Control Societies: Notes for an Introduction

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First published in Michel Butel's popular review *L'Autre journal*, of which he was an editorial board member, Gilles Deleuze's essay on control societies, re-published in *Pourparlers* in 1990 and later translated as the 'Postscript on Control Societies' (hereafter just the 'Postscript') has proved to be one of his most widely cited pieces of work.[1] Presented in historical terms as the successor to the disciplinary configuration of power elaborated by his friend Michel Foucault, the logic of control sketched out by Deleuze has proved highly suggestive within the arts and social sciences (in Anglophone countries in particular), as a means of articulating understandings of a range of historically grounded shifts in the organisation of power.

1. In their articles, contributors have referred to a number of different sources for the Postscript, and we have not attempted to harmonise these.

Yet, brief as it is, Deleuze's essay can scarcely be thought to offer anything like a complete account of control, whether that is to be understood either uniquely on Deleuze's terms or, in particular, as a comprehensively established contrast to the disciplinary logic presented by Foucault. Its cursory and suggestive form makes the historical basis of the argument obscure, and, whilst it makes numerous references to concepts established by Deleuze elsewhere in his writings (modulation, dividual, order-word/pass-word and so on), the broader basis of its connections with his more carefully established accounts of, for example, capitalism, are not entirely obvious. Perhaps this is one of the reasons for the Postscript's success: presenting no comprehensive, detailed account of the logic it nonetheless seeks to outline, it lends itself to multiple uses, a quality that is as practically valuable as it is theoretically frustrating. Such incompleteness, and the cursory nature of the contrast with disciplinarity, might, of course, lend credence to suspicions about the analytic value of the idea of control, suspicions that quite readily reinforce a view of Deleuze as a philosopher with, on the one hand, a sketchy understanding of history and, on the other, a marked tendency to read other philosophers (including Foucault) very much according to his own interests and proclivities.

Given that Deleuze was a writer whose attention to and analysis of the construction of the 'oeuvre', and the functions played by different kinds of writing, was always carefully nuanced, it is difficult for us to read the cursory, suggestive, quality of the Postscript prima facie as a defect. In this respect it might be worth reviewing, briefly, some aspects of the pragmatic situation of the Postscript before trying to arrive at any conclusions about what Deleuze might have been doing, or trying to do, with it.

The first, and most obvious, point to note is that the 'Postscript on Control Societies' was published first in a relatively popular, if slightly unconventional,

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journal (Butel, who had connections with the La Borde clinic, has a track record of setting up journals that challenge mainstream formats). The text was then republished in *Negotiations*, a collection of interviews spanning the years 1972 to 1990, shortly before Deleuze's last joint writing with Guattari, *What is Philosophy?*. The texts included in *Negotiations* are only a selection of Deleuze's circumstantial texts from this period, so it would be (at least philologically) improper not to acknowledge an editorial decision on Deleuze's part regarding that selection.

We know from other writings of Deleuze's that he was somewhat hostile to the mediatic format of an interview (or other kind of text) in which one 'explains oneself'. The incursion of marketing into publishing, and thence philosophy, had also been an issue with which he had been concerned for some time (not least since his pamphlet critiquing the 'nouveaux philosophes'). *Negotiations* has none of the experimental conversation - in which it is not entirely clear who is speaking when - that Deleuze had previously constructed with Claire Parnet in *Dialogues*, a text which reprises themes that had featured in Deleuze's broadside against the new breed of media 'intellectuals'. Yet the difficult situation which standardised media formats create for establishing the broader presence of the intellectual is not absent from *Negotiations*, even if the collection as a whole is markedly different from the earlier *Dialogues*. Regrettably, the English language translation of the collection *Pourparlers* (as *Negotiations*) in which the Postscript re-appeared omits a brief text signed by Deleuze (as 'G.D.'), which is included both as an exergue and then again as a blurb on the back cover of the book. It is worth citing this text in full - not just because it is missing from the translation but also because of the allusive pointers it offers to what might be called the pragmatics of 'non-communication' that Deleuze engages in vis à vis 'Powers':

> Why gather together the texts of conversations that spread out over nearly twenty years? It can happen that negotiations last for so long that one no longer knows if they are still part of the war or are already part of the peace. It is true that philosophy cannot be separated from an anger against its epoch, but also from a serenity it assures us of. However, philosophy is not a Power. Religions, states, capitalism, science, law, opinion, television are Powers, but not philosophy. Philosophy can have big battles internally (idealism - realism, etc), but these are battles for laughs. Not being a Power, philosophy cannot engage in a battle with Powers. On the other hand, it does carry out a war without battles, a guerrilla war, against them. And it cannot talk with them, it has nothing to say to them, nothing to communicate, it only undertakes negotiations. As powers are not content with being external but also pass into each of us, each one of us finds him or her self in incessant negotiation, and in a guerrilla war with him or her self, thanks to philosophy.

