A thousand CEOs: Relational thought, processual space, and Deleuzian ontology in human geography and strategic management

Key MacFarlane
University of Washington
Department of Geography
kmacfar@uw.edu

accepted version, not final

Abstract
The last 20 years have witnessed a deepening of the imbrication between capital and the university. This paper seeks to map one point at which this binding occurs: in critical theory. Recently scholars in strategic management have turned to processual and relational ontologies in an attempt to reimagine the logics of profit, value, and growth. These same ontologies have appealed to critical geographers as a means of reconceiving space as unfixed. Drawing on a case study of Deleuze's appropriation in management literature, I show how such ontologies presuppose a vitalism that necessarily reproduces and obscures the structures of exploitation.

Keywords
Badiou, Deleuze, management, process-based ontology, relational turn, vitalism, university

I Introduction

1 We have never been anti-capitalist

Nigel Thrift wrote in 1999 that "the links between academia and business are closer than ever before" (1999: 690). Those links are even closer today, in the US, where the university bears an increasing resemblance to the corporation, as non-tenure-track positions now constitute over three quarters of instructional staff members (Curtis, 2014), professional administrators form the standard body of governance (Ginsberg, 2013), and neoliberal logics of efficiency and profit maximization play a growing role in teaching, research, and administration (Osei-Kofi, 2012; Meyerhoff et al., 2011). Increasingly we are recognizing what has always been the case: that the modern university is firmly enmeshed in the logics of capital.

This is an obvious, but major, problem for those of us in the university who would seek a radical politics. Lest we reproduce the mediations we aim to critique, much work is needed to map out exactly how—at what points, in which spaces—the university helps bolster and obscure the violent processes of exploitation and coercion at work today. Rather than theorizing whether "another university is possible"[1] (Dawson, 2007) we need to first ask ourselves: how does what we teach and research, in both form and content, sustain the uneven material relations we find beyond (and within) our walls? Thrift provides a solid starting point for this project, as he explored many of these links in the late 1990s and early 2000s in his work on "soft capitalism" (1997), complexity theory (1999), and the "new economy" (2000)—all of this before accepting a job as vice-chancellor at the University of Warwick.

I focus here on a specific corporate-university link, one with repercussions for the ways we think about the "criticalness" of critical theory and critical geography. In the last fifteen years, the disciplines of strategic management and management and organization studies (MOS)[2] have turned to relational and process-based ontologies for conceiving change, competition, and surplus-value

extraction within firms and other organizations (e.g. Styhre, 2002; Tsoukas and Chia, 2002; Chia, 1999). These same ontologies have played an important role in critical human geography, particularly in the last decade, in challenging dominant conceptions of space as absolute, fixed, and hierarchical (e.g. Springer, 2014; Thrift, 2006; Marston et al., 2005). "Thinking space relationally," Martin Jones (2009: 488) suggests, "is becoming the mantra of the early twenty-first century in human geography." And it is a mantra of potential: scholars like Doreen Massey (2005: 59) have gone so far as to consider relational thought the "prerequisite […] for the possibility of politics." It seems ironic, then, that the ontologies which have allowed geographers to "liberate" space as a site of openness, heterogeneity, and liveliness (Massey, 2005: 19) are also used in developing the conditions of exploitation that would prevent this space from being realized.

2 The Vitalization of Capital

Such irony, however, reflects a deeper historical process. One reading of Karl Marx's *Grundrisse* (1993) would suggest that the descriptive power of relational ontology rises in proportion to the development of capital. With the emergence of large industry, Marx (1993: 709) writes, "the product ceases to be the product of isolated direct labour, and the *combination* of social activity appears, rather, as the producer." Production is conceived as a relational process, no longer the purview of the individual laborer but of a larger "scientific process" which presupposes "co-existing labour" and the "metabolism" of capital (Marx, 1993: 700–701). The turn to relational ontology in MOS and human geography might be seen in this way as an attempt to map out (and then to either exploit or critique) worlds increasingly subsumed under the capitalist relation.[3]

Yet, politically, there is much more at stake than this. When taken alone, a relational conception of the world justifies, while also mystifying, the extraction of surplus value. Under capitalism the transformation of direct labor into scientific (i.e., relational) labor presupposes a

productive force external to and in opposition with the worker. What this means is that viewing the social as it appears for capital, as relational, is to gloss over its real historical conditions: the separation of the laborer from her means of production. Instead, social combination "appears as a natural fruit of social labour (although it is a historic product)" (Marx, 1993: 700). Such combination is self-naturalizing insofar as it, as productive force, increasingly takes on the objective form of fixed capital—ultimately of an "*automatic system of machinery*" wherein "the workers themselves are cast merely as its conscious linkages" (Marx, 1993: 692).

From a purely relational perspective, since the latter cannot conceive labor on its own terms as "non-capital" (Marx, 1993: 274), this machinery appears as all there is. Existence itself is mechanized, reduced to its apparent relations—to the sensible or to *what is*—which are always mediated by the movements of capital. In this way relational ontology becomes part of the machinery of exploitation: because it is unable to think the non-apparent but real conditions of capital, it necessarily reproduces these conditions and thus "guards against interruptions" (Marx, 1993: 692) to their realization. Life, as such, is recast as automaton: as a "moving power that moves itself" (Marx, 1993: 692) it is closed off to critique while opened up as a locus for surplus-value extraction, since it now appears productive on its own accord. In a relational ontology exploitation is thus rendered *vital*—capital wrapped in the frocks of life forces. A living machine, a body without organs.

3 Line of Flight

I develop this argument in what follows through a critique of the philosophy of Gilles Deleuze. In Section II below, I use the work of Alain Badiou (2012, 2009) to demonstrate how a process-based ontology like Deleuze's ultimately relies on a "democratic-materialist" ideology that shores up the social relations it aims to undermine. In particular, I argue that such ontologies help constitute and

secure what Badiou (2009: 420) calls "atonic worlds"—spaces devoid of decision-making, where "[o]ne's life is managed like a business that would rationally distribute the meagre enjoyments that it's capable of."

It is the *atony* of Deleuze's work that has made it so appealing to management scholars. In Section III, I show how MOS has appropriated Deleuzian philosophy as a means of conceiving the organization, but also surplus value, as emerging from a set of rhizomatic relations in constant flux. Indeed, Deleuze's (and Guattari's) work has been taken up in management studies to map and to justify the contours of life, work, and organization within a global economy, while providing new "organizational technologies" (Thrift, 2005: 8, 119) for their control. What these technologies presuppose is a certain vitalist conception of space. Such vitalism, in turn, enables a theory of the organization as a creative space of resilience (Wakefield and Braun, 2014), supplying managers with strategies for contingency planning and risk management amid threats of interruption and declining rates of profit.

Having shown how Deleuzian theory is taken up in business strategy, the question becomes whether this body of theory, or any other, is politically fraught in and of itself. In other words, what are the political stakes of "doing theory" inside and outside of the classroom? To explore this question, Section IV shows how relational and process ontologies have been instrumental in the increased *maptitude* of strategic management (its ability to plot the movements of capital) but also in the *deradicalization* of critical geography. This is evident in geography's so-called "relational turn" (Sheppard, 2008: 2608) in the early 2000s and MOS's "processual turn" (Kristensen et al., 2014: 500) around the same time. On the whole, both of these "turns" rely on a rejection of the dialectic and on an assumption of vitalism that ultimately repeats *what is*: the material relations of the present. The result is an ontological flattening-out between the two disciplines—the reaffirmation of an already-corporate university.

My goal in this essay is to trace a counterstrategy: to provide a few tools for helping us uncover and map the material conditions that enable the thinking and doing of theory. Ultimately, such a critique seeks departure from the "creative thinking" and "line-of-flight" theorizing now so valued in the startups and tech companies that increasingly define the US economy. Rather, in politicizing the worlds of teaching, research, and writing (including my own) this essay lays out a clearer terrain of the visibilities and invisibilities of our current—atonic—moment, so that we might make better decisions on how to change it.

II A Badiouian Critique of Deleuze and Process-Based Ontology

1 Potato Management

If process ontology has been incorporated into business, what are the stakes of such theory within critical disciplines like human geography? While the attention to immanence, flux, and relationality has helped open space as a site of politics and conflict, in denying "permanence" (Harvey, 1996: 7) and the "transcendental" (Badiou, 2009: 362), a pure process ontology remains blind to the mechanisms of social reproduction, to the means by which our worlds are created and structured. This issue, which I develop below, poses a major dilemma for those of us who would view relationality, in itself, as a tool for social critique. On the contrary, Badiou's work (2012, 2009) suggests that relational and process-based ontologies, like Deleuze's, are problematically vitalist. As such, they posit a "materialism of life" (Badiou, 2009: 2) or a "democratic materialism" wherein there exist "only bodies and languages" (1) and no truths (which are, for Badiou, exceptions to the former). Life becomes a limiting concept, signifying "every empirical correlation between body and language" (35) while casting out any organs not absorbed in the roots of this vital mixture. It is in this way that Deleuzian ontology replicates the mediations of our worlds including those of capital: it cannot conceive a body beyond "Life."

Such reproduction is an upshot of Deleuze's dismissal of the dialectic. This dismissal is often, of course, conceived as politically liberating. As Badiou points out (2012: 195), Deleuze and Guattari seek to replace the dialectic with the "pure multiple (the rhizome) […] in revolt against the bourgeois One [i.e., *what is*]." Through this act, Deleuze and Guattari confirm their dislike for the Two, "that detestable figure of choice (and of class choice), and the support of what they condemn the most in the world: morality, which implies options, but also politics (since there are only two of them, proletarian and bourgeois)" (Badiou, 2012: 196). These binaries are muted in the rhizome to the extent the latter has "neither beginning nor end, but always a middle (milieu) from which it grows and which it overspills" (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987: 21). This spillage—that of the pure multiple—seeks to challenge the finitude of the One through the deferral of choice and the positing of creative possibility. With its network of sprouts and tubers, the potato comes to replace the tree, its fixity, as the model for growth and change.

