PART 4: HOW ARE WE NOW?

Retracing my steps, in Part 1 of this report, I outlined the goal of this research and its theoretical and philosophical foundation. In this, I declared that my goal has been to study and explicate *how* individuals are produced as subjects in a rapidly growing sector of labour that I call technology-mediated tertiary labour (TMTL). The goal has therefore been to study an aspect of society that, like society itself, is in motion.

In Part 1 of this report, I also reviewed several predominant theories and proponents of them within what have been called the most expansive and coherent collections of research in the sociology of work – Marxism and feminism (Abbott 1993) and related theoretical positions. From within these bodies of research and theory I identified components from each that would inform the goal of this study. I also identified components from these theoretical collections that would not aid and may even impede the goals of this study. While valuable components were identified in each theory inspected, from this review I concluded that a post-structuralist and Foucaultian orientation would be the most appropriate foundation for this study, though bolstered by those components from other theories that provided analytic purchase or links to other literature in the sociology of work.

In review, with the goal of studying *how* subjects are produced in TMTL, the vision of society forwarded by Marxian-informed studies of labour provides useful concepts, in terms of the overwhelmingly common rationalisation of labour process, and the development and application of tools, rules and technologies to deskill and regulate workers and their options for action (Braverman 1974; Burawoy 1979; Callaghan & Thompson 2001; Cockburn 1983; Edwards 1990; Mulholland 2002; Thompson 1990; Wardell 1999) with the apparent goal of increasing the economy,

calculability, predictability and 'control' over the labour process (Ritzer 2000b).

However, the highly structuralist approach and assumption of universal historical

forces within Marxian theory and its relations produce the appearance of a nearly

inescapable catchment that apprehends and dominates workers by binding them with

capital's power, a power that strips workers of their knowledge and skill,

appropriates it, and then organises that knowledge and skill against them in order to

satiate capital's ever expanding aims. Additionally, Marxian theory allows one to

conclude that capital's power is also mobilised in ways that distract workers from

class consciousness, and turn them into a rabble who seek only individual or selfish

gains, and in so doing fracture their only (in Marxian terms) chance for overcoming

capital – the collective revolt. Instead, by considering power to be the continuous

product of relations between resources within a setting, the analyst is able to identify

and deconstruct these relations, and how they are made to cohere into an apparatus in

which subjects are produced and in which they actively participate so as to contribute

to or alter that production.

That is, within Marxian-informed theory the subject is an individual separated

from one's own knowledge and skill and distracted from aspiring to or achieving

one's 'true' or transcendental subjectivity by capital's strategies and tactics. The

subject is considered to have its own, essential nature—transforming the world

through labour—which is then repressed by capital. Capital's power is power that

prevents the subject from realising one's proper self-fulfilment. Under Marxian

theory, the only way to recover that imputed 'truth' for one's self is to overthrow the

power that oppresses it – to become free of a power which is always considered to be

negative, and coming from 'outside of' the worker's subjectivity. Marxians frame the

subject as always in opposition to power, rather than being constituted through

power, as is the orientation of a Foucaultian viewpoint. It is only by uniting as a class – labour against capital – and rebelling or withholding its effort that labour can overthrow capital's power and return to the theoretically proper relation between self, knowledge and skill. In Marxian theory, the subject has only one tactic for producing change – revolt against the domination of power.

Marxian-informed feminism produces similar visions but, depending upon what variant of feminism one inspects, equates or replaces capital with historical patriarchal forces that direct the actions of individuals so as to maintain historical inequalities by marginalising women in the workplace. 'Women's work' is the gendered product of this action, and serves to separate women from paid labour when such paid labour disadvantages the status or earning power of males in the workplace (Cockburn 1983).

Similarly, accounts of labour and society that utilise a Weberian orientation produce the appearance of an increasingly strong and distributed 'iron cage' of rationality that is simply unstoppable, except in small pockets that will, nonetheless, eventually succumb to its universalising force (Ritzer 2000b; Sennett 1998). The view that an unstoppable rationalisation of labour process will always and inevitably destroy worthwhile components of social life and corrode the very character of individuals in society positions power as always a negative force that leaves us with a flat, grey existence in a flat and grey world without hope for escape (Ritzer 2000b; Sennett 1998).

Each of these orientations relies on the assumed existence of some ineluctable force actualised into power that dominates, and which can only be destroyed by a counter-force posed as the 'truth' – a battle of dualisms that requires the continual discovery of knowledge not influenced by power such that the 'truth' about subjects

can be exposed and the subjects themselves freed from the repressive effects of power. Foucault labelled this viewpoint 'the repressive hypothesis' (Dreyfus & Rabinow 1983c, pp. 126-142; Foucault 1983, 1990a; Ransom 1997, pp. 101-153; Rose, N. 1999c, pp. 217-232) – a domination by power that oppresses 'truth' – and that one must overthrow this oppressive power in order to recover truth and free its subjects. This leads to the enlightenment-influenced 'incitement to discourse' (Foucault 1990a) in which scientific means – presumably independent of power's repressive influence – for producing knowledge about subjects are employed to recover truth and in so doing throw off the tyranny of power's repression.