It is worth recalling, secondly, at this point, that the logic of control sketched out in the Postscript is framed in part as a generalised crisis of institutions which implicitly frames much of the broader thematics of *Negotiations* as a whole: from the letter to Michel Cressole, with its barbed and witty analysis of an ex-student's *ressentiment*, connected therein to the problematic character of a leftist milieu that Deleuze found difficult, through the discussions of the cinema and creative operations in the milieu of the 'audio-visuel' that consolidated its industrial position in France in 1970s and 1980s, to presentations such as that on 'mediators', with its discussion of numerous social and cultural institutions (the couple, literature, medicine in relation to the AIDS crisis, and so on). Whilst institutions are not the same thing as the 'Powers' in terms of which Deleuze frames *Negotiations*, there is a much broader consonance here with Deleuze's own general interest in institutions, in the creative possibilities they establish, and the position of intellectuals in relation to them (a point of concern in his 1972 discussion with Foucault), all of which are key to his approach to politics. From an early stage in his career, with an edited collection on *Instincts and Institutions* (1955), the role of the institution played an important part in Deleuze's understanding of politics, as he acknowledges in the discussion with Toni Negri on 'Control and Becoming', referring this in turn to his concern with collective creation. His work with Guattari - although this is less often remarked - continued that early interest. Guattari's practice of institutional analysis, which of course crucially informed *Anti-Oedipus*, can be understood precisely as an institutionally contexted practice of collective creation. The critique developed by Deleuze with Guattari in *Anti-Oedipus* itself had an important link with his broader appraisal of philosophy, tracking the operations of power into the unconscious in ways that resonate with the later criticism of the institution of philosophy apparent in *Dialogues*, under the auspices of the 'abstract code' that regulates its operations. And we wouldn't be mistaken - given that Deleuze had already been concerned with the incursion of the redundancies of signification into publishing - in reading the critique of the book as image of the world, conveyed in the more experimental register of *A Thousand Plateaus* in 1980, as part of this.

However, if the 'crisis of institutions' line gives us one way to thread together some links between the Postscript and broader themes in Deleuze's work, it is perhaps the connection with Foucault, whose work was a more obvious part of the broader calling into question of institutions that marked the 1960s and 1970s, that has proved most important. It is debatable whether or not the idea of control societies would have gained as much traction were it not for its introduction in terms of a contrast with Foucault's disciplinarity. Here once again, some context will be helpful. The explicit contrast between control societies and disciplinary societies is perhaps the most obvious element of the Deleuze-Foucault connection evident in the Postscript and its broader context. Whilst the eighteen-year period of the texts collected in

Negotiations is most obviously linked to Deleuze's collaboration with Guattari, we cannot forget the signal importance of Foucault for Deleuze over this period: their conversation on 'Intellectuals and Power' was published in 1972, and it is difficult not to read many of the concerns signalled earlier in relation to institutions as developing in a crucial relation to Foucault's ideas about the specific intellectual. The extent to which Deleuze's thinking over the period spanned by *Negotiations* is informed by his engagement with Foucault is something that is not readily established by the texts on Foucault included therein, any more than are the points of contention between them (which Deleuze establishes for his part in other pieces of writing). But in his invocations of subjectivation and the theme of the guerrilla combat with the self, as with the idea of friendship as a condition for philosophy and the ongoing question of the relationship between philosophy and the present, both explored in *What Is Philosophy?*, there are some rather obvious pointers towards Deleuze's establishing of a common cause with Foucault. Each of these issues really merits close consideration of its own, of a kind that is not really possible for a journal introduction. Another way to come at the Deleuze-Foucault issue, with more immediate relevance to the pragmatic situation of the Postscript, is presented by the notion of the problem and the practice of problematisation that we find in Foucault.

Reading Foucault's oeuvre as a whole, and doubtless mindful of the difficulty created by its historically constraining status discursive formations for the possibility of effective critique, Deleuze suggests that interviews [entretiens - conversations, the term Deleuze uses for the exergue to *Negotiations*] form a crucial part of Foucault's work because they form part of a process of constructing a problem, of problematisation insofar as it constitutes 'the development of a domain of acts, practices, and thoughts that seem … to pose a problem for politics'.[2] Problematisation, in this respect, presents a challenge to thought, to theory or to philosophy, as much as it does to politics, given the manner in which, as Foucault presents it, it confronts established certainties. Foucauldian problematisation, in some respects, seems analogous to Deleuze's vindication of 'experimentation' in philosophy, in so far as the latter takes place, at least in the account given of it in the chapter on 'Geophilosophy' in *What Is Philosophy?*, in the domain of the actual, 'current' events, what is happening now, rather than in the sedimented strata of history. 'The actual is not what we are but, rather, what we become, what we are in the process of becoming - that is to say, the Other, our becoming-other'.[3]