Nevertheless, such a tactic is doomed to repeat that which it would overturn. For Deleuze's pure multiple "is a thinkable category only in its contradictory relation to the One" (Badiou, 2012: 198) which is ultimately affirmed through its negation. In *Logics of Worlds*, Badiou (2009: 381–387) shows how this follows from Deleuze's vitalist account of the event in *Logic of Sense* (1990), where the "event is the ontological realization of the eternal truth of the One, of the infinite power of Life." Deleuze and Guattari (1987: 21) try to overcome the problem of the One in *A Thousand Plateaus* through its subtraction: "$n - 1$." Yet in the end, the subtraction of the One "merely metaphorizes the need for both the One and the Multiple" (Badiou, 2012: 199). The result is a revolt against the bourgeois One without the figure of the Two that would give coherence to the bodies who revolt in the first place. This is "to call for the mass revolts, *minus* the antagonistic factor of unity – that is, minus their traversing by the point of view of class" (Badiou, 2012: 199). This has dire consequences for Deleuzian geographers, as the collapse of the Two threatens to close off the

space of critique. "Like all the philosophers of vital continuity," Badiou (2009: 386) says, Deleuze is unable to maintain within his rhizome the gap between sense and truth (non-sense). In plugging this gap with lines of flight, Deleuze paints over the points from where the sensible might be challenged or negated. Instead the event is reabsorbed, as if a nutrient, into "the One of life" (Badiou, 2009: 387).

Always returning to the One, not only does the rhizome fail to establish a critical ground but it also functions as an "unbridled apology of anything whatsoever" (Badiou, 2012: 196–197) including, as we will see, business strategy. This is the hidden meaning of Deleuze and Guattari's (1987: 7) claim that "any point of a rhizome can be connected to anything other, and must be." Such an undialectical affirmation of *what is*, of Life, makes Deleuze an envoi of democratic materialism, which conceives reality as an endless assemblage of bodies and languages without truth. This ideology produces a form of identity politics that Badiou (2009: 2) names using Deleuze's term "minoritarianism," one rooted in liberal notions of equality and rights. For minoritarianism,

> [c]ommunities and cultures, colours and pigments, religions and clergies, uses and customs, disparate sexualities, public intimacies and the publicity of the intimate: everything and everyone deserves to be recognized and protected by the law. (Badiou, 2009: 2)

In this picture, the task of politics becomes the recognition and tolerance (cf. Brown, 2008; Žižek, 2008) of different "forms of life" (Badiou, 2009: 35). Existence, moreover, is reduced to the body of the individual (Badiou, 2009: 2) and can only be affirmed or verified alongside the finitude of death. As Badiou (2009: 268) argues, for a vitalist like Deleuze "proof of the transcendental constitution of existence" depends on its correlation with mortality: "the guarantee of the One as constituent power" is the "finitude of the multiple as a constituted configuration […] Death alone is proof of life." The implication of this rather abstract argument is that democratic materialism, in requiring

death as a problematic, works to justify those institutions and technologies that protect existence, that reproduce *what is*.

Life thus becomes *a priori* the staving off of death, a practice in better management. It is in this way that the democratic materialist warrants governance: happiness, for them, is a dream in which "everything is organized and everything is guaranteed" and one's life is "managed like a business" (Badiou, 2009: 420). The only thing that ever happens in this dream is death, which is best "managed" and "put out of sight." From here, it's not hard to see why business strategists would turn to democratic-materialist philosophers like Deleuze since the latter, however paradoxically, help justify the maintenance of the One.

2 The Atony of the Rhizome

Ian Shaw (2010) has given an excellent critique of Deleuze that echoes and expands on much of what I've said above. He does not, however, fully explore Badiou's notion of atony—of worlds void of decision-making points. Not only does atony carry with it a set of spatial implications that should interest geographers, but it also allows us to better apply Badiou's philosophy to the co-constituted worlds of business strategy and academic theory. Badiou (2009: 420) considers a world atonic when "its transcendental is devoid of points." What this means is that in their "infinite gradation" and complexity, such worlds afford "no figure of decision." Every binary and every choice between "yes" and "no" is collapsed, so that a truth can never be wholly affirmed or denied. There is simply nothing to hold on to: "there's no truth, nothing but objects, nothing but bodies and languages" (Badiou, 2009: 420). Without a stable halting point—"with no figure of the Two"—"everything communicates infinitely," precisely like Deleuze's rhizome.

In identifying process-based ontologies, Deleuzian or otherwise, as constitutive of atony, we are better able to grasp their ideological function in normalizing postfordist forms of governance

and exploitation that operate through the flexibilization and deskilling of labor. In the first place, atonic worlds reproduce the managerial conception of the organization as a set of objects—the bodies of workers, their languages, the means of production—that may be rearranged and related to each other in a seemingly infinite number of ways, some more productive of value than others. Management, then, becomes a process of organizing, but also of producing, a "complexity" (Badiou, 2009: 420) that maintains atony. Such complexity justifies the constant experimentation with and fracturing of labor relations insofar as surplus is reimagined as emerging creatively, from new arrangements of bodies. It is in this way that atony describes the landscape of temp work, part-time contracts, and the short-term arrangement of labor groups for specialized jobs—where the identity of the worker becomes nebulous and unstable.

These relations of exploitation are naturalized, moreover, through the forestalling of critique and negation within a materialism of life. In denying any instance of the Two, atonic worlds like Deleuze's "plane of immanence" (Deleuze, 2001: 27) can afford no point that "is capable of evaluating them" (Badiou, 2009: 420) and, as such, cannot think outside the conditions of *what is* (bodies and languages). This is because in rejecting the Two and thus rendering the ontological as a plane of immanent creativity, a vitalist philosophy like Deleuze's must also reject the semi-permanence of any "transcendental" or "order-structure" outside sensible experience (Badiou, 2009: 596). In doing so, it must also reject the existence of exceptions—what Badiou calls truths—to the "there is" of bodies and languages (2009: 9). And without this discontinuity there can be, for Deleuze, no real change.

3 Real Change

To some this may appear a counterintuitive claim. After all, Deleuze is often pegged as a philosopher of change *par excellence* (Thatcher, 2005). Badiou (2009: 362) himself considers Deleuze

the "only contemporary philosopher […] to have made the intuition of change the crux of a renewed metaphysical programme." Yet change is not a fixed concept—it occupies a different space for Deleuze than it does for Badiou. This difference is essentially one of scale. For Deleuze (1993: 76) change—or the event—occurs within the continuity and "chaotic multiplicity" of Life: it is an immanent consequence of becomings and thus belongs to the realms of language and sense. In Deleuze's (1990: 8) words: "The event is coextensive with becoming, and becoming is itself coextensive with language." On the other hand, for Badiou the event is "the immanent principle of *exceptions to* becoming" (2009: 362; emphasis mine). Real change is then not at all a category of Life, as Deleuze would have it, but of a subtraction from the latter (from bodies and languages). What makes change "real" in Badiou's (2009: 357) eyes is when it "imposes an effective discontinuity on the world where it takes place."

This discontinuity occurs at the level of the transcendental. The transcendental of a world is the order-structure sanctioning what does and does not appear, and to what degree (Badiou, 2009: 596). Real change occurs, then, when these transcendental conditions are altered: when an inexistent (*what-is-not*) comes to occupy a place of maximal existence (*what is*) (Badiou, 2009: 585). Since Deleuze offers no theory of appearing, he cannot account for a "*transcendental* change of worlds" (Badiou, 2009: 362). Change, for him, remains confined within the conditions of *what is*—ultimately, to the logics of the state and capital. What this means is that managers may, drawing on Deleuze, conceive a revolution in value creation without having to posit a revolution in the mode of production. This is the atony of Deleuze's world, where individuals are always-already exempt from the decision to affirm or deny its conditions, at best offering some kind of reform, but never any real change.

It is in this way that atony masks political tensions (Badiou, 2009: 422) and deradicalizes those bodies that threaten to hinder capital's movements: by inscribing them within a world in

which all acts of negation are relegated as different forms of life and thereby stripped of their potential to negate Life itself. Thus, in atonic worlds where liberal notions of diversity and multiculturalism become permissible within—and even goals for—the consulting firm or the university administration, employees are stripped of the dangers they pose to whiteness, patriarchy, and efficient exploitation. These bodies are depoliticized when they no longer subtract from the situation: in an organization where lines of communication appear to be infinite, decisions about that organization itself are precluded, since any such act is quickly diverted into one of many lines of flight. The irony in this, of course, is that *decisionlessness* is part and parcel of the process-based ontologies that management strategists have turned to in order to theorize better decision-making. Thus, if the incorporation of Deleuze into business tells us anything, it is that theory can bolster the illusion of choice, while at the same time producing its opposite.

