is desired is a citizen who maximises their human capital in order to contribute the most to the contemporary economy of Singapore. To students "creative license", it appears, is more important than "critical independence". If liberal arts education is to escape the nightmare of "Punitive Neo-liberalism", which attacks its own staff's job security and control within the educational system, it needs to gain control over the policy and financial educational structure by managing joint, rather than divisive, initiatives between art and financial issues.

Taking up the other end of the educational spectrum in the form of student experiences of self-management, Karin Hansson analyses how emerging artists at the Royal Institute of Art in Stockholm self-manage through monitoring their identity, promotion, communication and networking online in "The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life Online: Between Alienation and Belonging". This effort demands that they understand how to position their professional self in the field of art and strike a balance between their reputation and economic capital. Interviews conducted by the author are analysed in relation to Marx's theory of alienation "to explore how a process of alienation and dis-alienation takes place in practice". Hansson identifies a number of ways of acting, from "competing" and "performing" to "belonging". What strategies are deployed depend on the students' background. Students without a previous connection to the art world hope that their art will "speak for itself in an open market", taking their online presence more seriously, while students from families of artists and cultural workers rely more heavily on face-to-face encounters.

In her article "'Save our Library': Social Action, Austerity and the Big Society", Carla Cruz emphasises the managerialism at work in local and national authority cultural service provision in the UK. She takes the example of The Mill, a community initiative that emerged from a campaign to save a local library in East London in 2007. Through detailed analysis with a community campaign to save the building which housed the library for community use using interviews and local press

reports, Cruz identifies the ambivalent relation between community action and the then UK Prime Minister David Cameron's idea of the "Big Society" in which previously state-funded welfare institutions and services are expropriated to the care and goodwill of willing citizens.

The Riwaq Centre for Architectural Conservation, the Riwaq Biennale and the Qalandiya International, are analysed in Khaldun Bshara's "Biennales in Palestine: Thinking Art and Making Art". The article foregrounds challenges and possibilities in the intersection between heritage work, community and capacity building, artistic practice and institutional frameworks and platforms. Moreover, it addresses how these modalities may be developed and managed in relation to each other in order to produce crossover possibilities, inaccessible within each of the modalities as such, which might challenge the frames of conservation practice, community work, artistic production and biennial platforms. In doing so, Bshara hopes to render "visible the structures that shape lives and practices of people", engaging more broadly in managerial structures and strategies, such as "inside-out", "outside-in" and "inside-outside-in" for producing events in the public sphere, both as modes of thinking and of making.

In his article "Managing Collaborative Critique in Times of Financialisation Capitalism" Erling Björgvinsson in turn addresses how co-design and collaborative critique is in urgent need of being rethought outside dominant regimes and social systems. The additive and affirmative strategies of such regimes, which seek to account for a broader spectrum of experiences, tends to colonise rather than empower those in marginalised positions, producing "minor reformist aesthetic-political changes" rather than challenging the status-quo as such. What is proposed and discussed through two case studies – the collaborative production of a feature film titled *Nasty Old People* and the practice-based research project *City Fables: Follow the Money* – is a process of negating, delinking and disaffirming as empowering strategies for the development of new formations, which in turn can challenge different political-aesthetic regimes beyond reformist imaginaries. Such an understanding urges us to rethink the sites of intervention beyond the micro-political and foregrounds meso and macro frames and forms of violence which follow such frames.

Apolonija Šušteršič and Dari Bae's "Master Plan for Duamdong" describes their working in the city suburb Duamdong, as part of the 2016 Gwangju Biennial, in which high-rise housing development has not yet occurred, in contrast to much of the rest of the city. The artists collaborated with the managers of a local community centre to develop an interactive table game for local residents in which a form of unregistered micro-political action began to emerge as people formed solidarities and neighbourliness over cooking, rooftop gardening and the organisation of rubbish collection. What does it mean for such micro-managerial practices to appear as part of an international biennial? Is such a gift workable, legible, sustainable?

Barbara Czarniawska's republished article "After Practice: A Personal Reflection" addresses the gap between theory and practice in Management Studies. Practice, she suggests, can best be understood as a form of complex sociality, materially mediated and guided by moral values. A central issue related to theory and practice is how (management) practices can be critiqued and improved. Why do practitioners prefer consultants and ignore academic critique even though consultants and managers of practices are unable to understand each other since they operate in two distinct closed autopoetic communicative systems? The answer can be found in that consultants "do not point to blind spots in clients' observations, as researchers often attempt to do, but emphasise the difference between their observations

and those of the clients". In other words, the consultant's aim is to develop the client's practice without stating it explicitly by "*mask[ing] the logic of practice* according to the representation rules sanctioned by a given social order…" Thus consultants "not so much help to improve the practice of management, as to engage in a common practice of legitimization". Researchers, on the other hand, aim to describe how practical sense making is produced, scrutinise processes of legitimisation, which they hope will improve a "client's" practice, but which only annoys them. Management studies, asserts Czarniawska, may be better off not to continue to produce "company doctors" or focus on reflections on practice, but instead redefine the field researcher that is an irritant that facilitates the practitioners' self-reflection.

Many of the contributions point to how management is entangled in contemporary economics that engage in managerial micro-control. In particular, the management of public institutions, cultural or educational, is under attack, and so are its workers (and if not existing under the threat of closure, they operate under enforced austerity and self-monitoring, especially but not only in the West). The result is a hyper-individualised isolated student or worker who is addicted to work and pathologically tired and numbed. Such an individual is expected to contribute to the current economy, rather than maximise their interests, or, and more importantly, engage in productions of solidarity that mobilise critical thinking and creativity.

The position of critique in relation to discourses on management, theory and practice, and wider social systems is raised. In relation to discourse it is argued that a fundamental problem with management discourse itself is that it is highly gendered. Management work, if carried out by women, is made invisible, downgraded, excluded from the public sphere and considered unproductive and stifling. If carried out by men, it enables the constitution of power and authority over workers.

We consider it essential to reposition how we understand and criticise management, albeit in acknowledgement of the long history of workers' resistance to being managed. Central to such repositioning is the acknowledgment of the political agency of management work, not the least if political transformation is to be achieved. In particular, and central to the concerns of PARSE, is how artistic research figures in such a realignment. Rather than fostering an expectation of managerial provision for the gifted exceptional worker, we would like to assert, through these pages and along with our contributors, the artistic and educational imperative to take responsibility.