Deleuze's insistence, in *Foucault*, that his friend's interviews are critical to the process of constructing a problem is particularly useful with regard to understanding the particular status of the Postscript and its relationship to other elements of Deleuze's work. It is hardly surprising that elsewhere in *Negotiations* - specifically, in the conversation on 'Mediators' (also published in *L'Autre journal*, a few years before the Postscript), Deleuze underlines the importance of the category of the problem for politics: 'discovering a problem

2. Michel Foucault, 'Polemics, Politics, and Problematizations' online at http://foucault.info/foucault/interview.html (also in Michel Foucault *Dits et écrits* II 1410-1417).

3. Michel Foucault, *What Is Philosophy? trans. H. Tomlinson and G. Burchill, Verso, London 1994*, p112.

that the right wishes at all costs to hide' (p127). It is in respect of the idea of the problem - and the experimental process of problematisation, which we might understand in relation to the idea of resistance - that the rather tentative and uncertain quality that is found specifically in the last section of the Postscript can be read, with its discussion of what 'sociotechnical studies' should be doing, what research in different institutional fields might question, the situation of the unions, the importance of young people discovering what ends they are being made to serve, and so on. These notes of uncertainty point towards something that is in the process of happening, the stakes of which are not clear, and for which, perhaps, appropriate concepts do not yet exist, especially given that elsewhere (in *What Is Philosophy?*) Deleuze sounds a note of caution about *all* concepts and the possibility that they include a 'grey zone and indiscernibility where for a moment the combatants on the ground are confused' [*What Is Philosophy?* a propos of Heidegger and his relation to Nazism, p109]. However, what really matters here, as Deleuze puts it, 'is that we are at the beginning of something …'.

THE PROBLEM OF PERIODISATION: 'DISCIPLINE', 'SECURITY', 'CONTROL'

So, the question of the extent to which the term 'control societies' should be taken to designate some new historical phase, distinct from the epoch of 'discipline', remains open, dependent as much on interpretations of Foucault's historiography as on an understanding of Deleuze's brief, suggestive essay. In particular, some of Foucault's recently-published lectures sketch out a conceptual distinction between three main modes in which governmental power operates: legal power, disciplinary power and 'security'. It is the latter mode, concerned with the quantification of data, the calculation of probabilities, the anticipation of probable social outcomes (of either ongoing behaviours and trends or potential policy interventions), and the designation of broad continua of acceptable behaviours (rather than binary divisions between the allowed and the prohibited), which is seen as emerging in its fullest form later than the others, in the twentieth century. This latter modality of power in Foucault's schema can usefully be equated with 'control' in Deleuze's. Foucault is clear that, although they emerge and come to prominence at different times, these modulations of power do not represent distinct historical phases in his schema but can be seen to co-exist, to interpenetrate and to mutually modify and reinforce each other. Whether or not the relative prominence of these different modalities at different times offers any basis at all for periodisation is a question on which there is no clear agreement amongst scholars, with contributors to the present volume taking quite different and distinct positions. Some commentators, such as Mark Kelly here, reject any such notion, understanding 'security' and 'control' as essentially modulations and variations on the same fundamental

dynamics of power designated by terms such as 'discipline', and arguing that Foucault's accounts of disciplinary society offer genealogies of the key power mechanisms still shaping contemporary societies. Others have seen these terms as designating some quite specific mechanisms of power and government, which - on some such accounts - assume particular prominence in the epoch of 'post-Fordism'.

Although we fully respect the position of sceptics such as Kelly, for the sake of argument let us explore here briefly the general hypothesis that there have been some shifts in prevalent modalities of power, and that these are closely related to developments in the self-organisation and administration of capitalism. To explain the posited relationship simply: the classic techniques of disciplinary power identified by Foucault in studies such as *Discipline and Punish* can clearly be identified with some of the key organisational techniques which defined Fordism as a novel form of capitalism, at the level both of the factory and of the general social formation. The dispersion of populations into individual units in prison cells and army barracks finds its echo in the break-up of previously team-based industrial production into the discrete tasks of the assembly line. The close monitoring of workers with time-and-motion studies and the centralised, hierarchical control of the factory clearly shares the same logic. In fact these processes are imagined as explicitly panoptical phenomena in the most famous cinematic representation of Fordist production, Charlie Chaplin's *Modern Times*, which features a factory centrally administered and monitored via an imagined form of closed-circuit television (technology which would not become widely available until several decades after the film was produced). On a much larger scale, the Fordist state arguably represented the apogee of disciplinary society. Particularly insofar as that term can be extended to include both the corporatist states of post-New Deal welfare capitalism and the authoritarian, productivist socialist states of the Soviet bloc, the Fordist state's capacity to administer and regulate the whole field of social and productive relations can clearly be understood in these terms.

