

## PERSPECTIVE

# Value and the Unseen Producers: Wages for Housework in the Women's Movement in 1970s Italy and the Prosumers of Digital Capitalism

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**This article examines the problem of value in unpaid labor from the perspective of the domestic labor struggles in the Wages for Housework campaign of the early 1970s in Italy. Some of the history of this movement is recounted in regard to the question of value in capital and, importantly, beyond capital. The issues of value that are raised in this perspective by posing questions of value in domestic labor against those in digital labor are not only the analogical and even the metonymical relations of domestic sphere production to digital labor and the critical discourse on it, but the historical and the foundational quality of the former to the latter, as well. In these models the larger social and cultural traditions within which labor is literally begotten remain, and so does capital's use of them.**

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## EXPLOITATION: FROM DIGITAL, BACK TO DOMESTIC, LABOR

In his article “Labor in Information Capitalism and on the Internet,” Christian Fuchs (2010) explores the notion of class in information capitalism and digital new media technologies (particularly social networks, and by extension, recommendation systems, citation and link-analysis systems, etc.—in other words, those systems that derive cognitive value through user participation in creating content). Value is analyzed as part of this argument.

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Fuchs argues that Marx's notion of surplus value in use value is a product of the difference between the cost of production and the actual laborer's time put into the product, and then this value is added to exchange relationships and tertiary processes of financial investment and wealth creation. Exploitation lies in the extra amounts of value derived from the commodity above the worker's wage, and so is equivalent to the notion of surplus value.

Fuchs (2010) also emphasizes “overexploitation,” particularly in regard to women in the domestic sphere, a term that he then extends to unpaid or very poorly paid labor in the digital economy, largely involving sociocultural production and reproduction. From a digital class of unpaid workers, especially of content creators (often called “prosumers”), Internet companies derive profit by selling access to that content and by sometimes repackaging that content and data mining it. Content creators' knowledge and work seem to constitute an endless source of raw material, and these workers seem to constitute an endless source of unpaid labor. This class, along with others, is what Hardt and Negri (2004) call “the multitude.” While the multitude may include capitalists, the capitalist class, as Fuchs (2010) repeats in various forms, “is the only class that derives economic profit and accumulates capital with the help of the appropriation of the commons” (190).

In the conclusion to Fuchs's (2010) article, the question remains as to what is a “class” in Marxian analysis, rather than being simply a group of people in “nonclass antagonisms” (193). Fuchs argues that the Negrian notion of the multitude “is an expanded Marxist class category that is used to describe the common labor class that produces the commons and is exploited by capital, which appropriates the commons for free and subsumes

it under capital in order to gain profit" (193). The workerist demand for a social wage comes from the acknowledgment that "nobody is unproductive since each human being is producing and reproducing the commons appropriated by capital," so "capital should in return give something back to society in the form of taxes as compensation" (193). Fuchs adds, "This broadening of the notion of class is necessary because the development of capitalism and the productive forces have increased the significance of nonwage workers" (193).

Though earlier in his article Fuchs analytically breaks down different subclasses of the multitude, in the conclusion to his article he returns to this larger category out of theoretical (i.e., the concepts of social and affective capital) and practical (i.e., structural under- and unemployment) necessities. Fuchs (2010) seems to see the class concept of the multitude, just like other potential class categories, as containing "subjectivistic" cultural elements (corresponding to the analyses of "post-Marxism" (e.g., the work of Laclau and Mouffe) and "objective" elements that are brought together in political struggle (Fuchs 2010, 194). The final sentence of Fuchs's article (2010) is: "The exploitation of unpaid knowledge workers, such as Web 2.0 users, has the potential to be channeled into political demands, such as the demand for a wage for all unpaid knowledge workers, which is equivalent to the demand for the introduction of a universal basic income" (194).

What is of interest to us in this present article is Fuchs's (2010) extension of the "wages for housework" (i.e., the domestic labor) discourse of the Italian women of the 1970s to digital labor as forms of social labor and social capital. Hardt's work (1999) earlier showed Hardt's (and to some extent Negri's) debt to this discourse in the form of "affective labor," conceived as a type of social capital. In Marx's *Grundrisse*, as Fuchs notes (2010, 192), social knowledge is seen as some day being a "direct force of production," not just a secondary force.