Ironically, scientific knowledge is found not to be free of power, but rather to manifest it in other ways (Foucault 1990a; Haraway 2004a). That is, the Knowledge produced through scientific means is not such that subjects are 'freed', rather such that a different kind of subject-in-power is produced, and continuously re-produced as new Knowledge and new relations between existing and new Knowledge are produced (Foucault 1988e, 1993, 1995; Foucault, Dreyfus & Rabinow 1983; Haraway 2004a; Smith, D. 1990b, 1999a; Townley 1993, 1994, 1995a, 1996). Subjects are always made in relations that both produce power and are an instrument of power. That is, in a Foucaultian view, subjects *are made in* relations that produce power and, because they are made *in* these relations, subjects are penetrated by power and can never escape it. However, power is conceived of as productive and enabling, and not as something which dominates subjects. It is important to note that this does not appeal to some transcendental notion of power. Rather it appeals to the idea that power is a product of historical relations into which subjects are inserted *and* contextual relations in which subjects actively participate; power is a product of

these relations and does not have an independent or timeless existence. Power is not destructive, it does not take away from the subject. Instead, it produces the subject.

Different from a Marxian-influenced theory base, post-structurally oriented theory and theorists present a critical analysis of the creation of Knowledge and power in society, and in social science itself. This draws attention to particular intentional and narrowly-focused actions that have far reaching and arguably *un*intentional influences and effects on gendered and labouring subjects and subjectivity (Haraway 1990, 2004a; Smith, D. 1977, 1987b, 1990b, 1990c; Townley 1994, 1995b, 1996). From this vision that Knowledge and power are the product of human doings comes the idea that human doings can alter the production of Knowledge and power, and the production of 'truth' about subjects in the relations that produce power. These visions allow the normally marginalised actors to be put in a position such that *their* voices – *their* knowledge, beliefs, values and goals – can be installed into the apparatus through which K/knowledge and power are produced, with the goal of producing a more egalitarian discourse and the potential for power relations that marginalise no one (Foucault 1983, 1988a, 1997a, 2000c, 2000d, 2003; Foucault, Dreyfus & Rabinow 1983; Haraway 1990; Smith, D. 1987a, 1990b; Townley 1994). The goal here is to afford individuals with the ability to alter the apparatus in which Knowledge, power and 'truth' are produced, when relations within such apparatuses become congealed such that asymmetries of power allow domination[285] to occur, rather than to free them from a transcendental and oppressive power, as viewed within Marxian theory.

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[285] As noted above, following Foucault, domination only exists when the subject is totally controlled and has no ability to alter relations that produce power. As has been shown, despite what appears to be a set of very strong controls on workers in TMTL, workers can resist and in so doing exert their own power/knowledge (Foucault 1994b, 2000c, 2000d) in an effort to alter these relations. For Foucault, power, on the other hand, is viewed as a force that actually produces subjects and subjectivity (Foucault 1995, p. 194), and is thus a necessary component in any situation.

> I don't believe there can be a society without relations of power, if you understand them as means by which individuals try to conduct, to determine the behavior of others. The problem is not of trying to [eliminate power] but to give one's self the rules of law, the techniques of management, and also the ethics, the ethos, the practice of self, which would allow these games of power to be played with a minimum of domination. (Foucault 1994b, p. 18)

By placing subjects *inside* the apparatus in which Knowledge and power are produced, subjects are in a position to act within it and to alter the relations that produce Knowledge and power, subjectivity and themselves as subjects (Foucault 1983, 1988a, 1997a, 2000c, 2000d, 2003; Foucault, Dreyfus & Rabinow 1983; Haraway 1990; Smith, D. 1987a, 1990b; Townley 1994). Thus, rather than seeing subjects as outside of power and prevented from realising truth as victims of power's universal and unavoidable force, or, as proposed in the Enlightenment view that subjects are freed through the exercise of independent and 'objective' scientific process and its creation of 'objective' Knowledge,[286] subjects are actually involved *in* the production of power and subjectivity, and themselves as subjects.

Many of these perspectives draw upon the philosophy and critical historical analyses of Michel Foucault, whose work focused upon identifying and describing the means through which individuals are made subjects of Knowledge and the power and truth it produces:

> ...the goal of my work during the last twenty years ... has not been to analyze the phenomenon of power, nor to elaborate the foundations of such an analysis. My objective, instead, has been to create a history of the different modes by which, in our culture, human beings are made subjects ... [and] ... the way a human being turns him- or herself into a subject... (Foucault 1983, p. 208)

These modes include the imputed 'freeing potential' of scientific methods and the Knowledge, power and 'truth' they produce. Rather than seeing them as freeing phenomena, Foucault saw that such processes carry with them all manner of values, beliefs and goals that produce subjects as resources under the aegis of some

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[286] The latter represents a viewpoint which, from the empirical data presented above, is still very much a part of the *discourse of TMTL*.

political goal. While domination by arbitrary forms and norms may be avoided

through this technical and scientific apparatus, new forms of domination can appear

in scientific discourse when subjects are counselled, cajoled and trained to accept its

force as 'truth', and to alter themselves in fulfilment of this scientific 'truth' about

their selves (Foucault 1990a, 1993, 1995; see also, Haraway 2004a; Smith, D. 1990b,

1999a; Townley 1994, 1995a).