Conversely, it is easy to see how the logics of 'control' and 'security' can be understood as informing the characteristic tendencies of post-Fordism, as governments have sought to replace direct centralised control of corporations and economic sectors, and direct provision of services, with far more complex networks of regulation and semi-private provision, while corporations have increasingly focused on the complex mapping, differentiation and anticipation of consumer behaviour over any clumsy attempts at market homogenisation or didactic marketing. Another example of the nature of this shift might be the specific ways in which the nature and objectives of state surveillance have shifted in recent times. Here the paradigmatic example is obviously the US National Security Agency's 'PRISM' programme to collect data and metadata relating to electronic and mobile communications between citizens of many countries including the US, brought to light by the actions

of the whistle-blowing IT contractor, Edward Snowden.

PRISM IN THE SOCIETY OF CONTROL

What did we learn from Snowden? We learned that the NSA and allied security agencies have been engaged in a massive programme of 'social mapping', a kind of enormous, state-sponsored network-analysis. We learned that they have planted 'back doors' in commercial encryption software packages. We learned that almost all relevant corporations have colluded with them in these endeavours. What we did *not* learn - let's be clear about it - is that the NSA has been reading all our emails. In fact it is not entirely clear, from the information about the PRISM programme released by Snowden, how interested the security services actually are in the specific *content* of electronic communication, or whether it is entirely on the collection of metadata that their efforts are really focused (as is the case with mobile telecommunications, although in that instance the security services are constrained by legislation inherited from an earlier epoch). We also learned, in passing, that the most popular and widely-distributed open-source encryption software - contrary to popular mythology - has not been cracked by anyone, and that tor connections and bitcoin transactions cannot be easily traced, provided users take the most basic precautions.

The implications here are worth considering. Firstly, the sense that under conditions of heavily saturated digital infrastructural relations, contemporary security operations are only quite tangentially concerned with the actual content of citizens' beliefs and utterances, except under very specific circumstances, is rather striking, and it is instructive to consider what a difference this marks with the concerns of defenders of authority throughout the modern epoch. From the Reformation and Counter-Reformation through to the dying days of Stalinism, state censorship, centralised control of information and the general exercise of disciplinary power were routinely concerned with the imposition of strict norms of belief and behaviour. Even in the liberal Anglo-Saxon world, the expectation of social conformity, and the deference to institutions charged with managing it, was far higher than in much of the capitalist world today, and there is no evidence that the NSA surveillance programme is bent on restoring a new Puritan order. Of course there are limits to how far the security agencies remove themselves from the policing of ideology: particularly in the UK, which has no strong tradition of defending 'free speech', mere expressions of explicit jihadi sentiment are likely to attract the direct attention of the security services. But even in that case, it is worth noting that it is not the heretical nature of the beliefs as such which is under investigation and attack; rather, it is the probable behaviours which they are assumed to predict. 'Terror' and 'terrorism' are not ideologies, but behaviours. It is to the anticipation of behaviours through the mapping of social relations that the NSA programme was devoted, not

to the normalisation of beliefs or even the standardisation of behaviours. On the basis of a turn towards the probabilistic forms of statistical learning characteristic of contemporary network-based machine intelligence, there is an epistemic shift which is registered in the kinds of statistical processing of data on which the new surveillance operates. This is a significant departure from the pattern which typified what Foucault called 'disciplinary' societies.

Of course, it is absolutely clear that the PRISM programme has had the deliberate aim of building the capacity to access and monitor the content of all electronic communications, indiscriminately. Athina Karatzogianni has described this state behaviour as 'quasi-totalitarian', and we find this description quite persuasive on its own terms. But what we really want to draw attention to here is the 'quasi' element of this formulation, and in particular the way in which even the indiscriminate nature of the surveillance in question is arguably quite different from the carefully targeted and individualised nature of traditional disciplinary attention, even in totalitarian regimes. The aim of it seems not so much to impose any kind of conformity on the surveilled population, but rather to prepare the security services for any eventuality, pre-empting any possible emergence.