The notion of social capital in Marx's works was tremendously important in the workerist and then the autonomist reading of Marx in Italy after its first appearances in Italian (Tronti 2008). Workerism (*Operaismo*) premised the primary status of the working class as an independent variable to capital, rather than viewing the working class as a product of capitalism. The "autonomist" movements, which followed workerism in the early 1970s in various manners and groups, attempted to extend the workerist analysis to a more encompassing "class" that spread across multiple anti-capitalist groups. Negri's later concept of the "multitude" may be traced back to this earlier politics and to the appearance of *Autonomia Operaia* out of the ashes of *Potere Operaio*.

Thus, the issues of value that are raised in this perspective by posing questions of value in domestic labor against those in digital labor are not only the analogical and even the metonymical relations of domestic sphere production to digital labor and the critical discourse on it, but the historical and the foundational quality of the former to the latter, as well. From this perspective, we would be vastly reducing the problem of the creation of value in digital culture or digital economy if we were to limit ourselves to these contemporary discourses, so we must not only return to some of the historical foundations of Fuchs's (2010) and Arvidsson and Colleoni's (2012) discourses, but we must go beyond these authors' inscriptions into larger, still relevant, industrial models of labor and, beyond this even, back to domestic spheres of accounting for labor. In these models the larger social and cultural traditions within which labor is literally begotten remain, and so does capital's use of them remain.

The questions that we raise in this article are: How does the notion of a women's "class" arise in the Italian women's movement of the 1970s, and can this be discussed in relation to "digital labor" today? Particularly, what is the relation of one issue of the Italian women's movement of that period, namely, the "domestic labor" or "wages for housework," to digital labor today? Can the notions of identity, struggle, and labor in this movement be expanded to the more general and gender inclusive notion of "social labor" in the sense that Negri's "multitude" and Hardt's "affective labor" seem to want to do, and then to Fuchs's (2010) reading of digital labor? What is the relation of social affect (social relation) to value and from what standpoint within and outside of capital should we pose this question? And perhaps the overarching question this perspective poses is, can we even ask some of these questions without first discussing the foundational labor that domestic labor literally affords any type of industrial or postindustrial production? This last question is what the "wages for housework" campaign primarily posed and still poses for us today.

## WAGES FOR HOUSEWORK IN THE *LOTTA FEMMINISTA*

Some of the Italian feminist or women's movements at the end of the 1960s and 1970s used (although also criticized) traditional Marxist analyses when articulating the struggles of women. The application of Marxist analyses to the conditions of housework or domestic labor was particularly expressed by the Padova women of *Lotta Femminista* in the early 1970s in the form of the Veneto Committee for Wages for Housework. "Housework" or domestic labor was understood as part of the sphere of

reproduction, which included biological reproduction and the social reproduction that women were expected to perform in providing a home for the primary (male) wage earner and in raising socially well-adjusted children for a capitalist society and workforce. This work was done primarily in the home (for no direct wage or “earned” pensions), and secondarily, and often in addition, for low salaries in primary education and health care, and as secretarial work and the like for male bosses. It was not just as undervalued labor that “women’s professions” were paid little, but as Leopoldina Fortunati pointed out in a 1974 article on the March 8, 9, and 10 protests in Mestre (Femminista 1975; Fortunati 1974), free labor and the massive reserve force of women drove down the salaries for all women entering the workforce. The problem was that of an overall *social organization* of work, and how the exploitation of women was foundational for the overall devaluation and exclusion (theoretical and practical) of social labor within the formation and determination of the wage.

The demand for wages for housework united the Veneto women with an international struggle. The “wages for housework” campaign in Italy was related to the work on this issue by the American radical feminist Selma James (who, along with Mariarosa Dalla Costa, coauthored the 1972 book *The Power of Women and the Subversion of the Community*), and to work in other countries on this issue.