III Deleuze in the Boardroom

1 Cartography of the Present

Geographers have turned to Deleuze's philosophy, especially his and Guattari's concepts of multiplicity, rhizome, and assemblage (e.g. Springer, 2014; Woodward et al., 2012), as a means of reimagining the spatial and political in ways that challenge the binaries of more traditional materialisms like Marxism and biology (Saldanha, 2012b). Recently, for instance, Deleuze has formed the theoretical cornerstone for critiques of gender (Hickey-Moody and Laurie, 2015), race (Saldanha, 2012b; Saldanha and Adams, 2012), pedagogy (Kullman, 2015), queer space (Talburt and Matus, 2014), conservation (Horowitz, 2016), aesthetics (Saldanha, 2012a), and narrative (Dittmer and Latham, 2015). Deleuze's philosophy has also been important in studies on affect and nonrepresentational theory (Bissell, 2015; Miller, 2014a; Miller, 2014b), as well as those on power (Ruddick, 2012), topology (Dixon and Jones, 2015), the body (Brands et al., 2015; Moreno and

Curti, 2012; Tamboukou, 2012), the urban (Robinson, 2016), geopolitics (Dittmer, 2014), cartography (Gerlach, 2014; Farías, 2011) performativity and habit (Atkinson and Scott, 2015; Dewsbury, 2015, 2011), and landscape and territoriality (Bear, 2013; Huijbens and Benediktsson, 2013).

While used to open up new forms of critique and novel imaginations of space, Deleuze's philosophy has also served a mimetic function. For Wilmsmeier and Monios (2015) and Ng et al. (2014), Deleuze and Guattari's concept of smooth space provides an accurate description of global port operations. This is because it "allows an appreciation of the relational construction of power and place, thus providing the tools of analysis currently absent from port geography" (Wilmsmeier and Monios, 2015: 2). Similarly, Jacob Miller (2014a: 214) uses Deleuze and Guattari's "spatial ontology of affective assemblages" to investigate emerging geographies of consumption, including those of the shopping mall.

That geographers have found Deleuze's work useful in mapping the flows of global capital makes his appropriation in the management literature less surprising. As Žižek (2009: 205) argues, the "conceptual machinery" articulated by Deleuze (and Guattari) maps nicely onto the "(military, economic and ideologico-political) operational mode of contemporary capitalism."[4] The reason for this is that Deleuzian philosophy provides an accurate account of a biopolitical tendency in the extraction of surplus value, of exploitative practices increasingly conceived and implemented on the plane of Life itself. While helping us understand the vitalization of the value-form, Deleuze's work is nevertheless incapable, as we have seen above, of offering a satisfactory critique of this process or of identifying the violent practices of immiseration and domination—non-biopolitical because invisible to the category of Life—on which the latter is made possible. Instead, Deleuzian philosophy must always reify that which it seeks to map. This is made evident by the use of Deleuze in MOS.

2 The Firm as Rhizome

Management theorists have turned to Deleuze for the same reasons that geographers have, as a cartographer of the socioeconomic. Only for the former, Deleuze's philosophy provides a means of exploiting this sphere: a logic for rendering and then harnessing an organization's "creative force" (Steinberg, 2005: 2; Thanem, 2004: 204) in the interests of value creation and growth. Unlike other French philosophers of his generation such as Foucault, Lyotard, Derrida, and Baudrillard, Deleuze was largely overlooked in organization theory during the 1980s and 1990s (Styhre, 2001: 4). Yet by the end of the century there was, according to Robert Chia (1999: 209), a growing consensus in the discipline that "current theories of change are not sufficiently 'process-based' to adequately capture the dynamics of change." For Chia and others, Deleuze provided a viable alternative—a new way of conceiving *becoming* that challenged commonly held views of the organization (see, e.g., Linstead and Thanem, 2007: 1484; Steinberg, 2005: 82). This is why, since the 1990s, MOS scholars have drawn increasingly on Deleuze's work (Figure 1 demonstrates this with a citation analysis of Deleuze and Guattari's *A Thousand Plateaus*).

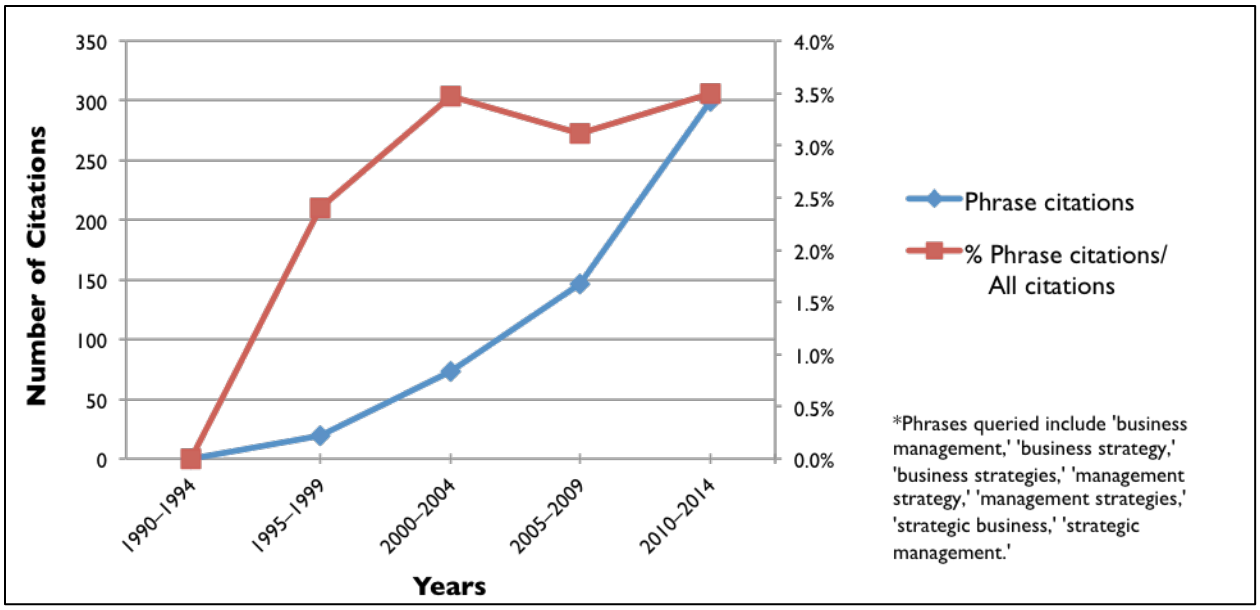

Figure 1. Citation analysis of A Thousand Plateaus (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987) searching on MOS phrases* in Google Scholar.

Throughout the history of MOS, organizations had been predominantly understood through "typologies, taxonomies, and classification schemas [which] are convenient but essentially reductionistic methods for abstracting, fixing and labelling what is an intrinsically changing, fluxing and transforming social reality" (Chia, 1999: 210). For Deleuze and Guattari (1987: 7) however, a schematic method for analyzing change constitutes an "arborescent" form of thought that "plots a point, fixes an order." They contrast this "image of thought" to that of the *rhizome*—an endless process of becoming, "ceaselessly establish[ing] connections between semiotic chains, organizations of power, and circumstances relative to the arts, sciences, and social struggles."

Most MOS scholars who have turned to Deleuze's work adopt some kind of rhizomatic model of change to emphasize the flexible, precarious, and heterogeneous elements of the organization. This model has been proposed as the foundation for organizational studies itself (Linstead and Thanem, 2007; Spoelstra, 2007; Cooper, 1998), along with strategic management (Noy and Luski, 2012; Styhre, 2002). The reason for this is that the rhizome enables theorists to conceive the organization as a multiplicity (since "multiplicities are rhizomatic" [Deleuze and Guattari, 1987: 8]) that is "creatively autosubversive — not fixed, but in motion, never resting, but constantly trembling" (Linstead and Thanem, 2007: 1486). Strategy is thus recast as a "nomadic science" and considered more capable of grasping the elusive concepts of creativity and value (e.g. Simpson et al., 2015: 3).

3 Organizational Technologies

While rhizomatic theories of the organization tend, unsurprisingly, towards the abstract, they are both productive and symptomatic of new management practices. Indeed, the corporate rendering of Deleuze is imbricated with many of the "organizational technologies" that Thrift (2005: 119) finds emerging in the 1990s. These technologies seek to bring bodies into "optimal alignment" via teams

or projects so as to produce creativity. Deleuze's work has provided an ontological blueprint for such creative alignments, in terms of their planning, implementation, and surveillance. Chauvet Mathieu (2010), for example, applies Deleuze's notion of the virtual to a business conglomerate in order to better conceive and manage remote work and globally distributed teams. Other authors use Deleuzian terms like *dividual* as analytics for understanding identity formation (Schultz et al., 2012; Kallinikos, 2003: 600–601) and membership (Bencherki and Cooren, 2011: 1586) within professional organizations.

Yet Deleuze's work has also helped MOS theorists think beyond the (in)dividual to production itself. For Alexander Styhre (2001: 9), a Deleuzian perspective of immanence uncovers the true nature of motivation that traditional organization theory has failed to grasp. This is because Deleuze and Guattari's post-binary, smooth space enables "new ways of conceiving of phenomena" and produces a theory of desire (and motivation) as an "immanent constitutive principle":

> [Deleuzian desire] is not outside of our relations between one another and artifacts, but is rather the substance that constitutes our being-in-the-world and produces us as the enterprising, accountable, and customer-value-adding agents that are the favoured outcome from the pursuits of good (i.e. legitimate) management.

Relationality and alignment thus become the basis for behavior (desire) and value growth (production), which are synonymous terms in Styhre's account.

Consequently, while hailed for its "line-of-flight" thought and for removing barriers to organizational growth, Deleuze's work supplies managers and theorists with the machinery for fusing the individual body, its mentalities, with that of the organization (Sørensen, 2006; Carter and Jackson, 2004). In this way Deleuzian ontology acts as a "middle term" (Deleuze, 2004: 72) in its own right. Desire, immanence, multiplicity, and embodiment are placed—via Deleuze—at the foundation of product development (Styhre and Sundgren, 2003), organizational creativity (Sköld, 2012), marketing schemes and PR efforts (Sköld, 2013), emergent knowledge in e-business

entrepreneurship (Steinberg, 2008, 2006, 2005), and learning in business school (Izak, 2015; Farquharson et al., 2014; Statler, 2014; Beyes and Michels, 2011).