From this perspective, in fact, the picture emerges of a situation which is quite recognisable to anyone familiar with Deleuze's account of the societies of control. As we have explained, the control-societies hypothesis posits a general shift away from what Foucault calls 'disciplinary' systems of power. This involves a number of changes to the characteristic operations of power. In particular, rather than a normalising imperative which would work to ensure each individual's complicity with a strictly defined set of social and ideological norms, it implies the propagation of a social logic according to which agencies collect specific kinds of information with the aim of adapting their own procedures in anticipation of changes in the behaviour of populations. At the same time such populations are conceived not, as in disciplinary society, as aggregations of individuals to be monitored and administered by a single central authority, but as aggregates of 'dividuals', defined by their complex sets of relations with others. This sounds very much like the project of the NSA detailed in the Snowden files.

Another point worth considering here is the nature of that project itself. It has been a project which depends entirely on its secrecy for its efficacy. It is, in the sense in which the word is normally used in contemporary colloquial English, a project of *surveillance*. It is worth reflecting here that in the translations of Foucault from French into English made in the 1970s, the translation of the French *surveillance* by the English 'surveillance' was always arguably problematic. In most contexts, the preferred translation of *surveillance* into English would be 'supervision', and 'disciplinary' power as conceived by power can clearly be usefully understood as always a form of *supervisory* power. By contrast, although it may not always have done so, in contemporary English the word 'surveillance' almost always carries connotations of subterfuge and

secrecy. Surveillance is assumed to be clandestine. It does not want to be seen. This is clearly entirely different from *surveillance* as described by Foucault. This is significant when we consider the importance of secrecy to the PRISM programme itself. In contemporary English, 'surveillance' is a term much better applied to the rather secretive, pre-emptive yet clandestine forms of operation which PRISM exemplifies, than to the forms of supervisory power which characterised the age of 'discipline', and which, as Foucault showed very clearly, depended for their effectiveness on their visibility, or at least their assumed presence. Surveillance, as we normally understand the word in English, belongs to the world of data-collection and anticipatory power which Foucault designates with the term 'security' and Deleuze with the term 'control'.

CONTROL AND HEGEMONY: THE GRAMSCI/ BURROUGHS CONNECTION

It's worth reflecting a little further here on terminology. On the one hand, it is useful to appreciate that the French word *contrôle*, invariably translated in the case of the Postscript as 'control', would normally be translated by the English 'regulation' almost as often as by 'control'. The phrase 'control societies' can summon up an image for some English readers of a highly directed and centralised power system, and it is important to understand that, if anything, the reverse was clearly Deleuze's intention. It is equally important to note that Deleuze actually took the term 'control' from a short essay by William Burroughs, published in English in an issue of the journal *Semiotext(e)* inspired by Deleuze and Guattari's work.[4] It is quite fascinating to consider some of Burroughs's remarks in that essay.

> Consider a control situation: ten people in a lifeboat, two armed self-appointed leaders force the other eight to do the rowing while they dispose of the food and water, keeping most of it for themselves and doling out only enough to keep the other eight rowing. The two leaders now need to exercise control to maintain an advantageous position which they could not hold without it. Here the method of control is force - the possession of guns. Decontrol would be accomplished by overpowering the leaders and taking their guns. This effected, it would be advantageous to kill them at once. So once embarked on a policy of control, the leaders must continue the policy as a matter of self-preservation. Who, then, needs to control others but those who protect by such control a position of relative advantage? Why do they need to exercise control? Because they would soon lose this position and advantage and in many cases their lives as well, if they relinquished control.
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> Now examine the reasons by which control is exercised in the lifeboat

4. The issue, deriving from a conference three years earlier, has recently been reprinted along with documentation of the conference. See Sylvère Lotringer and David Morris (eds), *Schizo-Culture: The Event, The Book*, Semiotext(e)/MIT Press, Cambridge MA 2014.

> scenario: The two leaders are armed, let's say, with .38 revolvers - twelve shots and eight potential opponents. They can take turns sleeping. However, they must still exercise care not to let the eight rowers know that they intend to kill them when land is sighted. Even in this primitive situation force is supplemented with deception and persuasion. The leaders will disembark at point A, leaving the others sufficient food to reach point B, they explain. They have the compass and they are contributing their navigational skills. In short they will endeavour to convince the others that this is a cooperative enterprise in which they are all working for the same goal. They may also make concessions: increase food and water rations. A concession of course means the retention of control - that is, the disposition of the food and water supplies. By persuasions and by concessions they hope to prevent a concerted attack by the eight rowers.