The women’s movements of the Italian struggles saw themselves as variously and simultaneously internal and external to the dialectic of workers’ class oppression and its struggles: They constituted a class outside of a male working class—a group by reason of sexual differentiation and a political class by its negation from capital (and as a group subordinated below the working-class men, as well), even as they constituted the foundation upon which capital could exploit the male workers, themselves, and eventually their children. As both internal and external to production as it has traditionally been economically understood, the feminist groups thus varied in their understanding of themselves within Marxist notions of class and whether they would even take up the Marxist analysis (Cunningham 2008; Dalla Costa 2002). Used by the factory workers movement to do secretarial and distribution work, the workerist women were sometimes subject to usury and exploitation by the male members of the exploited labor class, which, as a class, they depended upon for marriage and children, as well as for their livelihood and retirement income. They not only were exploited by capital, but were subject to subservient positions by their dependence upon their husbands and their families. Their protests were sometimes suppressed by other leftist groups dominated by men (Cunningham 2008). Both the Marxist discourse and other left groups

had to be critiqued, and, on the other hand, the workerist women encountered essentialist and liberal politics from national and international feminist movements, whether in solidarity with or completely contrary to their own Marxist analyses. Their revolt, thus, turned not only upon Marxist analytical categories, but upon what now might be seen as the “post-Marxist” categories of gender and sexual identity to various degrees, which then came to modify the Marxist analyses of class, labor, and value.

## VALUE

One of the issues of value that connected domestic labor to the workerist movements was the problem of the nature and value of time in production. Many of the factory workers who came north in the 1960s and later were from the agrarian south, where, naturally, the organization of labor around time took a different form than the labor/leisure divide of the industrial workday and work week. Generally, the social struggles of the 1960s that were centered in the northern factories and took the (male) factory workers as the vanguard gradually changed in the 1970s to encompass larger concerns with the struggles of former agrarian workers from the south, household women, and students (Wright 2002), all of whom shared a different notion of the value of time from that of the standard waged workday. This spread of workerism to a broader social and cultural struggle, *Autonomia*, involved protests against capitalist work and value, but it also expressed issues with the very problem of the rhythms of life within the organization of capital. Thus, the rejection of the wage, and of “work” based on this, constituted a central theme across various left groups.

According to Marxist political economy, however, the analysis of value in capital should not be limited to the exchange of paid work for hours of labor. Rather, value is understood as the result of work in social life-spheres more generally, in what Marx called “social labor” or similar variations of such (Marx 1969). What Marx meant by this term was the total sphere of work that goes into allowing the worker to work for a wage. Such work, and the cooptation of other values than that of profit and the wage, must be comprehended as elements of exploitation and capital’s reduction and calculation of value.

For the feminists of the “wages for housework” campaigns of the early 1970s, family reproduction was an important, if not the most important, element in the creation of value. This element was not simply unseen within capitalism and the traditional Marxist critique and movements, but it was explicitly denied and excluded from capitalist and traditional anticapitalist discourses, and sometimes by elements of the women’s movements, as

well. What “reproduction” meant in this context was not only the production and reproduction of the conditions that supported the (male) wage earner, but also the total physical, cultural, and social upbringing of children so that they might become disciplined and socialized to be obedient workers and citizens within a capitalist organized state. In this way, women were, and continue to be today, a major part of—both in households and in low-pay “women’s labor” jobs (school teachers, school librarians, child care workers, adjunct college and community college faculty, and other “affective laborers”)—a similar army of largely unpaid or low paid agents whose labor is the necessary prior ground for the low or unpaid gift economy of the Internet, as well as for all other sectors of capital, in addition to whatever further roles they play in the past or today in the direct or indirect generation of capital.