Throughout his career, Foucault also worked to identify means through which

individuals could work to free themselves of these dominant scientific discourses of

society – a continuous process of examination, reflection and 'self work' (Foucault

1984b, 1988a, 1994b, 2001). As with the observation that subjects are not 'given' in

some transcendental truth-form and rather that they are always produced in power

relations, this does not indicate that an individual works toward freeing one's self

from power; rather that one can adopt particular technologies of the self through

which new configurations of knowledge and truth about one's self can be produced

and used to alter existing forms or make new forms of power and subjectivity.

In his various studies, Foucault makes it apparent that these different modes

by which individuals are made subjects are influenced by both subtle and gross shifts

in cultural, scientific, political and economic values, methods and beliefs. These

modes involve the application of technologies, tools and rule systems –

prototypically 'scientific' in their form (Foucault 1993, esp. fn. #4) – that literally set

up conditions to manufacture *truths*, which are then proclaimed to both justify and

prove particular actions and, in turn, justify and prove the production of particular

subjects of these truths (Foucault 1981, 1988a, 1988c, 1988d, 1990a, 1990c, 1994a,

1994b, 1994c, 1995). These various modes are also characterised by the creation of

particular kinds of Knowledge about the subject (Foucault 1990c; 1993, esp. fn. #4),

Knowledge that is then used in the development and deployment of strategies, techniques and technologies for the realisation of particular political programs through which the subject is disciplined or governed to behave in particular ways.

However, Foucault also makes it apparent that the forms of Knowledge and power that arise in scientific processes are rarely total, and subjects are rarely dominated by them in the sense that they have no other alternatives (Foucault 1994b). Instead, subjects are brought, through the application of various kinds of governmental practices, to accept and adopt the imputed 'truth' value in the Knowledge and power to which they are subject, and in this acceptance, freely choose to hold themselves to it through the adoption or development of 'technologies of the self' (Dreyfus & Rabinow 1983c; Foucault 1990a). In other words, in the face of imputably 'true' scientific knowledge and an unacknowledged belief in the repressive hypothesis, individuals actually *freely submit* themselves to its imputed objectivity and work on themselves to fulfil what *it* says they are or should be (Rose, N. 1999c).

That said, it is also the case that Foucault describes how individuals can locate or produce 'spaces left free' within stabilised discourse/Knowledge in ways that act to alter the otherwise 'accepted' Knowledge, and even the apparatus through which it is produced (Foucault 1988a, 2000c, 2000d, 2001, 2003; Foucault & Deleuze 1977). This is the Foucaultian frame for resistance – by acting within the discourse so as to redirect its power or truth, or reduce its apparent authority, the subject effectively resists it. Far from simply instantiating local change, such moves can alter the trajectory of history by opening new options and closing off others, such that the dominant discourse is no longer *as* influential in disciplining and/or governing the perceptions, values, actions, etc. of subjects.

Where Marxian approaches envision that truth is *outside of* power, and that the only way to realise truth is to overthrow power, for Foucault truth and power are intimately intertwined in discourse, and influence the production of the subject and subjectivity differently in different places and times (Dreyfus & Rabinow 1983c; Foucault 1980a, 1980c, 1981, 1984b, 1988c, 1988d, 1988e, 1990a, 1993, 1995; Gordon 1980, pp. 234-235). By affecting the apparatuses through which they are formed, different Knowledge, truth and power can come to arise. By affecting Knowledge one affects truth, by affecting truth one affects power, and by affecting power one affects truth – recursive processes for producing continuous change in the present and options for the future, all aimed not at overthrowing power but reshaping it and its effects on subjects and subjectivity.

Thus, by adopting a post-structuralist Foucaultian and feminist perspective, the vision of society that guides this research is one that considers its motion to be motivated by two sets of forces: (a) manifold and heterogeneous forces including historical components, and institutional forms and technologies that produce and 'freeze' Knowledge, power and truth in a given venue and which can be invoked in various ways to influence subjects and subjectivity; and (b) other 'free floating' factors introduced by individuals acting within 'spaces left free'. All of these forces are mobilised by human actors who populate the venue, and who utilise programmatic and institutional technologies and existing resources in local and tactical ways. What is produced is not only a product of what these actors intended, but also of the characteristics of the resources which they mobilise in the course of carrying out their schemes – in constructing or reading a table of productivity or quality statistics, one is mobilising a huge apparatus of the norm, the normal and normativity. The present is thus a product of tactical and intentional actions by many,

sometimes anonymous, individuals who are conjuring goals and means for achieving them within the context of existing conditions, historical knowledge, un-stated values, assumptions about the future and the like, which produce both intentional and unintentional effects and, at any rate, actually latch the actors into previously existing programs. Additionally, whether programmatically intentional or not, these effects become resources for subsequent actions (which produce resources for subsequent actions, and so on) that gradually produce what are recognisable post hoc as 'strategies' that produce subjects and subjectivities. All of these apparatuses and actions involve programs, strategies and technologies (Gordon 1980) that end up having far reaching but unpredictable outcomes 'downstream' – the phenomenon of 'intentional but not subjective' effects.