Many readers of *New Formations* will be struck by a forceful resonance here: *by persuasions and by concessions they hope to prevent a concerted attack* …There is a striking parallel to be drawn here with Gramsci's classic formulation of the nature of social hegemony, whereby 'leading' social groups seek to secure their position and to avoid having to resort to brute force in order to maintain their hegemonic position. Now, this is a particularly interesting observation, to the extent that recent political theory taking direct inspiration from Deleuze and Foucault has tended to assume that 'hegemonic' power relations are a specific function of 'disciplinary' societies.[5] Hegemony is assumed to be a process whereby strict norms are enforced by a centralising and/or 'vanguard' political force, analogous to the centralising and authoritarian tendencies inherent in disciplinary power. By contrast, we might suggest that in fact hegemony is always an inherently complex process, involving partial articulations of demands, coalitions of movements, variable deployment of institutions, temporary stabilisations and concessions. Deleuze and Guattari would perhaps understand this process in terms of hegemonic power's capacity to add and subtract 'axioms' to and from social assemblages.[6] This is consistent both with Gramsci's own formulation of modern politics as a 'war of position', a kind of trench warfare involving perpetually-shifting borders between different camps, and with Laclau and Mouffe's argument that hegemonic relations have become more and more important to a wide range of social and political domains as societies, cultures and polities have become increasingly complex fragmentary and interrelated.[7] From this perspective, far from being a relic of the disciplinary age, the era of hegemonic politics and the age of 'control' are more or less coterminous.

At the same time, one of the potential uses of concepts such as 'control' or 'security' is that they enable us to map an institutional terrain that is the only one upon which any viable progressive politics can actually hope to intervene, considering the likely strategic implications of major historical shifts. In fact this was already Gramsci's overriding objective in sketching out his concepts

5. For example Cesare Casarino and Antonio Negri, *In Praise of the Common*, University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis 2008, p165; Maurizio Lazzarato, Expérimentations Politiques, Éditions Amsterdam, Paris 2009, p69.

6. Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari *A Thousand Plateaus*, trans. Brian Massumi, University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis 1987, pp483-95.

7. See, for example, Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe, *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy*, Verso, London 1985.

and analyses almost a century ago. The war of position is famously contrasted in his writing with the 'war of manoeuvre', the classic revolutionary putsch aimed at seizing a centralised and apparently omnipotent state apparatus. From this perspective, it seems clear enough that in the era of 'control', no politics which simply aims at the benign capture of state power, even in the manner of traditional social democracy, can hope to be effective; only a radical programme of democratic experimentation is likely to prove dynamic enough to contest the concentrations of power which institutions of 'control' work to reinforce and to protect. It is as much as anything in the hope of helping to map this territory that the present volume is conceived.

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In particular, the editors' interview with Robin Murray, one of the pioneering analysts of post-Fordism in the UK, examines the deep imbrication between emergent technological systems and forms of political power, both capitalist and democratic. Andrew Goffey's essay addresses the problem of techno-scientific determinism in such accounts, and points towards the importance of considering the history of engineering, particularly in its complex relations to management and to bureaucracy, for an account of the present. Understanding the incidence of these practices on the environment within which computing emerged helps provide a corrective to idealised readings of the history of digital technology, and points in turn to crucial aspects of the relationship between control and governmentality, relating in particular to the important Deleuzo-Guattarian concept of machinic enslavement. Following on almost directly, Alex Williams's essay considers Deleuze's 'control societies' hypothesis through the philosophy of cybernetics, with reference to Norbert Weiner's theory of control systems in animals and machines. He argues that in maintaining a concept of control as homeostatic feedback modulation, cybernetic readings tend to ignore the constructive, enabling dimension of control. To remedy this, he analyses a recent concept developed in the field of business studies of information technology, which is also discussed in some detail in our interview with Murray: the platform. Extrapolating beyond the existing literature of platform design, he develops a generalised theory of the platform as an alternative model of control, through the concept of generative entrenchment, where enablement is directly correlated with constraint and vice versa. Finally we consider the political implications of such an approach to control.

Yuk Hui's contribution engages with some of the same issues as Williams and Goffey, by examining the role of the concept of 'modulation' in the Postscript. Deleuze characterises the shift from discipline to control in terms of a shift from 'moulding' to 'modulation', that is from a form-imposing mode to a self-regulating mode. The concept of modulation is crucial to Deleuze's reinterpretation of the history of philosophy, where he employs it to turn

against Aristotle's hylomorphism and Kant's transcendental categories, for example. The role of modulation in his thinking in general, and in the Postscript in particular, demonstrates an *aporia* concerning the consistency of this concept: are not societies of control, because they are based on processes of modulation, themselves a realisation of Deleuze's own philosophy? On the other hand there is a need to consider how modulation is realised through digital technologies, which occupy a central role in the Postscript - an issue which has been further taken up by contemporary media theorists. Hui's essay attempts to answer both of these questions by going back to the work of Gilbert Simondon, who was the inspiration for Deleuze's thinking on modulation. His essay attempts to show that modulation can also be understood as a way to resist the tendency of 'disindividuation' in societies of control, and concludes with a concrete and practical example from within the development of alternative social networks.