The primary points of class antagonism, then, are around the problem of a social wage paid to socially valuable labor within capitalist society as a whole. One sees a particular type and form of “social wage” acknowledged and rewarded in the excess value given to corporate and governmental executives for their social contacts and intellectual heuristics and creativity, but this is denied further down the industrial work scale, and this reward is muted altogether with more broadly social labor that has been able to be relegated as secondary or tertiary to the paid wage or salary. Further, not only tax incentives that are given for investment and other capitalist “creativity” are denied to these latter producers, as well, but also social security benefits beyond a minimum, and in many countries, child care assistance, health insurance, and even schooling dollars. As so often is the case in capital, and particularly in recent neoliberalism, a “social wage” is a reward given to the highest earners and those holding the greatest wealth and denied to others who “earn” less and/or have less wealth. There is the peculiar social wage that is rewarded to the society of the masters of capital, and there is the nonexistent or little-existent social wage begrudgingly shared with the rest of society, upon whose labor and collective wealth the former relies both directly and indirectly.

### NEGRI, THE MULTITUDE, AND SELF-VALORIZATION THROUGH CREATIVE EXPRESSION

Since both Fuchs (2010) and Avridsson and Colleoni’s (2011) articles rely to various degrees upon notions of “self-valorization” and “affective value” that have English language sources in, most famously, the writings of Antonio Negri, let us return to Negri’s works to examine these concepts. Such an analysis may also extend to

“post-Marxist” theoretical positions of asserting minority or “subaltern” identities, as well as a Gramscian concern with engaging cultural ideology as a dominant function of class hegemony and repression.

For Negri, the difference and transition from a political economy of constituted power to constituent power is through the capitalization of a fundamental human ontology of socialized expression, which both constitutes and symbolizes a sense of human life and experiential values that lie outside of capital’s appropriation of these. Capital treats these “other,” surplus, values and their various forms of work as other than its own work (though also often “cherishing” them in a sentimental cultural sphere of “art” or “affect”), but it also relies upon them as foundational for capital’s creativity. This is the contradiction that Negri deconstructs in his article “Value and Affect” (Negri 1999).

Succinctly put, the problem of value (and for Negri, the resultant problem of the nature of political economy) is reducible to the tension between life (“desire”), made up of social affects and intellectual abilities, and capital’s organization of this through its penetration into all types and levels of social being. Foremost for Negri, capital exploits the literal lifetime of the worker, both as direct labor and as a preparation for labor. Through both production and consumption, the life of the being is thought of in terms of being a quantity for further capital production. Through the total subsumption of the life sphere by capital, capital potentially acts against itself by smothering the creative forces that it relies upon. Within the logic of capital, the unmeasurable (*smisurato*) and excessive (*dismisura*) are totalized and measured (*misura*) by capital’s use and exchange values (Negri 2003), based upon capital’s quantitative evaluation of life and work by its own standards. Life itself, as the time of the being for itself and for others, is reconstructed as the time value of capitalist production and exchange. For this very reason, capital must leave external to its own logic a “class” upon which it is dependent for creativity and for needs that exceed its own economy. This “excess” is both the core of resistance to capital and the foundation of capital’s creative and expansive powers. Negri refers to this life force of creativity without fixed commodity and exchange value as “desire” (Negri 2003), presumably following the psychoanalytic term in marking a primary life force (of the Id or *das Es*—“the it”) that capital then subsumes and makes “productive” and “valuable.”

Negri’s (1999) “deconstruction” of capital consists in pointing out that capital both relies upon and negates as value the creative social and cultural powers that lie outside of its productive apparatus, most of all the value of life itself as a source of creativity. As affective and “purposeless” (in the Kantian sense of the aesthetic), this creativity is not generally rewarded by capital to the

extent of its contributions (Negri 1999). For Negri, this “other” realm is the realm of desire, affect, and imagination, and through this there results both capital’s power of innovation and production and, on the other—more “autonomous”—hand, a sociocultural realm of possible “self-valorization” for those involved with value creation beyond capital.

### WORK? CLASS? VALUE?

Significantly, the call for a general wage for women’s domestic labor has not gained much, if any, traction in most countries, and the struggle for “wages for housework” (i.e., a wage for reproductive work) has largely been forgotten. Instead, what has happened is that many more women in “developed” countries are now involved in “double labor.” The central mechanisms of capital—the wage and the total organization of the wage by capital, that is, the conditions of social labor—have expanded to not only include, but to coerce, women into this double labor, while also increasing the pressure upon working-class and white-collar men and women through reduced wages and structural unemployment, underemployment, and the collapse of the welfare state under the pressures of neoliberalism.