> Power relations are both intentional and nonsubjective. If in fact they are intelligible, this is not because they are the effect of another instance that "explains" them, but rather because they are imbued, through and through, with calculation: there is no power that is exercised without a series of aims and objectives. But this does not mean that it results from the choice or decision of an individual subject ... the logic is perfectly clear, the aims decipherable, and yet it is often the case that no one is there to have invented them, and few who can be said to have formulated them. (Foucault 1990a, pp. 94-95)

Through these locally intentional acts, there may, of course be intentional outcomes, but also unintentional outcomes that open possibilities and close others for those who inhabit these present and future contexts. All actors have potential impact on these forces – though activation of that potential is neither certain nor predictable in its timing, its empirical details or its effects. The result is a production of subjectivity influenced by the inertia of past ideas and Knowledge, contextually current factors and also by the agonistic actions of individuals in the present, depending on the influence of both historical and current conditions, values, and the like. Power is always present and is influential in producing the subject, but what

forms it takes and what types of subjects it effects remain open to the influence of these myriad, heterogeneous and not always knowable factors.

However, from the description of workers and call centres contained in Chapter 1 of Part 2 of this report, one can easily take away the idea that Marxians are right – that call centres are domineering institutions or iron cages of modernity in which workers are treated as subjects who must be controlled by incessant and close discipline of their every move and thought (Becker 2003; Deetz 1998; Ellul 1971; Fernie & Metcalf 1998; Goffman 1961; McKinlay & Taylor 1998; O'Neill 1986; Taylor, P. & Bain 1999; Weber 2001). A network of technologies, some 'passive' and some 'active', engulf the worker when he or she enters the workplace. These include: architectural enclosing and partitioning of workers; computer and telecommunication networks operating software that paces, directs and observes workers, while at the same time inscribing their activity into databases that afford continuous and automatic examination-as-data-processing and presentation of 'productivity' and 'quality' reports; training that focuses on the 'proper' operation of these softwares; rules, regulations and policies that define the boundaries of what is organisationally appropriate; and enticement to perform in particular ways so as to receive benefits of job advancement or at least job stability – apparatuses for the production of official discourse/Knowledge, power and subjectivity. The imbricated relations of this Knowledge and power serve to *manufacture an objective and scientific reality* – a 'truth' – in which the worker performs, and against which he or she is examined and produced as a subject, and in which he or she is disciplined and governed to act so as to reify that subjectivity. This *manufactured reality* favours the similar construction that this 'truth' is the only proper way of being.

Chapter 2 of Part 2 continues in this same vein, but deconstructs the strategic and technological apparatuses through which organisations render the subject as a responsible actor within their manufactured objectivity. In these apparatuses, 'psy-tactics' are deployed, and the subject is coached, counselled and sometimes harangued into taking responsibility for maintaining oneself according to the objective vision produced by the rules and technologies that comprise the apparatus (McKinlay & Starkey 1998a; Rose, N. 1999c). In combination with the above, this manifests a continual reification of the apparatus through which this occurs – the ongoing production of an appearance of objective reality. The product is a subject who is not only disciplined by the architectural, technical, etc. tools of the organisation, but one whose conduct is conducted by these psy-tactics, and whose subjectivity is effected through them. Additionally, the subject is made responsible for maintaining this manufactured 'truth' about one's self such that, when found in deviation from its forms in scientifically or technically-conducted examinations, he or she can be shown in one's deviation from the 'truth' and made subject to various techniques in order to be brought back into the fold. Together, the disciplinary and governmental power – collectively the bio-political power – manufactured and deployed by the organisation provide evidence of both intentional and emergent goals, programs, technologies and strategies (Gordon 1980) of these call centre organisations.

At the same time, however, the chapters in Part 2 of this report have included footnotes and parenthetical comments alluding to imperfections in the disciplinary and governmental power instantiated by the strategies, technologies and tactics described in those chapters, and draw attention to the workers' occasional distrust of the Knowledge and 'truth' coming with this power. The chapters in Part 2 also begin

to illustrate workers' ability to avoid or deflect Knowledge and 'truth' through their use of 'spaces left free' in which they activate other opportunities at their disposal for producing and activating knowledge and truth about themselves (see also, Barnes 2004; Beirne, Riach & Wilson 2004; Knights & McCabe 1998, 2000; Taylor, P. & Bain 2003). That is, while Part 2 of this report describes and deconstructs the apparatuses through which Knowledge, power and subjectivity are continuously produced and asserted in TMTL, it also forecasts ways and means through which subjects are not *just* subjects *of* the manufactured rationality of organisations and their Knowledge and power, but rather subjects arising in other, personally directed ways as well.

In the face of the apparatus for producing Knowledge and power presented in Part 2 of the report, the chapters in Part 3 expose the fact that, regardless of the manufactured appearance of 'truth' and its associated 'proper' way of being, workers have substantial and obscured authority for thought and action that manifest very different ways of being. That has substantive effects on producing a difference between the lived reality of work, and the observations, abstracted inscriptions, examinations and subjectivity produced by these organisations. This includes actions by agents, team leaders and similar status groups, supervisors and management staff, who, on occasion exploit programs and technologies in the workplace for their own and others' advantage. It is also the case that in doing so, a subject is asserting different knowledge about one's own self, and in ways that take responsibility for maintaining that knowledge of the self.