From a critical perspective, the linking of body and organization enables management scholars to naturalize and humanize the logic of capital by infusing accumulation with *vitality*. As management theorist Torkild Thanem (2004: 203) puts it: "Rather than adding more 'organization' to 'organizational life,'" attending to embodied desire "may be a way to put more 'life' into [organization]." After all, for Deleuze (2001: 27), pure immanence "is A LIFE and nothing else." And if the professional organization is recognized on the "plane of immanence" (Deleuze 2001: 27) then it is recognized as a Life.

4 Life and Surplus Value

Treating the organization as a Life opens it up to novel modes of inquiry and management. It allows theorists to scale up from the individual in new ways and gives coherence to abstract objects of analysis like organizational memory (Sørensen, 2014), territoriality (Maréchal et al., 2013), and behavior (Carter and Jackson, 2004); the "organization-without-organs" (Linstead, 2000: 45); "bank fraud assemblage" (Bougen and Young, 2000: 406); the "nomadic strategies" of Linux (Munro, 2010: 215); entrepreneurship as "an unstable network" (Steyaert, 2002: 8); and the "imagined relational capital" of tourism firms (Saxena, 2015: 110).

More fundamentally, though, Deleuze's vitalism has implications for the conception of the value-form. However crudely appropriated, it enables the translation of surplus—either as organizational change or capital growth—into the terms of Life. Placed on a plane of immanence, surplus becomes inseparable from its "milieu" (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987: 313), from the structures and processes—the "virtualities, events, singularities" (Deleuze, 2001: 31)—in which it is embedded. Not only does this naturalize the processes of accumulation, rendering surplus extraction

an inherent property of the world in which it occurs, but it also justifies the expansion of these processes into new sectors of the everyday, to Life itself.

This entails a form of surplus extraction rooted in the blurring of borders, of inside and outside. As an example, Noy and Luski (2012: 28) use the "rhizome paradigm" to develop a business strategy that departs from traditional "either/or" models of competition and cooperation between firms. They replace this binary with a more rhizomatic "and, and, and…" logic whereby competitors work together, through "co-opetition," to "open new markets, develop new products, or improve the market position of all parties involved." In its emphasis on rhizomatic "principles of connection and heterogeneity," this collaborative strategy introduces a "new value set" between actors by integrating additional parties within the profit network. As such, Deleuze's ontology allows Noy and Luski (2012: 28) to expand the processes of accumulation to what was formerly considered outside—to include previously overlooked collaborators and "complementors" and in doing so create a "new relation between buyers, sellers and competitors."

By conceiving the market in terms of possible complements and connections, the firm is encouraged to adopt a "niche strategy," carving out a specialized position within a wider network of collaborators and competitors. The focus on niching, Noy and Luski (2012: 29) argue, has led to a "growing recognition that motivation, behaviour and company culture are critical elements in determining the success or failure of strategy planning and implementation." Life—the wellbeing of the employee—has become a major signifier for the managerial class (cf. Badiou, 2009: 35; Rose, 1999: 119). This is because, as a mediating term, the strategic focus on Life fashions a technology for correlating the interests of the individual employee with the trajectory and goals of the firm. The so-called "rhizome paradigm" enables managers to think this relation: not only does it place emphasis on motivation and behavior within the firm, but in doing so this emphasis works to situate self-fulfillment within the boundaries of the corporation, such that the life and goals of the worker

become imbricated with the Life of the organization and her surplus labor is naturalized as the product of life forces.

5 Crisis Management

While Deleuze's vitalism allows management to imagine the dynamics of business and capital differently and in ways that potentially allow greater exploitation, it also provides an instrument for the management of crises. As Sørensen (2006: 135) explains, Deleuzian ontology reconfigures crisis as the site of "innovation" and knowledge creation. In Sørensen's (2006: 137) reading, "crisis is an event" which for Deleuze and Guattari (2014: 156) includes "a shadowy and secret part [i.e., the virtual] that is continually subtracted from or added to its actualization." And since the event is "not just what happens," it reveals glimpses of "new and unforeseen connections between the individual and the organization" (Sørensen, 2006: 137, 135). For this reason Sørensen (2006: 139) advises the entrepreneur to "multipl[y] his crisis" so as to arrive at a fuller understanding of "his" situation:

> It is on account of these re-actions that it is possible to re-construct […] the nature of the environment into which you insert your production. In this case, the entrepreneur is investigating the nature of the politico-military complex, and is mapping out its body.

Crisis, in this analysis, provides an opportunity to surveil, experiment, and improve upon the processes of labor and production that are otherwise concealed. Read in this way, the deleuzoguattarian event supplies the theoretical justification for creative destruction, for the deterritorializations that capitalism depends on to produce new markets for investment and new pools of precarious labor for surplus extraction. Nowhere does Sørensen mention this dark underside to crisis, nor does he account for the (non-entrepreneurial) bodies that lose out during such moments, through unemployment, immiseration, and other forms of disruption. These latter constitute the true virtual of "innovation."

Also unexamined is the question of who or what is given access to the event, to the

"rhizome-structure of which everything is constructed" (Sørensen, 2006: 137). In the management literature these experiences constitute "visionary leadership" (Painter-Morland and Deslandes, 2014). Often this leadership is framed as an event in itself (e.g. Wood, 2005: 1117). Drawing on Deleuze, Painter-Morland and Deslandes (2014: 859) echo this position in pointing towards an "affective rather than effective leadership" where leading becomes a practice of "intuitive becoming" (860) which challenges "representationalist stereotypes" (844) and moves beyond oppositional difference. Such intuition—what Raffnsøe and Staunæs (2014: 195) call "anticipatory affectivity"—permits access to a Deleuzian virtual that includes past, present, and future possibilities. While Painter-Morland and Deslandes's (2014: 850) acknowledgement of the "multiplicities at work within leadership dynamics" certainly, and importantly, challenges gender binaries in the workplace, it also mystifies the process of management and excludes those not in leadership positions from access to the past, present, and future (i.e., to the virtual). Instead, the discourse of visionary leadership raises the (white, male) CEO to the status of prophet of time, guardian of the event. He is placed on the high barren ground of the plateau, that desert of endless creativity and resilience.

6 A Larger War Machine

The appropriation of Deleuze into management studies is part of a larger "processual turn" (Kristensen et al., 2014) in the discipline. Historically and in terms of content, this turn mirrors the so-called "relational turn" in human geography. I outline both of these movements in the next section, arguing that they share a common ontological assumption: that space is a creative force in itself. This assumption, which is ultimately that of a relational or process-based philosophy, provides one point at which the convergence between business and geography is made apparent.

In identifying such a point of juncture we are able to see that, in itself, the positing of alternatives cannot constitute—and often runs counter to—the horizon of political struggle.

Possibility and management, creativity and exploitation, life and value are not only compatible, but as the relational/processual turn in management and geography demonstrates, increasingly they are the couplings through which capital realizes its "propagandistic (civilizing) tendency" (Marx, 1993: 542), assimilating points outside of itself into those of production—including its own critique.

IV From Management to Geography: Delighting in Possibilities

1 The "Processual Turn" in MOS

When taken together, MOS's processual turn and geography's relational turn reveal a core function of the modern university: to expand the technologies and scope of surplus-value extraction and to weaponize knowledge against the working class (see Paschal, 2012). This function is realized to the extent that space is rendered atonic—full of new possibilities that, however paradoxically, reproduce the present while opening it up to new forms of investment and control.

Although it began in the early 2000s, MOS's processual turn belongs to a longer genealogy of strategy, management, and design. It is the most recent iteration of a movement, since the late 1980s, of incorporating critical theory and so-called "postmodernist" philosophy into organizational analysis (see Alvesson and Deetz, 2006). Drawing on the language of theory has helped constitute and vindicate what Thrift (2005: 31) calls "the new managerial discourse," which formed in the decades following the Second World War. The development of this discourse, including the processual turn, reflects an attempt to think beyond the failures of traditional approaches to management amid the decline of the Bretton Woods system (Thrift, 2005: 31) and the rise of a global economy marked by increasing technological complexity, capital mobility, and just-in-time models of production (Fjeldstad et al., 2012: 738; Sy and Côté, 2004: 439).

An essential component of the new managerialism, the discipline of strategic management emerged during the 1960s in reaction to these conditions. Faced with a morphing economy,

theorists like Alfred Chandler (2013 [1962]) began to realize that a strictly hierarchical structure of organizing, once conventional, was no longer the dominant model for large firms, especially those with a variety of products and market segments (Gooderham and Ulset, 2002: 117). Strategy as a concept entered the business world precisely at this moment, when managers and scholars began to conceive of and experiment with alternative, *lateral forms* of organizing.[5]

On the whole, these approaches sought to soften top-down management by installing horizontal lines of governance, accountability, and collaboration, with the goal of boosting information flow and output volumes while reducing production costs, delivery times, and risks to managers and stakeholders (Fjeldstad et al., 2012). Such a lateralization of management was part and parcel of a larger revision of the concept of value. No longer the end result of a linear and hierarchical chain of production, value was now considered to emerge from creative combinations of productive activities and actors (see Treacy and Wiersema, 1997; Porter, 1996).