The difficulty in achieving this goal for domestic labor should not be a surprise, however. The wages for housework campaign faced and still faces a double hurdle, not only forcing of capital to pay for its unpaid labor, but also being faced with a non-Marxist international women’s movement that was and remains largely directed toward achieving work equality outside of the home.

However, the need was and is still there for a fair domestic or social wage, whether women are working in the home exclusively or not, or whether it is men working in the home, or, as well, either men or women working in other areas of biological and social reproduction where there is insufficient or low pay for very important social work.

Through their political protests, the Veneto women formed a “multitude,” and they sang and protested in speech and writing in a “common name” (to use Negri’s vocabulary) the necessity of a wage for domestic labor—a social wage. But this “common name” wasn’t heard well enough at the time and there were other voices to bury or divert its message. Other routes of addressing the problem would be found across advanced capitalist economies that conformed, extended, and increased the power of capital across the world (e.g., hired immigrant domestic labor, time-saving domestic appliances, transportation devices, in Japan research into robotic domestic labor, flexible work schedules and “virtual” work environments, delayed or canceled child-bearing, and now

simply class marginalization and poverty). Some of these came about through legislative policies, others through “personal choices” in the face of economic reality, others through inventions and public and private investment in such, and some of them through the post-Fordist restructuring of some work organizations. There have been social reorganizations since the protests—more generally, and within the family structure and within sexual relationships—that addressed the problem, while still leaving its central issues not only unresolved, but also intensified.

As usual, as with the depletion and destruction of life on Earth, capital addresses its core problems through the extension of capitalist production, deferring an encounter with the core problems themselves, namely, capital’s refusal to pay for what it depends upon most fully—here, an educated and socialized worker. Indeed, the Internet, as increasingly a site of sociocultural production and of commodity consumption (and where these both are increasingly interrelated), requires these well-educated, “bourgeois” individuals to be raised and acculturated. The Internet, like no other capitalist regime, requires the bourgeois “global” individual. It requires people who are knowledgeable enough and have the time to both consume and produce products for exchange within a computer-mediated environment and it largely requires people to own computers and pay for network infrastructures themselves.

The breakdown of the local “multitude”—of local communities and cultures—in modernity has aided this need to “reconnect” through computer mediation in order to overcome the fragmentation of communities and relationships. In turn—similarly to how the women’s movements and other social movements of the time used journals and other forms to gather a political force together—there is a call that the “multitude” asserts itself as the “prosumers” in the digital economy.

There are several hurdles to the analogy between the women’s movements and the digital “multitude,” however. First, there is a lack of a common identity upon which to build a political group and movement. While we may question the naturalness of the category of “woman” as a fixed gender identity, as a sexuality identity it is more difficult (though not impossible, of course) to do so. Second, the exclusion of women from the “labor market” and their secondary (or tertiary) status as unpaid domestic labor were due to a sexual and gender prejudice, the analogy with which may be more difficult to see in the case of digital labor (unless, perhaps, one sees the prejudice in terms of types of knowledge—i.e., artistic knowledge or humanistic/cultural knowledge, as compared to the more highly rewarded knowledge produced by “the sciences” and proprietary commercial practices).

On the other hand, there was and is a claim with domestic labor, as now with cultural knowledge and artistic expressions, that “everyone can do this” and so it should not be “rewarded” by capital by a wage (even though it is used by capital, and in fact, fundamentally so). Third, despite their theoretical differences, the women’s movements also came together in certain ways and times around specific issues and legislation—abortion or the right to divorce, for example. This coalition can occur with the Internet production and consumption. One thinks of the protests in January 2012 against the U.S. Congress’s Stop Online Piracy Act (SOPA), but in these cases, companies such as Google joined with “the multitude” in opposing this bill.