That is, Part 3 of this report describes forms of resistance and secondary adjustments that arise when workers come face to face with the organisation's programs, technologies and strategies. This 'excessive' thought and action produces

and introduces other knowledge and power into the apparatus, and produces variant 'truths' about the subjects and their subjectivity. This is consistent with the Foucaultian notion that truth is not a universal, and rather is a construct of whatever Knowledge and power arises in a particular setting. When multiple discourses of K/knowledge exist, multiple possibilities for power and subsequently multiple 'truths' come to exist. By introducing other ways to think and act, and other ways to produce knowledge, workers fracture the appearance of objectivity and 'truth' in the organisation's discourse, and introduce the idea that the organisation and themselves as subjects do not *have to be* as they are currently constructed, represented and enacted. Other possibilities for knowing and being are possible.

However, while there are 'spaces left free' in any discourse that permit such moves, these gaps still exist in a web of relations produced by the disciplinary and governmental resources and forces put in place by the organisation. In fact, these spaces would not exist were it not for the web of relations erected in the form of buildings, cubicle walls, starts and stops of work shifts, schedules, computer technologies, telephone technologies, surveillance systems, productivity and quality graphs, rules, training, scripts, counselling from management and peers, and so on.[287] Consequently, even when one resists or is engaging in secondary adjustments within these organisational tactics, strategies and technologies, one can say that the subject in technology-mediated tertiary labour exists and is continuously produced in an agonistic relation *with* these resources, their interrelations and the pull and push felt from them, in addition to those felt from one's life outside of the organisation. While one is not dominated by them, one is never totally free of them either. Indeed, the subject *uses* them in producing alternative forms of knowledge, power and 'truth'

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[287] Even so, if these components were differently arranged or manifested, *other* 'spaces left free' would come to exist. That is, one cannot expect to produce a perfect 'iron cage' of rules, rationalities, etc.

about one's self, and has the ability to freely choose from and activate these alternatives. Power is never avoided; it can only be reconfigured or reoriented.

By characterising the subject as one produced in terms of power arising in an agonistic relation, I, and by their actions the individuals who are contained in these pages, admit to a struggle, but not a struggle that has a goal of breaking free or of overthrowing some universalised Knowledge and power. Instead, it is a struggle, the 'doings of doings' of which effect a redefinition, extension, alteration or bending of the situation and organisation, for producing a new way of knowing and doing, and thus a new 'truth' for being, in the situation, through one's active involvement in it. As described above, these always work with and within relations of power to alter that which the subjects may have come to believe to be so limiting or dominating that they cannot *not* act otherwise. In so doing they are still subjects of power, but not a power that inherently cancels out other possibilities for action.

The various forms of power that arise in these relations are not forms of domination, nor forms that endeavour to 'break free', nor that attempt to 'return' to a path toward some essential human nature that has been repressed by power. Instead, I am indicating that power is something *in which subjects are produced* – not something that cages them and prevents them from becoming.

> We must cease once and for all to describe the effects of power in negative terms: it 'excludes', it 'represses', it 'censors', it 'abstracts', it 'masks', it 'conceals'. In fact, power produces; it produces reality; it produces domains of objects and rituals of truth. (Foucault 1995, p. 194)

This view of power is in direct contradiction to what is asserted by orthodox proponents of labour process theory or other Marxian-oriented perspectives, where power is always a force that oppresses, dominates and impedes individuals from progressing on a path toward eventual perfection (Callaghan & Thompson 2001;

Edwards 1990; Lucio-Martinez & Stewart 1997; Mulholland 2002, 2004; Thompson 1990). However, among some labour process theorists the Foucaultian view of power is also acknowledged as a useful one, especially as it affords a possibility to 'reconstruct' one's self from knowledge and practices with an eye toward a different future, rather than one already written in universalising perspectives of humanity (Ezzy 1997; Knights 1990; Knights & McCabe 2000; Knights & Vurdubakis 1994; Knights & Willmott 1989; Littler 1990; McKinlay & Starkey 1998b; O'Doherty & Willmott 2001; Smith, C. & Thompson 1999, 2004; Taylor, P. & Bain 1999, 2003; Taylor, S. 1998; Thompson 1990; Willmott 1990).

This struggle exists primarily 'on the ground', with others and with the organisation – at the points where Knowledge, power, truth and subjectivity are produced and activated. It also exists in theory that can arise from study of this ground, and how it can relate to other theories used to explain, describe or model social life. In the following sections of this final chapter of the report, I will reflect upon these various sites of analysis and draw the contents of this thesis to a conclusion that answers the question 'how are we, now?' and produces a high-level map of the dispositif – the apparatus – of Knowledge and power in technology-mediated tertiary labour. I will also detail the production of the subject and subjectivity within the dispositif and in its 'spaces left free'. Finally, I will relate this to possible future directions for my own sociological research.

CHAPTER 1. PROGRAMS, TECHNOLOGIES, STRATEGIES & TACTICS

1.   Setting the Scene

During the course of this project, there were many different times I sat outside call centres. Only four times stick in my mind.

One was an unusually warm April day in the fading light in front of the *BigTech* call centre. Only a week later, on an unusually cold and blustery day, I sat in my car in the parking lot outside the hospital in which the *MedAdvise* call centre was located, typing field notes. Another week later, with the resident geese grazing and watching us warily from the yard around the building in which *MHealth* is located, I chatted idly with an agent before saying goodbye. Still later, in June, after a set of follow-up interviews at *DeliveryWorldwide*, I walked to my car in the parking lot, sharing a joke told by an agent behind the building as she took a break to smoke a cigarette.