The politics of social networks is also a concern for Athina Karatzogianni and Martin Gak. Their contribution focuses on digital surveillance ideology by examining specific empirical examples drawn from media reports of the Snowden affair, in order to explore the politics, ethics, values and affects mobilised by governments and corporate elites to justify the collect-it-all practices that are undertaken by the 'ménage à trois' of 'trusted' global networks that dominate this field - corporations, governments and co-opted civil society groups. It charts this political space as a sphere of action emerging against a backdrop of what they call 'quasi-totalitarian' mechanisms, which are fostered by the alignment, collusion and imbrication of the these three trusted networks. This approach accounts for a particular problem in the articulation of digital politics: the process of political disenfranchisement by corporations looking to profit, governments looking to regulate information flows, and coopted groups in civil society looking to appropriate the legitimate concerns of users for their own political and financial subsistence.

Angela Mitropoulos's essay takes the Postscript as a point of departure for a theory of risk analytics, heeding its advice to dispense with registers of fear and hope and to instead focus upon the rough outline of coming forms of power. The illustrative case in her essay is the Australian 'Detention Network', a vast system of migration detention that has been wholly privatised since 1997, and has served as a laboratory for similar systems in other parts of the world. In doing so, it has tested the limits of normative and constructivist theories of risk. Normative theories explain the ubiquity of risk as a consequence of 'globalisation', the rise of techno-scientific rationality, and the decline of 'traditions' (namely, the gendered division of labour and the family upon which industrial production depended); while constructivist approaches either neglect the persistent reconstruction of bounded spaces and time zones to the dynamics of risk and profit, or tend to place the assemblage outside the changing, conflictual, socio-technical history of capitalism. The principal argument in her essay is that contemporary analytics of risk are preoccupied

with integrating uncertainty (or uninsurable risk) into formulations of risk, and that this necessarily gives rise to complex, archipelagic systems of abstract and physical dimension.

In his essay, Will Davies points out that a key feature of 'societies of control' as described by Deleuze is that, unlike societies of discipline, they lack any decisive moments of judgement or evaluation. Individuals live in a condition of 'endless postponement' and constant uncertainty. His essay here explores the contemporary implications of this feature, in the context of ubiquitous digitisation, neoliberalism and the return of the 'social' as a mode of government (as in 'social media', 'social enterprise,' etc). It argues that the state of continuous uncritical flow facilitated by the price system, combined with the uncritical, embodied, knowledge of the entrepreneur, is a key feature of capitalism that is celebrated by neoliberal thinkers. We might therefore view neoliberalism as a celebration of 'control' technologies, and - inversely - view the neoliberal critique of socialism as a critique of 'disciplinary' technologies, as manifest in Hayek's critique of 'intellectuals'. The contemporary re-emergence of the 'social' as a means of government is due to the fact that this new version of the social is amenable to 'control', rather than 'discipline'. This is a new phase of neoliberalism, which highlights the fact that it was only ever contingently dependent on markets, and can be reinvented by expanding the scope of control using (non-market) techniques that were traditionally associated with corporate management. The essay explores the new forms of power inequality that arise once the 'social' is co-opted as a tool of control. Control societies are organised by varying assumptions regarding the individual's capacity to cope with a state of constant, uninterrupted flow. Most individuals require steering in some way, while a small minority of leaders and entrepreneurs can perform the navigation.

By contrast with the foregoing, Mark Kelly's essay critically assesses Deleuze's 'societies of control' thesis in relation to the work of Michel Foucault that provides its ostensible inspiration. Kelly argues, contra Deleuzian readings of Foucault, that contemporary society continues to be a form of the disciplinary-biopolitical society identified by Foucault as having emerged in the late eighteenth century. His argument for this is dual. On the one hand, he points to claims of Deleuze's that have not been borne out by subsequent developments, particularly the claim that disciplinary institutions are breaking down: while some institutions have declined, others (particularly the prison) have massively expanded. On the other hand, he argues that characteristics specifically assigned to societies of control by Deleuze were already part of disciplinary power as conceived by Foucault, noting that Foucault indeed uses the word 'control' as a synonym for discipline. He concludes that, due to his relative economism, Deleuze misidentified real changes associated with the transition from Fordism to post-Fordism as comprising something much more dramatically new at a political level than they really were, and that post-Fordism manifests at most a modification of disciplinary power, rather

than a new technology of power in a Foucauldian sense.