An interesting example of a corporate recognition of “the multitude,” which is occurring as I write this article, however, is the request by Google and other U.S. Internet companies to the U.S. government that they should be allowed to publicly share more about their participation in secret U.S. government surveillance programs upon Internet and telecommunications traffic. The reason given for this request appears to be (at least as can be garnered from media coverage of the issue) that Google and other companies feel that they may lose the “trust” of their users if they remain bound by the stringent gag orders that accompany U.S. secret Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Court (FISC) orders and National Security Letters. While this is usually seen by the press as a rather typical corporatist concern in regard to consumers, what is more significant for our analysis is the concern that Google and other companies may be affected not by a boycott of consumption, but by a boycott of production.

Just as with the marriage contract as an extension of the labor contract, the producer must trust that they are not being betrayed by the division of labor, not just be aware that they are being exploited. Once exploitation comes to consciousness as betrayal, then the trust that was built on there being some other value that the producer was getting from the relationship, beyond even any small monetary reward, is put into question. Once that occurs, this “other value,” what is seen as a “remainder” or an “affective value”—somehow “inexplicable” outside of the rational cognitive categories of a political economy—becomes a point of contention.

The question then occurs, why is the logic of the (unpaid) producer not seen? What is mystified in this relationship with capital? In the Italian women’s movements’ context of the 1970s, “marriage” and “love” mystified the economic relationship of the woman to the man and to the entire economic process, inclusive of biological, social, and psychological reproduction (Fortunati 1995). In the Internet context it is perhaps the formal, documentary, and algorithmic role that digital software

and indexes perform that is mystified by the user’s affective expressive needs and production and senses of psychological and social identity. Capital cares little whether needs are consumptive or expressive, emotional or cognitive, physical or mental, just as long as money can be made. But the more “primary” or fundamental are the needs, the more profit can be made from them, and perhaps the more easily such needs mystify the means and ways in which capital organizes, exploits, and profits from them through its technological, technical, organizational, and social systems. For example, Facebook mystifies its data collection and parametric reuse of data and data points with “friends,” Google PageRank search rankings mystify the algorithmic transformation of opinion by documentary and computational techniques by simple results said to satisfy “information needs,” and the U.S. National Security Agency mystifies the dragnet collection and indexing of Internet and telecommunication “metadata” by calling such activities “security.” In each case, affective terms mystify instrumental functions and in each case the subjects feels betrayed when they learn that what they took as personal and social value was merely surplus value in capital’s yearning for profits. There are clearly two different, but metonymically overlapping, economies of value functioning in the digital economy: the serving of needs and the construction of those needs out of initial interest and participation.

Why would one willingly exist in an “overexploitative” relationship—that is, in a relationship wherein one is not only exploited as a partner in a working relationship, but as a passionate partner, first of all? Why does one willingly give one’s thoughts to Facebook, which owns the materials that are written on it? Why would one willingly be made into a document—or any object of production—within a relationship that is ultimately based on production and profit making by one of the partners with minimal financial reward to the content producing partner? Sometimes, indeed, there isn’t a choice. One has to eat, even minimally. On the other hand, perhaps more to the point, we all aspire to be “content” (or more precisely, expressions) for some other. We all wish to express our passions and our experiences. Through such activities we extend our lives and so answer the question of what is the meaning of our lives. And this is especially, or perhaps more pressingly, so when our lives are mediated by formal, abstract, systems. Other than the little, if any, wage there is attached to such activities, this is the reason why people produce Internet content, teach adjunct in universities, perform volunteer labor, and sometimes, why they have and educate children, with little, if any, financial reward from these activities. (Even while others profit from them.) Within a society where so many of our affects are mediated through

capital, it isn't surprising, for example, that we embrace, at least for a time, social media platforms that take our affects and derive financial wealth from them. After all, living in capitalism has always involved two forms for value—one for our life and another for the life of capital.

For most people, it is not so much the famous Warholian “15 minutes of fame” that is the issue, but the need to connect to others so as to be a human animal, that is, to be a person. Capital has long ago fragmented us and now gives us this means of reconnecting, but as always, with several extractions of profits and several costs to us.