While I had made arrangements for more telephone interviews with agents in each call centre, each time I felt the same. Bittersweet. I knew the 'intensive data collection' phase of the project – as my supervisor had come to call it – was at an end. I looked at the buildings with nostalgia and with some gladness. Nearly 2000 hours were spent in these buildings and nearly 6000 pages of field notes were typed. Over 130 interviews were completed. Nearly 1000 photographs were taken and nearly two thousand documents were collected. All of these things filled a file cabinet in my office, several gigabytes on my computer hard drive and several CDs. I

wondered each time, 'what have I done?' What am I to make of the past three

years?[288]

During fieldwork I was busy 'getting data' most of the time, but at night (or

early in the day when fieldwork put me in the evening shift) I was also analysing the

data and writing what turned out to be several hundred meandering 'theoretical'

memos and elaborations of what I had seen and heard. Some of this you have

recently read in the report above. While I had lots of *thick description*, what I did not

have at this point was a clear understanding of its interconnections.

For example, a lot of my effort in fieldwork centred on 'the stats' and

productivity and quality evaluations. I reasoned that these must be important, based

simply on the sheer mass of regulation, technology and time, space and energy spent

by agents, supervisors, team leaders and management addressing them! Their efforts

seemed intent on the continual reification of order, structure and function of the call

centre, though filtered through particularly manufacturing-oriented means of

characterising productivity and quality. I puzzled at how agents and management

used the stats as a basis for their statements, support for their actions and reflections

on how things *are* for them and the call centre. The indelible image of rows and rows

of people in cubicles, wearing headphones, staring at computer screens and talking at

disembodied voices remains, though I had become accustomed to its somewhat eerie

character – warehouses filled with cyborg bodies. I smiled at the memory of Bos', an

agent at *BigTech*, voicing a line from the science fiction television show *Star Trek:*

The Next Generation that ironised his own participation. As he put on his headset he

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[288] One year prior to fieldwork was spent preparing materials for my advancement to candidacy for the degree of Ph.D., which were presented and passed in May 2002. Two calendar years were spent in 'intensive fieldwork' activities along with full time work as a faculty in the Instructional & Performance Technology department at Boise State University. Together this accounts for about three calendar years. This, plus the year I spent writing up the project, accounts for over four years in process.

looked at me and said – "[w]e are the Borg, you have been assimilated." It was not long before the continuous surveillance of workers through the ACD and quality monitoring became apparent to me. The continuous banter between agents, and the many short conversations between team leaders, QSSs, experienced nurses, trainers, and agents are also a feature of these workplaces that anyone would notice. It was easy to hear that the majority of such conversations had to do with productivity and quality, in one way or another. From my close proximity to the workers in these four call centres for so many hours, I also became privy to the talk and tactics of management, supervisors, team leaders, QSSs and agents across a wide range of circumstances. It was readily apparent that these individuals are not dopes, but nonetheless they frequently perceived and through their actions reified the 'reality' erected and reinforced by the way workers are physically and electronically separated, observed and recombined in statistical arrays.

Through data collection and data analysis, a constellation of factors, resources and forces influencing the subject and subjectivity had begun to appear. However, I found myself wondering as I started the car and drove away from these places, _how_ is _everything I've heard and seen_ influential in making the subjects and subjectivity in TMTL? How _are_ they now? To provide a conclusion and answer to this question, I will draw together components of the theoretical and empirical chapters above in order to produce a high level, more abstract formulation describing the apparatus through which TMTL and the subjects in it are created, and how they continuously act to reify and modify its components and their selves through various forms of K/knowledge and power, and the ongoing production of 'truth' about themselves.

2.   Programs, Technologies, Strategies: Manufacturing Objectivity, Knowledge, Power & 'Truth'

Gordon (1980) characterises the Foucaultian study of power/knowledge as comprising an analysis of overlapping or interleaving forms with particular identifiable ends, means and trajectory: programs, technologies and strategies. Programs are intentional, discursive schemes for the formation and regulation of a particular kind of social reality that leverages particular Knowledge about subjects (e.g. Bentham's panopticon (Foucault 1995)). Technologies are the techniques by which particular knowledge and assemblages of knowledge come to be apparent – and by which they can be joined into particular programs or strategies. Strategies emerge or become apparent post hoc, upon the 'operationalisation' of programs and technologies:

> What is meant by a strategy of power is the interplay between one or more
> programmes/technologies and an *operational evaluation* in terms of strategy: a logically
> hybrid function which integrates the production of effects with the utilisation of those effects
> [italics mine, DJW] (Gordon 1980, p. 252).

However, strategies are such that they are not always consistent with either intentional programs or intentional discourses of Knowledge. Actors can take up local circumstances in developing and activating what become recognisable as strategies, and in so doing, produce something different from the intentional program as it is 'enforced' within technologies. This is consistent with the notions of resistance and secondary adjustments as described above. This also illustrates that strategies are a region in which innovation is more or less unintentional or unconstrained – constant innovation is called for in the development of technologies

that increase the probability that a particular reality will be achieved, and this may create diversions from the intentional programmatic goal such that technologies of power are shunted, diverted or redirected into things recognisable post hoc as strategies (Gordon 1980, pp. 252-253).