Kevin Jobe's contribution implicitly relates directly to some of Kelly's arguments, concerned as it is with analysing the contradictions of liberal 'police' power, from Hegel's analysis of modern *polizei* to a Foucauldian analysis of the 2011 judicial ruling on the police eviction of protestors from Zucotti Plaza. In his essay, he develops insights from Hegel and Foucault's analysis of the contradictions of liberal police, whereby power in liberal government incorporates an 'internal principle of limitation' that distinguishes it from the unlimited internal objectives of the European police state, while finding itself constantly violating its own internal normative principles. He goes on to situate liberal police within Foucault's history of police and the development of a political economy of the poor. From there he challenges Foucault's own portrayal of liberal police as 'self-limiting' in the 1978-9 lectures, through a detailed examination of 'police' in the life and thought of Benjamin Franklin. Finally, he draws upon this historical background of police to analyse the police power jurisprudence laid out in the 2011 *Waller v. City of New York* ruling on the police eviction of protestors from Zucotti Plaza. Here, he argues that the ruling allows us to see how the discourse of 'police power' claims to uphold a (neo)liberal economic-juridical order, while at the same time functioning as a mechanism of repression and security against the 'dangerous' (democratic) element within the polity.

Josephine Berry develops a powerful analysis informed primarily by the later Foucault in her study of the crisis of neoliberal urbanism and its production of polarised, fragmentary and exclusionary cities, which she explores as an effect of the biopolitical schema of the 'milieu'. This is a schema, Foucault claims, by which the 'pastorate of souls' is converted into the depersonalised collective 'population', while life is elevated and protected as an autonomous value but also degraded as fungible commodity. In this context, Berry interrogates the historical function of aesthetics and its increasingly central role within urbanism and urban government, from modernist architecture's attempts to design the entire 'anthrogeographic' terrain, to community art, to creative regeneration schemes and parks, and to public and site-specific artworks. Her essay explores the parallel between the securitising effects of the urban capitalist milieu, which acts to fix life within normative bandwidths, and the implications of artistic autonomy that strives to return to the everyday, thus fixing all life within the domain of aesthetics. She argues that it is precisely through autonomous art's universal exoneration of life (encapsulated by Joseph Beuy's slogan 'everyone an artist!') that it becomes amenable to the opposite use: as a propaganda tool for gentrification, through which housing can be withdrawn and life rendered naked, exposed to the relentless forces of the market. In this way, the intricate and fundamental relationship between biopolitics and autonomous art is exposed.

Similarly concerned with the biopolitics of public aesthetics, Alison Winch's essay examines the way that digital media harness, mine and

infiltrate social networks and private relationships. Specifically, it looks at the online homosocial groups that primarily target, interpellate and mould a heteronormative demographic of women and girls. Her essay examines digital platforms that are hosted or penetrated by corporations and their brands, such as Dove (owned by Unilever), babycentre.co.uk (owned by Johnson & Johnson) and Mumsnet (independently owned and funded by advertising). These sites can be seen as re-organised disciplinary industries whose instrumental apparatuses are devolved and spread among 'disaggregated sets of mechanisms and processes'. Winch argues that these websites harness the affectivity of female friendship conjoined with what Lauren Berlant terms 'intimate publics' in order to monitor women's sexualities. However, rather than being a top-down form of panoptical governance and discipline, control in these situations is devolved, shared and internalised among modalities of the policing gaze. Moreover, this policing is permeated by market values and the privileging of self-management in service to competitive subjectivities. Bodies are surveyed and controlled by groups of women, or what Winch calls a *gynaeopticon* - a gendered, neoliberal variation on Jeremy Bentham's panopticon - where the many women watch the many women.

In considering the nature of new forms and modes of gender normativity, Winch's essay opens up a crucial area of research which will no doubt warrant considerable further attention in the future. Foucault's work on discipline continues to offer the paradigmatic account of modern normativity in the critical humanities and social sciences today, and remains among the most widely-cited sources in any language. But if certain features of his most influential accounts are no longer fully applicable to contemporary cultures, as some of our contributors clearly believe, then the question of how normativity functions in highly complex, highly differentiated, intensely pluralistic cultures remains a particularly fertile source of potential future research. Important work has already been done, of course, in considering the politics of gender, sexuality and race in the light of these or similar observations and claims.[8] We hope that the present collection will offer resources on which more such research can build, considering in detail and at appropriate levels of abstraction the question of how old and established systems of power interact with new technologies of organisation and communications, and pointing towards new and productive forms of democratic engagement which can challenge them on this altered (or unaltered) terrain.

8. See, for example, the work of Rosi Braidotti, Jasbir Puar, Arun Saldhana, Sanjay Sharma, Claire Colebrook, etc.