The lack that is at the heart of the commodity, which mediates us, between each other and even in relation to ourselves, is extended by means of capital's “solution” to this ordinary lack that inhabits capital products. Such needs are treasured by capital—they are an endless source of production and exploitation. As long as value is quantitatively, rather than qualitatively, valued, that is, as long as capital (and, indeed, other productionist values) mediates being itself, then there will always be “alienation” and there will always be a need seeking to overcome it. The transformation of qualitative values into quantitative values contains the lack that is the capitalist value in a certain form of political economy, that is, the commodity. We want more, but we never get what we need, because need itself is not wanting or even wanting more, but rather, it is a symptom for the relationship that already is at the heart of our very way of being as humans, that is, as beings that are always with one another, caring for one another, and impassioned with one another through the selves that we are and become. Our need to find out what the other knows and wants and to express ourselves is ontologically foundational. This is value, generally, and derivative forms of value in capitalism ultimately start and contort this root. Within the still remaining aura of bourgeois morality, the nonwaged producers' “love” or “passion”—toward another person, toward what they are doing—must stand in for the wage. Here, love or passion is explained by the mystification of capitalism as a whole. “Value” is likewise mystified.

Perhaps one of the greatest mystifications that stands in the way of addressing the problem of monetary profit by the giant Internet and communication technologies companies in digital capitalism is the assumption that they who run this sector of the economy know best how to rectify the very problems that they are involved in participating in and producing. So, for example, virtual reality visionary Jaron Lanier (Lanier 2013) calls for the greater micromonetization of cultural production on the Internet, thus extending the monetary market to the vast scale of cultural and artistic production on the Internet. If one accepts this solution, though, one still begs the role of domestic labor and public schools, for example, in social and cultural reproduction, as the prior condition

for the agents of such production. Libertarian desires to roll back capital to small actor “free markets,” whether through technological or political solutions, often come about from frustrations that Marxist-oriented analyses and solutions seem stymied and “out of date,” not least because political powers will not allow them further passage. But whether a “Californian Ideology” (Barbrook 1996) libertarian turn to (micro-) liberal markets will solve neoliberal and corporatist tendencies when they don't address deeper issues at the root of capitalist notions of human economy and value as a whole is, in my view, very problematic.

The notion of a social wage, however, gets to the heart of the matter, namely, that life is not capital, because “affective” acts are not always done directly or even indirectly out of a desire for economic gain within a capitalist economy, though capitalist economy will exploit anything or anyone that it sees as potentially profitable and will restructure all desires into those for economic gain and restructure all beings as resources and agents of and for such. And capital will totally or “over” exploit and set up for structural abuse and self-abuse those who are willing to work for nothing, because for the capitalist class and for capitalist culture there is no such thing as exploitation in markets where a wage is paid, and if one is not paid, then there must be a good reason, because the market it is said—as a “natural” system—is the fair distribution not only of value, but of affect, and it justly services each to their own needs.

It is in regard to this last point that focusing on the domestic sphere and its institutions brings out most the construction of value and class in other capitalist market mediated exchanges, such as Internet and other cultural productions. Arvidsson and Colleoni (2012) are right to point out that value is ultimately derived from affect and that value is due not just to the wage relationship, but to the generalization of this relationship within socially necessary labor. But, in my opinion, they are incorrect in approaching this analysis from spheres mediated by capital and by documentary techniques and technologies, and they are incorrect in generalizing upon the social from these spheres and technologies, rather than seeing such as already exploitative (i.e., abstracting and socially narrowing) spheres. Affect is not simply a means for market value and isn't simply one sphere of human expression that is commoditized along with others, but rather, it is the basis for all human relationships. Such abstractions threaten to negate the ontological priority of the social relationship—of the affective bond—which is fundamental to human ontology. Capitalism relies not only upon the mystification of its productive logic, apparatuses, and governance, but most of all upon the mystification of being and life itself, for its continuation and flourishing. Critique must not be limited to such mystifications, but

must return to the origins of such—for example, to the problems of value in domestic work—in order to more fully understand other events and cases.

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