The discovery of critical theory and postmodernism in management studies is bound up with this revaluation—as an attempt to map out the fluid and complex dynamics of lateral organizational forms. Some MOS scholars (e.g. Chia, 1995: 579) have viewed postmodern thinking *as* an ontology of becoming, flux, and emergence. This ontology is often framed as a direct challenge to the strong-rationality hypothesis of neoclassical economics, which it replaces with more flexible views of agency and change designed to grapple with uncertainty, theorize intra-firm relations, capture creativity, and develop a theory of corporate competencies and competitive advantage (MacLean et al., 2015; Berg, 1989).

MOS's processual turn is an attempt to rethink the organization along these lines. Rejecting a metaphysics of substance, "process organization studies" asserts the ontological primacy of "processes and change over entities and stasis" (Kristensen et al., 2014: 506). Organization is synonymous with change itself as "a non-intentional, creative disintegration and recombination of

new forces and matters" (Linstead and Thanem, 2007: 1496). Such attention to *becoming* seeks to replace a linear and static model of change with one that "affords a better understanding of the inherent dynamic complexities and intrinsic indeterminacy of organizational transformational processes" (Chia, 1999: 209).

While the processual turn is most pronounced in the MOS literature that theorizes the organization for its own sake,[6] it has also occurred within more mainstream business strategy, as well as within the practice of management itself (see, e.g., Czarniawska, 2007). This work has used process and relational thinking to develop models for conceiving and managing knowledge (Styhre and Sundgren, 2003), worker creativity (Caniëls et al., 2014), leadership (Wood, 2005), and the boundaries within and between firms and markets (Nayak, 2008). Other management scholars have conducted "processual research" (Dawson, 1997) in the hopes of solving managerial problems and to identify and affect change within the workplace (e.g. Styhre, 2002; Hinings, 1997; Pettigrew, 1997; Ropo et al., 1997).

The theoretical literature tends to draw from the process philosophies of Bergson, Whitehead, Deleuze, and others to reimagine the firm as a set of "interrelated and cooperated configurative capabilities" (Styhre, 2002: 585). The realization of these potentials—and thus of value—is said to require fluid and relational practices of management able to generate the proper conditions for their emergence. From the vantage of process philosophy, firms are thus premised on a constant adaptation or resiliency that reinterprets change, often crisis itself, as "the *normal* state" (Styhre, 2002: 580), "a generic characteristic of today's competitive environment." In Styhre's (2002: 585) words, "strategic management is increasingly 'networked', firms disperse, disintegrate and are reconfigured across the organizational field." Strategy in this context becomes a task of managing human and nonhuman relations within a given space while "recogniz[ing] the continuous change and production of novelty" (Styhre, 2002: 580) that emerges from their arrangement. It is from

within this process—rather than at its terminal points—that value is perceived to exist.

2 The "Relational Turn" in Geography

Since the early 2000s scholars have perceived a "relational turn" in human geography (Massey, 2004; Yeung, 2004; Bathelt and Glückler, 2003; Boggs and Rantisi, 2003). To the extent this turn is pitted against the scission of the dialectic—as Eric Sheppard (2008: 2608) says is often the case—its politics tend to be based on a vitalism that is bound to repeat the relations of *what is*. That's not to say that a relational view of space does not open possibilities. On the contrary, for many in the discipline relational, flat, or non-Euclidean space offers a much-needed critique of the hierarchical notions of scale and territoriality (e.g. Springer, 2014; Woodward et al., 2012; Jones et al., 2007; Marston et al., 2005; Amin, 2002). As Martin Jones (2009: 487) puts it, "relational thinking challenges human geography by insisting on an open-ended, mobile, networked, and actor-centred geographic becoming." This is a departure from both absolute and relative conceptions of space "because it dissolves the boundaries between objects and space, and rejects forms of spatial totality" (Jones, 2009: 491).

In developing theories of relational space geographers have drawn on a variety of sources (Sheppard, 2008: 2608) including actor-network theory (Murdoch, 2006), feminist relational thought (England and Lawson, 2005), and the process-based ontologies of Deleuze and Guattari, Spinoza, Bergson, Whitehead, and others (Martin and Secor, 2013; Thrift, 2006; Whatmore, 2006; Marston et al., 2005; Massey, 2005). Recently, such thinking has played a significant role in work on care ethics (Cloutier et al., 2015; Ramdas, 2015; England and Henry, 2013), geopolitics (Dittmer, 2014), emotions and affect (Andrews et al. 2013), governance (Pollard and Samers 2013), economic geography (Ahlqvist, 2013; Georgeson et al., 2013), migration (Collins, 2012; Gielis, 2011; Darling, 2010), urban politics (McGuirk, 2012, 2015; McCann and Ward, 2010), children's geographies

(Kullman, 2015, 2010; Tipper, 2011), anarchist geographies (Springer, 2014), neoliberalism (Peck et al., 2010), borders (Doevenspeck, 2011); the body (Abrahamsson and Simpson, 2011), civil society (Marshall and Staeheli, 2015), sexuality (Di Pietro, 2015), food security (Jarosz, 2014), the nonhuman (Buller, 2015, 2014; Shaw et al., 2013), and topology (Jones, 2014; Martin and Secor, 2013).

While influential in a variety of subfields, relational thought has had a shared effect: it has rendered space as a site of politics, conflict, and possibility. Doreen Massey summarizes this position in *For Space* (2005: 9) where she defines space in three ways: as "the product of interrelations," as "the sphere of possibility of the existence of multiplicity," and as "always under construction." Imagined in this way, Massey claims, space has the potential to undermine established concepts, enabling a progressive politics that would be constituted on a more complete acceptance of coexisting histories and futures. Similarly for Thrift (2006: 145) space-as-process unlocks "new ways of thinking about efficacy and causality, about how we are in the world." Such possibilities enliven. They are, for Massey, Thrift, and others, something in which "it is quite reasonable to take some delight" (Massey 2005: 14).

But what are the political stakes of this "delight," of a practice rooted in the proliferation of "rhizomatic alternatives to life" (Springer, 2014: 402)? As I argued in Section II, positioning "forms of life" at the center of a political project runs the risk of ignoring the transcendental structures under which these forms are and are not made visible, and thereby confining politics to the finitude of Life, to the monotony of the One. What this means is that relationality or process cannot, in themselves, produce a subject outside the relations of the present. This is because an ontology of pure flux denies any stable point at which a decision could be made to affirm or reject these relations. In David Harvey's (1996: 7) words, "[i]f everything that is solid is always instantaneously melting into air, then it is very hard to accomplish anything or even set one's mind to do anything."

This is not to abandon relationality altogether. It is only to suggest, following Sheppard (2008), that relational thought must be accompanied by the structure of the dialectic. This is in many ways a return to the origins of radical geography in the 1970s and 1980s (cf. Castree, 2000: 955). While maintaining a dialectical-Marxist approach, radical geography, in its emergence, is heavily indebted to relational understandings of space. Harvey's (2009 [1973]) early work, after all, was inspired by Lefebvre's (1992: 116) idea of space as a "set of relations and forms." Indeed, both Jones (2009) and Sheppard (2008) point to Harvey's career-long engagement with relational space as a precursor to more recent work in this area. Nevertheless, the so-called relational turn has tended to pit itself against the dialectics of Harvey's relational ontology (Sheppard, 2008: 2608). This is because while a flat ontology opens up a multiplicity of possibilities, it does so only at the cost of eliminating all binary thought (see, e.g., Springer, 2014: 402), every instance of the Two, a degree of which is required in dialectical reasoning.

In place of the Two, many geographers of the relational turn have posited a creativity or vitality at the heart of being such that material space is framed as "self-organizing" (Dittmer, 2014: 392) or "organizationally autonomous" (Woodward et al., 2012: 204), determined by its relational activity (Jones, 2009: 491). Such vitalism has placed critical geography, its poststructural strains, in ontological alignment with business theory because it reimagines the space of the present as a set of (exploitable) potentialities. There is nothing beyond this terrain; nothing beyond the creativity of this world. And as I've shown above, such a view of space, no matter how creative, is destined to reproduce the transcendental conditions of its moment.

Harvey (1996: 7) overcomes this problem—upholding the dialectic while maintaining relational space—by accepting the "relative fixity" of things, positing nodes within patterns of flux: what he calls "permanences." Jones (2009: 493) acknowledges something similar when he writes that "[d]espite the multiple potentials of space flagged in relational thinking, factors can constrain and

structure space." Without some kind of structure there can be no thought of the dialectic since there is nothing stable enough—not even *nothing*—to which another term could be opposed. For Hegel (2010: 60), dialectics requires opposition: of *nothing* to *something*, and of *something* to another *something*. Not only does a relational ontology deny this opposition—because opposition would imply binary—but in doing so it necessarily obscures the structures of domination, since it receives its conditions of possibility from their rejection.

The potential for naturalization is what makes the relational view of space so attractive to business. While he pioneered geography's critique of management studies, Thrift's own theory of space demonstrates this point nicely. Processual space, he (2006: 145) claims, is "the very stuff of life itself." From this principle, space and life are correlated so that each becomes the limit of the other: life is restricted to process, and vice versa. Such co-determination enables the maintenance of the present because it confines existence (life) to apparent relations (space). In Thrift's words, "[p]rocess (or perhaps, more accurately, force-being) is all in that it is all that there is" (2006: 141). If there is nothing outside *what is*, then *what is* must be justified: the violence of its antagonisms may continue unquestioned.