In identifying and analysing programs, strategies and technologies, the goal is not to isolate three independent and distinct components that cause Knowledge and power. Rather, the goal is to identify and inspect the interrelationships of each, the way each relies upon and contributes to the accomplishment of the program, their explicit and implicit aims and 'doings' in a particular venue, and how this conditions possibilities for present and future action. However, this does not always occur as intentional products of the intentional actions of individuals, rather, sometimes as effects that escape the intentions of those individuals – effects that contribute to the production of *how we are now* in a society increasingly characterised by technology-mediation and tertiary labour.

As communicated above, it is the case that while actions of workers in TMTL are disciplined and governed in locally meaningful ways, they also often have far reaching influence that was not foreseen nor necessarily desired by the individual(s) putting them out into the social environment. This points up Foucault's problematising of the Enlightenment vision of science and humanism as a dedicated and teleological journey toward ultimate truth:

> People know what they do; they frequently know why they do what they do; but what they don't know is what what they do does (Foucault, in Dreyfus & Rabinow 1983c, p. 187).

That is, while the thoughts and actions of people are not necessarily ignorant or careless, individuals think and act in ways that intentionally serve particular ends,

but also open possibilities for other happenings, thoughts and actions and, sometimes, close off other possibilities. The latter 'unintentional' doings are at least equally important in the production of social phenomena, subjectivity and society as the former, 'intentional' doings, although, perhaps because of their more or less invisible nature, maybe more so because they are allowed to go in relative obscurity 'underneath' the rhetoric of intentional action, at least until they are clarified by critical analysis.

Power is reflected in practices affected by intentional, tactical and strategic creation and application of Knowledge, and unintentional side effects of decisions made in the past and present – decisions that were/are influenced by the Knowledge, contexts, values and goals available to those committing them, but which also orient to values, beliefs and goals that may be hidden from view as products of previous (intentional and/or unintentional) 'doings'. These decisions and doings also come to be used as resources by subsequent decisions and actions, thus institutionally codifying particular 'strategic' relations that produce subjects and subjectivity. It is common to find these as constellations of factors that produce asymmetries of Knowledge and power in favour of the prevailing ideology or 'ruling relation' – reconstitution or redirection of traces of values from the past that affect possibilities for the present and future (Foucault 1988a, 1988e, 1990a, 1994a; Haraway 1990; Smith, D. 1990d, 1999a). In modern organisations, these are also typically channelled through scientific technologies for dividing, abstractly inscribing and examining the subject in order to produce Knowledge and an organisationally instituted 'truth' about the subject. As illustrated in the previous chapters, this truth can be used as a backdrop against which one can justify the exertion of particular

forces upon the subject, and/or by the subject upon one's self, to maintain that 'truth' and what it makes intentionally or programmatically possible.

Upon inspection one finds that the constellations in which such programs, technologies and recognisable strategies flower and flow do not operate only from the top-down, or only from the bottom-up. Programs, technologies and strategies penetrate all areas of society and its institutions such that power can be produced and activated anywhere through manifold capillary-like links embedded throughout society and its institutions. A reflexive analysis of social activity and its 'doings' is required to identify and detail its workings. By identifying large and small practices in society and its institutions that permit such things to exist, the analyst can make an account of *how things are*, and how Knowledge, power, truth, subjects and subjectivity are *produced*.

That is, these things are activated in the rituals, laws, rules and other practices in a society – they pervade the society's, organisation's or institution's ideas, ideals and activities, and indeed because they are so pervasive, one would have a hard time not finding them when an inspection is performed. Because they are *in* the very laws, rules, practices, etc. comprising the workings of society, exerting them need not be conscious or planned – they are activated, reified and reinforced simply by doing what one *normally does* when following the implicit and explicit rules and resources that are made available and usable in society. Thus, when a critical and reflexive analysis is performed, while power and Knowledge and an imputed 'truth' produced in them may be relatively easy to identify, one may find nobody intentionally inventing or masterminding them. That is, one may find:

> There is a logic to the practices. There is a push towards a strategic objective, but no one is pushing. The objective emerged historically, taking particular forms and encountering specific obstacles, conditions and resistances... The overall effect, however, escaped the actors' intentions. (Dreyfus & Rabinow 1983b, p. 187; see also, Gordon 1980, pp. 250-251)

This does not mean one can assert that all of the ends of business are unintentional. It is certainly the case that a capitalist business aims to make a profit and can be said to intentionally employ strategies and technologies to rationalise the workplace and the work in order to facilitate efficiency, calculability, predictability and control (Braverman 1974; Ritzer 2000b). One cannot say, however, that these objectives are the entirety of what is 'done' in TMTL, and as a result, these intentional programmatic goals do not provide sufficient grounds for determining the 'doings of doings', or the side effects of such intentionality, particularly in the production of subjects and subjectivity. As described above, in accommodating local contexts and contingencies to innovate in order to complete the intentional programmatic goals, technologies may be developed, adopted and deployed, and strategies may become recognisable that have second order effects. One cannot simply read off from the intentional programs common to an institution, or from the anonymous forces imposed through legal, economic, etc. means in order to make conclusions about the doings of these things. Instead, the researcher is faced with a situation where contingent and contextual factors must also be taken into consideration in accounting for and interpreting the constellation of resources that have become interconnected, and in so doing producing an account of the abstract apparatuses that are both produced and invoked, and which come to have what appears to be almost autonomic functioning.