This is a politics of disengagement. Or rather: of an engagement that situates the strategies and practices of "the Left" on a formalized plane—one which necessarily fails to grasp the historical situation at hand. This is why someone like Sir Nigel Thrift is able to serve as a guru of leftist theory (see, e.g., Amin and Thrift, 2013) while at the same time fulfilling his corporate role as vice chancellor of the University of Warwick. In the way Thrift frames politics and change as rooted in a processual view of space, these two functions appear perfectly compatible, if not mutually beneficial as potential "allies." Such compatibility is enabled by a failure to acknowledge the material conditions of worlds. In ignoring these constraints politics may be rendered—like it is for Thrift—as a kind of creative "art" imposed from above. In his critique of Amin and Thrift's 2013 *Arts of the*

Political, Dave Featherstone (2013) calls these arts "theoreticist prescriptions," which leave little room to "think about how left political practices proceed and engage with the world."[7] Indeed, as I have shown in this essay, process-based ontologies like Thrift's do just this: they reproduce the world; they do not seek to change it. Strategy is conceived here in the managerial sense, not the revolutionary sense, as external to struggle. Yet as materialists we ought to see struggle as the point of emergence for all strategy, for all theoretical thought, whatever its politics. Against Thrift, the task for us becomes, in Jasper Bernes's (2013: 175) words, "not to issue orders to struggles, but to be ordered by them."

V Conclusion: Critical Theory, Critical Thinking, Truth

In 2013 Hart Research Associates conducted an online survey of 318 private-sector and nonprofit organizations within the US concerning hiring practices and preferences. Of the executives questioned, 82% said that critical-thinking skills should receive a greater degree of emphasis in college education. In a national economy where what was once called a "middle class" has been all-but supplanted by the "creative class" (Florida, 2012) of tech firms and Silicon Valley-style startups, thinking critically and creatively is now a vital aptitude for the new managerialism. As management guru Larry Chester (in Lawrence and Chester, 2014: 3) stresses, critical-thinking skills "can help you manage complex, messy issues in a systematic way that elicits stakeholder buy-in and maximizes success."

What are we to do when not only our theories but also *critical thinking itself* has been co-opted in the service of corporate governance and the wringing out of surplus value? As I have shown with the example of Deleuze, the same "critical" theory that has been used to question capitalism can also provide the ontologic for its growth, development, and obfuscation. While admitting the potential of Deleuze and other process/relational ontologies for enabling geographers to think of space in

creative and critical ways, we need to acknowledge—and better map out—the ways in which this creativity and criticalness can function as the self-consciousness of the corporate university (Paschal, 2012), as a link between pedagogy and accumulation. The question then becomes: at what *points* does academic critique become inseparable from the creative destruction of capital?

The study of Deleuze's role in MOS gives us a few theoretical tools for addressing this question. It traces one space in which these points may be located: where truths fail to emerge. Deleuze is valuable for business strategists, after all, because of what he can't do. As I argued above, his philosophy is unable to conceive the transcendental change of an event and as a result can act as an apology for the present and for the exploitative practices of corporate managers. According to Badiou, the rejection of such an event also entails a rejection of truth since it is in the traces of the former that a truth becomes discernable, as an exception to *what is* (Badiou, 2009: 597). For this reason I echo Shaw (2010: 440) in insisting that we take truth seriously as a political category, as something which, when incorporated into our pedagogy and research, would help make our discipline less amenable to the material processes it aims to critique. A truth is, in Badiou's (2013: xii) account, always on the side of revolutionary politics because it emerges as a rupture in the world that supports it. Perhaps it is at such a point of rupture—in the classroom or in our work—that we may liberate theory and everything else from the finite limits placed on them by capital and by death.

Acknowledgements

Many thanks to Katharyne Mitchell, Luke Bergman, Chris Philo, Editor 2, and the anonymous referees for their thoughtful comments and their patience in reading some very-rough drafts of this paper.

Notes

1. "Another University is Possible" was the theme for the Cultural Studies Association's 2015 conference.
2. The Academy of Management (AOM) considers strategic management—what it calls "Business Policy and Strategy"—a subdiscipline of MOS. I maintain this taxonomy in the essay. It's important to note that MOS is an enormous discipline, with 25 "Divisions & Interest Groups" listed on AOM's website. Not all of these divisions are corporate-focused, and some, like Critical Management Studies, offer social critiques. My focus here however is on the non-critical strains of MOS.
3. The concept of world is taken from Badiou (2009: 598) to refer to "the place in which objects appear," or more formally, to that which "designates one of the logics of appearing."
4. See, e.g., Bay (1998) for an example of how Deleuze maps onto financial capitalism, particularly as a reference for understanding the logic of derivation.
5. Before the 1960s, "strategy" was a concept typically applied to war and politics, not corporate management (Kiechel, 2010: 25).
6. In addition to the works cited above, see also Koskinen (2013); Bencherki and Cooren (2011); Bakken and Hernes (2006); Carlsen (2006).
7. For a similar critique of *Arts of the Political* see Barnett (2013).

References

Abrahamsson S and Simpson P (2011) The limits of the body: boundaries, capacities, thresholds. *Social & Cultural Geography* 12: 331–338.

Ahlqvist T (2013) Engineering Spatial Fixes: Relational Spatial Practices, Strategic-Topological Approach and the Construction of a Finnish Science-Technology District. *Geografiska Annaler: Series B, Human Geography* 95: 89–109.

Alvesson M and Deetz S (1999) Studying Organization: Theory & Method. In: Clegg S, Hardy C,. Lawrence R, and Nord W (eds) *Critical Theory and Postmodernism: Approaches to Organizational Studies*. London: SAGE, 185–212.

Amin A (2002) Spatialities of globalisation. *Environment and Planning A* 34: 385–399.

Amin A and Thrift N (2013) *Arts of the Political: New Openings for the Left*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Andrews GJ, Evans J, and Wiles, JL (2013) Re-spacing and re-placing gerontology: relationality and affect. *Ageing & Society* 33: 1339–1373.

Atkinson S and Scott K (2015) Stable and destabilised states of subjective well-being: dance and movement as catalysts of transition. *Social & Cultural Geography* 16: 75–94.

Badiou A (2009) *Logics of Worlds*. London: Bloomsbury Academic.

Badiou A (2012) The Fascism of the Potato. In: Bosteels B (ed) *The Adventure of French Philosophy*. London: Verso, 191–201.

Badiou A (2013) *Theory of the Subject*. London: Bloomsbury Academic.

Bakken T and Hernes T (2006) Organizing is Both a Verb and a Noun: Weick Meets Whitehead. *Organization Studies* 27: 1599–1616.

Barnett C (2013) Book Review Essay: Theory as Political Technology. *Antipode*. Available at: http://antipodefoundation.org/2013/07/19/two-new-book-reviews/.

Bathelt H and Glückler J (2003) Toward a relational economic geography. *Journal of Economic Geography* 3: 117–144.

Bay T (1998) AND ... AND ... AND ... : Reiterating Financial Derivation. Doctoral Thesis, Stockholm University, School of Business.

Bear C (2013) Assembling the sea: materiality, movement and regulatory practices in the Cardigan Bay scallop fishery. *Cultural Geographies* 20: 21–41.

Bencherki N and Cooren F (2011) Having to be: the possessive constitution of organization. *Human Relations* 64: 1579–1607.

Berg PO (1989) Postmodern management? From facts to fiction in theory and practice. *Scandinavian Journal of Management* 5: 201–217.

Bernes J (2013) Logistics, Counterlogistics and the Communist Prospect. *Endnotes* 3: 172–201.

Beyes T and Michels C (2011) The production of educational space: Heterotopia and the business university. *Management Learning* 42: 521–536.

Bissell D (2015) How environments speak: everyday mobilities, impersonal speech and the geographies of commentary. *Social & Cultural Geography* 16: 146–164.

Boggs JS and Rantisi, NM (2003) The "relational turn" in economic geography. *Journal of Economic Geography* 3: 109–116.

Bougen PD and Young JJ (2000) Organizing and Regulating as Rhizomatic Lines: Bank Fraud and Auditing. *Organization* 7: 403–426.

Brands J, Schwanen T, and van Aalst I (2015) Fear of crime and affective ambiguities in the night-time economy. *Urban Studies* 52: 439–455.

Brown W (2008) *Regulating Aversion: Tolerance in the Age of Identity and Empire*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Buller H (2014) Animal geographies I. *Progress in Human Geography* 38: 308–318.

Buller H (2015) Animal geographies II Methods. *Progress in Human Geography* 39: 374–384.

Caniëls MCJ, De Stobbeleir K, and De Clippeleer I (2014) The Antecedents of Creativity Revisited: A Process Perspective. *Creativity and Innovation Management* 23: 96–110.

Carlsen A (2006) Organizational becoming as dialogic imagination of practice: The case of the indomitable Gauls. *Organization Science* 17: 132–149.

Carter P and Jackson N (2004) Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari. In: Linstead S (ed) *Organization Theory and Postmodern Thought*. London: SAGE, 105–126.

Castree N (2000) Professionalisation, activism, and the university: whither "critical geography"? *Environment and Planning A* 32: 955–970.

Chandler AD (2013 [1962]) *Strategy and Structure: Chapters in the History of the Industrial Enterprise*. Mansfield Centre, CT: Martino Fine Books.

Chia R (1995) From Modern to Postmodern Organizational Analysis. *Organization Studies* 16: 579–604.

Chia R (1999) A "rhizomic" model of organizational change and transformation: perspective from a metaphysics of change. *British Journal of Management* 10: 209–227.

Cloutier DS, Martin-Matthews A, Byrne K, and Wolse F (2015) The space between: using 'relational ethics' and 'relational space' to explore relationship-building between care providers and care recipients in the home space. *Social & Cultural Geography* 16: 764–782.

Collins FL (2012) Transnational mobilities and urban spatialities Notes from the Asia-Pacific. *Progress in Human Geography* 36 316–335.

Cooper R (1998) Assemblage Notes. In: Chia R (ed) *Organized Worlds: Explorations in Technology and Organization with Robert Cooper*. London: Routledge, 100–119

Curtis J (2014) The Employment Status of Instructional Staff Members in Higher Education, Fall 2011. *Washington, DC: American Association of University Professors*. Available at: http://aaup.org/sites/default/files/files/AAUP-InstrStaff2011-April2014.pdf

Czarniawska B (2007) Reclaiming processes. *Scandinavian Journal of Management* 23: 353–355.

Darling J (2010) A city of sanctuary: the relational re-imagining of Sheffield's asylum politics. *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers* 35: 125–140.

Dawson A (2009) Another University is Possible: Academic Labor, the Ideology of Scarcity, and the Fight for Workplace Democracy. *Workplace: A Journal for Academic Labor*. Available at: http://ices.library.ubc.ca/index.php/workplace/article/view/182204.

Dawson P (1997) In at the deep end: Conducting processual research on organisational change. *Scandinavian Journal of Management* 13: 389–405.

Deleuze G (1990) *The Logic of Sense*. New York: Columbia University Press.

Deleuze G (1993) *Fold: Leibniz and the Baroque*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Deleuze G (2001) *Pure Immanence: Essays on a Life*. New York: Urzone.

Deleuze G (2004) *Difference and Repetition*. London: Continuum.

Deleuze G and Guattari F (1987) *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Deleuze G and Guattari F (2014) *What is Philosophy?* New York: Columbia University Press.

Deslandes G (2012) The care-of-self ethic with continual reference to Socrates: towards ethical self-management. *Business Ethics: A European Review*, 21: 325–338.

Dewsbury JD (2011) The Deleuze-Guattarian assemblage: plastic habits. *Area* 43: 148–153.

Dewsbury JD (2015) Non-representational landscapes and the performative affective forces of habit: from "Live" to "Blank." *Cultural Geographies* 22: 29–47.

Di Pietro PJJ (2015) Decolonizing travesti space in Buenos Aires: race, sexuality, and sideways relationality. *Gender, Place & Culture*: published online before print.

Dittmer J (2014) Geopolitical assemblages and complexity. *Progress in Human Geography* 38: 385–401.

Dittmer J and Latham A (2015) The rut and the gutter: space and time in graphic narrative. *Cultural Geographies* 22: 427–444.

Dixon DP and Jones JP III (2015) The tactile topologies of Contagion. *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers* 40: 223–234.

Doevenspeck M (2011) Constructing the border from below: Narratives from the Congolese–Rwandan state boundary. *Political Geography* 30: 129–142.

England K and Henry C (2013) Care work, migration and citizenship: international nurses in the UK. *Social & Cultural Geography* 14: 558–574.

England K and Lawson V (2005) Feminist Analyses of Work: Rethinking the Boundaries, Gendering, and Spatiality of Work. In: Nelson L and Seager J (eds) *A Companion to Feminist Geography*. Malden, MA: Blackwell, 77–92.

Farías I (2011) Tourist Maps as Diagrams of Destination Space. *Space and Culture* 14: 398–414.

Farquharson M, Örtenblad A, and Hsu S (2014) Trusting local translation: Experiences from transplanting a "Made in Britain" entrepreneurship course in China. *Management Learning* 45: 182–199.

Featherstone D (2013) Review of Ash Amin and Nigel Thrift's *Arts of the Political: New Openings for the Left*. *Society and Space*. Available at: http://societyandspace.com/reviews/ reviews-archive/ash-amin-and-nigel-thrift-2013-arts-of-the-political-reviewed-by-dave-featherstone/.

Fjeldstad ØD, Snow CC, Miles RE, and Lettl C (2012) The architecture of collaboration. *Strategic Management Journal* 33: 734–750.

Florida R (2012) *The Rise of the Creative Class, Revisited*. New York: Basic Books.

Georgeson L, Caprotti F, and Bailey I (2014). 'It's All a Question of Business': Investment Identities, Networks and Decision-Making in the Cleantech Economy. *Geografiska Annaler: Series B, Human Geography* 96: 217–229.

Gerlach J (2014) Lines, contours and legends: Coordinates for vernacular mapping. *Progress in Human Geography* 38: 22–39.

Gielis R (2011) The value of single-site ethnography in the global era: studying transnational experiences in the migrant house. *Area* 43: 257–263.

Ginsberg B (2013) *The Fall of the Faculty*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Gooderham P and Ulset S (2002) "Beyond the M-form": Towards a Critical Test of the New Form. *International Journal of the Economics of Business* 9: 117–138.

Hart Research Associates (2013) *It Takes More Than a Major: Employer Priorities for College Learning and Student Success*. An Online survey among empolyers conducted on behalf of: The Association of American Colleges and Universities. Available at: https://www.aacu.org/sites/default/files/files/LEAP/2013_EmployerSurvey.pdf

Harvey D (1996) *Justice, Nature and the Geography of Difference*. Oxford: Blackwell.

Harvey D (2009) *Social Justice and the City*. Athens: University of Georgia Press.

Hegel GWF (2010) *The Science of Logic*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Hickey-Moody A and Laurie T (2015). Geophilosophies of Masculinity: remapping gender, aesthetics and knowledge. *Angelaki* 20: 1–10.

Hinings CR (1997) Reflections on processual research. *Scandinavian Journal of Management* 13: 493–503.

Horowitz LS (2016) Rhizomic Resistance Meets Arborescent Assemblage: UNESCO World Heritage and the Disempowerment of Indigenous Activism in New Caledonia. *Annals of the American Association of Geographers* 106: 167–185.

Huijbens EH and Benediktsson K (2013) Inspiring the visitor? Landscapes and horizons of hospitality. *Tourist Studies* 13: 189–208.

Izak M (2015) Learning from a fool: Searching for the "unmanaged" context for radical learning. *Management Learning* 46: 87–104.

Jackson N and Carter P (2007) *Rethinking Organisational Behaviour: A Post-Structuralist Framework*. Harlow, England ; New York: Pearson Education Canada.

Jarosz L (2014) Comparing food security and food sovereignty discourses. *Dialogues in Human Geography*, 4: 168–181.

Jones JP III, Woodward K and Marston SA (2007) Situating Flatness. *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers* 32: 264–276.

Jones M (2009) Phase space: geography, relational thinking, and beyond. *Progress in Human Geography*, 33: 487–506.

Jones M (2014) Kapoorian geographies of relationality: the Baroque, topological twists, phase space in action. *Environment and Planning A*, 46: 2585 – 2603.

Kallinikos J (2003) Work, human agency and organizational forms: an anatomy of fragmentation. *Organization Studies* 24: 595–618.

Kiechel W (2010) *The Lords of Strategy: The Secret Intellectual History of the New Corporate World*. Boston: Harvard Business Review Press.

Koskinen KU (2013) *Knowledge Production in Organizations: A Processual Autopoietic View*. Cham: Springer.

Kristensen AR, Lopdrup–Hjorth T, and Sørensen BM (2014) Gilles Deleuze (1925–1995). In Helin J, Hernes T, Hjorth D, Holt R. *The Oxford Handbook of Process Philosophy and Organization Studies*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 499–514.

Kullman K (2010) Transitional geographies: making mobile children. *Social & Cultural Geography* 11: 829–846.

Kullman K (2015) Pedagogical assemblages: rearranging children's traffic education. *Social & Cultural Geography* 16: 255–275.

Lawley S (2005) Deleuze's rhizome and the study of organization: Conceptual movement and an open future. *Tamara: Journal for Critical Organization Inquiry* 3: 36–48.

Lawrence J and Chester L (2014) *Engage the Fox: A Business Fable about Thinking Critically and Motivating Your Team*. Austin: Greenleaf Book Group.

Lefebvre H (1992) *The Production of Space*. Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell.

Linstead S (2000) Dangerous Fluids and the Organization-without-Organs. In: Hassard J, Holliday R and Willmott H (eds) *Body and Organization*. London: SAGE, 31–52.

Linstead S and Thanem T (2007) Multiplicity, Virtuality and Organization: The Contribution of Gilles Deleuze. *Organization Studies* 28: 1483–1501.

MacLean D, MacIntosh R, and Seidl D (2014) Rethinking dynamic capabilities from a creative action perspective. *Strategic Organization*: published online before print.

Maréchal G, Linstead S, and Munro I (2013) The territorial organization: History, divergence and possibilities. *Culture & Organization* 19: 185–208.

Marshall DJ and Staeheli L (2015) Mapping civil society with social network analysis: Methodological possibilities and limitations. *Geoforum* 61: 56–66.

Marston SA, Jones JP III, and Woodward K (2005) Human geography without scale. *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers* 30: 416–432.

Martin L and Secor AJ (2013) Towards a post-mathematical topology. *Progress in Human Geography* 38: 420–438.

Marx K (1993) *Grundrisse: Foundations of the Critique of Political Economy*. London: Penguin Classics.

Massey D (2004) The Political Challenge of Relational Space: Introduction to the Vega Symposium. *Geografiska Annaler: Series B, Human Geography* 86: 3.

Massey D (2005) *For Space*. London: SAGE.

Mathieu C (2010) The Management of Distance in Remote-Work Environments: A Deleuzian Approach. *AMCIS 2010 Proceedings*. Paper 471.

McCann E and Ward K (2010) Relationality/territoriality: Toward a conceptualization of cities in the world. *Geoforum* 41: 175–184.

McGuirk P (2011) Geographies of Urban Politics: Pathways, Intersections, Interventions. *Geographical Research* 50: 256–268.

McGuirk P (2015) Geographical theorizing for a world of cities. *Progress in Human Geography*, published online before print.

Meyerhoff E, Johnson E, and Braun B (2011) Time and the University. *ACME: An International E-Journal for Critical Geographies* 10: 483–507.

Miller JC (2014a) Approximating new spaces of consumption at the Abasto Shopping Mall, Buenos Aires, Argentina. *Journal of Cultural Geography* 31: 206–217.

Miller JC (2014b) Malls without stores (MwS): the affectual spaces of a Buenos Aires shopping mall. *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers* 39: 14–25.

Moreno CM and Curti GH (2012) Recovery spaces and therapeutic jurisprudence: a case study of the family treatment drug courts. *Social & Cultural Geography* 13: 161–183.

Munro I (2010) Nomadic strategies in the network society: From Lawrence of Arabia to Linux. *Scandinavian Journal of Management* 26: 215–223.

Murdoch J (2006) *Post-structuralist Geography: A Guide to Relational Space*. London: SAGE.

Nayak A (2008) On the Way to Theory: A Processual Approach. *Organization Studies* 29: 173–190.

Ng AKY, Ducruet C, Jacobs W, Monios J, Notteboom T, Rodrigue JP, Slack B, Tam K, and Wilmsmeier G (2014) Port geography at the crossroads with human geography: between flows and spaces. *Journal of Transport Geography* 41: 84–96.

Noy E and Luski AMD (2012) The multidisciplinary nature of business strategy: Suggesting a rhizome paradigm. *Electronic Journal of Business Research Methods* 10: 22–33.

Osei-Kofi N (2012) Junior faculty of color in the corporate university: implications of neoliberalism and neoconservatism on research, teaching and service. *Critical Studies in Education* 53: 229–244.

Painter-Morland M (2010) Questioning corporate codes of ethics. *Business Ethics: A European Review* 19: 265–279.

Painter-Morland M and Deslandes G (2014) Gender and visionary leading: rethinking "vision" with Bergson, Deleuze and Guattari. *Organization* 21: 844–866.

Paschal M (2012) Against Humanities: The Self-Consciousness of the Corporate University. *Viewpoint Magazine* 2. Available at: https://viewpointmag.com/2012/09/10/against-humanities-the-self-consciousness-of-the-corporate-university/

Peck J, Theodore N, and Brenner N (2010) Postneoliberalism and its Malcontents. *Antipode* 41: 94–116.

Pettigrew AM (1997) What is a processual analysis? *Scandinavian Journal of Management* 13: 337–348.

Pollard J and Samers M (2013) Governing Islamic Finance: Territory, Agency, and the Making of Cosmopolitan Financial Geographies. *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 103: 710–726.

Porter M (1996) What Is Strategy? *Harvard Business Review* Nov/Dec 1996: 61–78.

Raffnsøe S and Staunæs D (2014) Learning to stay ahead of time: moving leadership experiences experimentally. *Management & Organizational History* 9: 184–201.

Ramdas K (2015) Is blood thicker than water? Single Indian Singaporean women and the geographies of "being" family. *Gender, Place & Culture* 22: 255–270.

Robinson J (2016) Thinking cities through elsewhere: Comparative tactics for a more global urban studies. *Progress in Human Geography* 40: 3–29.

Ropo A, Eriksson P, and Hunt JG (1997) Reflections on conducting processual research on management and organizations. *Scandinavian Journal of Management* 13: 331–335.

Rose N (1999) *Governing the Soul: the Shaping of the Private Self*. London: Free Association Books.

Ruddick S (2012) Power and the problem of composition. *Dialogues in Human Geography* 2: 207–211.

Saldanha A (2012a) Aestheticism and post-humanism. *Dialogues in Human Geography* 2: 276–279.

Saldanha A (2012b) Assemblage, materiality, race, capital. *Dialogues in Human Geography* 2: 194–197.

Saldanha A and Adams J (eds) (2012) *Deleuze and Race*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

Saxena G (2015) Imagined relational capital: An analytical tool in considering small tourism firms' sociality. *Tourism Management* 49: 109–118.

Schultz M, Maguire S, Langley A, and Tsoukas H (eds) (2012) *Constructing Identity in and around Organizations*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Shaw IGR (2010) Sites, truths and the logics of worlds: Alain Badiou and human geography. *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers* 35: 431–442.

Shaw IGR, Jones JP III, and Butterworth MK (2013) The mosquito's umwelt, or one monster's standpoint ontology. *Geoforum* 48: 260–267.

Sheppard E (2008) Geographic dialectics? *Environment and Planning A* 40: 2603–2612.

Simpson B, Tracey R, and Weston A (2015) The Timefulness of Strategy Practices. Paper presented at the Academy of Management Annual Meeting, Vancouver, BC, 7–11 August.

Sköld D (2012) Beyond an Immanent Theory of Desire : Reconsidering Deleuzian Creativity Research. Paper presented at the 28th European Group of Organizational Studies Colloquium, Helsinki, Finland, 5–7 July.

Sköld D (2013) Co-creation at the limit of im/possibility: Learning from Lacan about the logic of desire and the limits of Deleuze. Paper presented at the 29th European Group of Organizational Studies Colloquium, Montréal, QC. 4–6 July.

Sørensen BM (2006) Identity Sniping: Innovation, Imagination and the Body. *Creativity and Innovation Management* 15: 135–142.

Sørensen BM (2014) Changing the Memory of Suffering: An Organizational Aesthetics of the Dark Side. *Organization Studies* 35: 279–302.

Spoelstra S (2007) *What is Organization?* Lund: Lund Business Press.

Springer S (2014) Human geography without hierarchy. *Progress in Human Geography* 38: 402–419.

Statler M (2014) Developing wisdom in a business school? Critical reflections on pedagogical practice. *Management Learning* 45: 397–417.

Steinberg A (2005) Emergent knowledge dynamics in innovation: exploring e-business entrepreneurship after the dotcom crash. Doctoral Thesis, London School of Economics and Political Science.

Steinberg A (2006) Exploring Rhizomic Becomings in Post Dot-Com Crash Networks: A Deleuzian Approach to Emerging Knowledge Dynamics. In: Fang Zhao (ed) *Entrepreneurship and Innovations in E-Business: An Integrative Perspective.* Hershey, PA: Idea Group, 18–40.

Steinberg A (2008) Toward a Flexible Onto-epistemology. *Journal of Decision Systems* 17: 97–117.

Steyaert C (2005) Entrepreneurship: in between what? On the "frontier" as a discourse of entrepreneurship research. *International Journal of Entrepreneurship and Small Business* 2: 2–16.

Styhre A (2001) We have never been Deleuzians: desire, immanence, motivation, and the absence of Deleuze in organization theory. Paper presented at the 2nd Critical Management Studies Conference, Manchester, England, 11–13 July.

Styhre A (2002) Thinking with AND: Management Concepts and Multiplicities. *Organization* 9: 459–475.

Styhre A and Sundgren M (2003) Creativity as connectivity: a rhizome model of creativity. *International Journal of Internet and Enterprise Management* 1: 421–436.

Sy T and Côté S (2004) Emotional intelligence: A key ability to succeed in the matrix organization. *Journal of Management Development* 23: 437–455.

Sy T and D'Annunzio L (2005) Challenges and Strategies of Matrix Organizations: Top-Level and Mid-Level Managers' Perspectives. *HR. Human Resource Planning* 28: 39–48.

Talburt S and Matus C (2014) Confusing the grid: spatiotemporalities, queer imaginaries, and movement. *Gender, Place & Culture* 21: 785–801.

Tamboukou M (2012) Heterotopic and holey spaces as tents for the nomad: rereading Gwen John's letters. *Gender, Place & Culture* 19: 275–290.

Thanem T (2004) The body without organs: nonorganizational desire in organizational life. *Culture & Organization* 10: 203–217.

Thatcher E (2005) Living Dead Networks. *The Fiberculture Journal* 4. Available at: http://four.fibreculturejournal.org/fcj-018-living-dead-networks/print/

Thrift N (1997) The rise of soft capitalism. *Cultural Values* 1: 29–57.

Thrift N (1999) The Place of Complexity. *Theory, Culture & Society* 16: 31–69.

Thrift N (2000) Performing Cultures in the New Economy. *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 90: 674–692.

Thrift N (2005) *Knowing Capitalism*. London: SAGE.

Thrift N (2006) Space. *Theory, Culture & Society* 23: 139.

Tipper B (2011) "A dog who I know quite well": everyday relationships between children and animals. *Children's Geographies* 9: 145–165.

Treacy M and Wiersema F (1997) *The Discipline of Market Leaders: Choose Your Customers, Narrow Your Focus, Dominate Your Market*. Reading, MA: Basic Books.

Tsoukas H and Chia R (2002) On Organizational Becoming: Rethinking Organizational Change. *Organization Science* 13: 567–582.

Wakefield S and Braun B (2014) Governing the resilient city. *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space*, 32: 4–11.

Whatmore S (2006) Materialist returns: practising cultural geography in and for a more-than-human world. *Cultural Geographies* 13: 600–609.

Wilmsmeier G and Monios J (2015) The production of capitalist "smooth" space in global port operations. *Journal of Transport Geography* 47: 59–69.

Wood M (2005) The fallacy of misplaced leadership*. *Journal of Management Studies* 42: 1101–1121.

Woodward K, Jones JP III, and Marston SA (2012) The politics of autonomous space. *Progress in Human Geography* 36: 204–224.

Yeung HW (2005) Rethinking relational economic geography. *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers* 30: 37–51.

Žižek S (2008) Tolerance as an Ideological Category. *Critical Inquiry* 34: 660–682.

Žižek S (2009) *In Defense of Lost Causes*. London: Verso.