Therefore, in the following sections I will reflect upon the many programs, tactics, technologies and strategies that have been seen to arise and exist in TMTL, including the thoughts and actions immanent in the organisation and in its members, in order to characterise *how* TMTL comes to be and *how subjects are produced* in TMTL.

a.   How are Technology-Mediated Tertiary Labour & its Subjects Created and

Maintained?

As described in the first chapter in Part 2 of this report, TMTL is
characterised by the production of Knowledge and power through a constellation of
technologies and tactics that have intentional programmatic goals, and that also
facilitate other outcomes – both of which make possible *recognisable but not*
necessarily intentional strategies. Thus, the disclosure and elaboration of
technologies, strategies, tactics and programs can be accomplished by disclosing the
way Knowledge and power are produced. The production of Knowledge, power,
truth and the subject can be seen in terms of two things, and the many activities that
manifest them: (a) dividing practices and (b) recombining practices.

The architectural and geographic division of space, the division of time into
shifts, call length, break times, etc. and the division of activity into scripted
sequences, data entry, prosodic voice control or affectation of emotion, etc. are all
examples of how the call centre and call centre agents are divided into components –
systems of differentiation that, as shown, facilitate and even come to 'require' further
degrees of rationalisation (Dreyfus & Rabinow 1983c, p. 222ff). As described in Part
1, Chapter 1, the workspace in call centres is geographically segmented into cubicles;
the cubicle is segmented by organisational rules, and by the computer and phone
systems that both dispense and regulate the flow of work and divide the conduct of
work into discrete data collection and data entry tasks; and the interactive
performance of 'service' is scripted, styled and made measurable against an
organisationally produced standard. The computer system is designed so as to
discipline what the worker can do when actually conducting the work assigned to

him or her. In so doing the worker's body and mind are intentionally constrained in order to facilitate the flow, sequence and form of work as it has been defined by the organisation. Training, job aids, additional computer databases, technical manuals and self-prepared documents further define and discipline the actions of workers in TMTL in the interest of achieving the programmatic goal of efficiently producing a reliable 'product' or delivery of service, and production of data about that product – a modelling of service in the manner of 'mass production'.

Time, space and activity are all divided into segments in the implementation of these strategies, programs and technologies. In doing so, the segments become discretely observable, countable and objectively comparable in producing and activating particular degrees of rationalisation (Dreyfus & Rabinow 1983c, p. 222ff). For example, the activities of all of the agents on Sheila's team at *DeliveryWorldwide* are observed, counted and made comparable through the programming built into the ACD (Figure 1). The result is the continuous and economical production of a set of scientific Knowledge that can be said to produce a 'truth' about each and every subject in its gaze.

As in the incitement to discourse, this production of scientific Knowledge purports to expose truth about subjects against the manufactured 'reality' imposed in the way the workplace and work activities are divided and disciplined – forms that institutionalise the production of 'truth' and subjects. The truths produced through this and other technologies, tactics and strategies are reflected back to call centre agents in various ways in order to put them into relations in which they are disciplined and governed by the organisation and by themselves. All of this instantiates a particular set of technologies that has the programmatic goal of efficiently and reliably achieving particular productivity and quality levels.

Additionally, as documented in Chapter 1 of Part 3 of this report, it also provides fodder for tactics that individuals can invent and use in ways that are not necessarily supportive of the programmatic goals of the organisation.

The table of ACD statistics displayed in Figure 1 also demonstrates that in the dividing practices in TMTL, only particular parts of the activity of agents are observed, counted and made comparable with other agents – parts that the organisation has determined are important to its goals. Additionally, the discrete observations and tabulations that are included in the organisation's gaze over each worker's activity are recombined in ways that make them comparable with each other worker and to some standard set forth by the organisation. For example, the number of calls taken by each agent per day is simply counted (see the left-most column of data shown in Figure 1). Other means for making these parts comparable across agents are also used. For example, the length of calls for each agent is averaged rather than simply tabulated, producing an average call length value (see the second column of data in Figure 1). The result is, however, the same – all agents can now be compared, in not only the number of calls taken but also according to the average length of their calls, etc. The intentional product of this division and now recombination of data into a simple tabular format allows the call centre to both 'see' and represent each individual worker both in terms of each other worker and in terms of organisationally-imposed norms – what Foucault called 'hierarchical observation' and 'normalising judgement' (Foucault 1995, pp. 172ff, 177ff). That is, the ACD statistics displayed in Figure 1 are a model of the call centre's efficient construction of a calculably 'productive' worker/subject.

Thus one program of the organisation is made apparent in the way workers are divided into cubicles, assigned to computer workstations and telephones, and set

to work on computer software. This program instantiates a particular labour process, and fabricates workers into subjects who are simultaneously made and made accessible by selective observation, inscription and examination practices that literally manufacture a reality in which all subjects can be rendered into common, numeric, forms and made comparable to each other, thus rendering them into a homogenous mass. The *intentional* programmatic goal is recognisably similar to that depicted by Ritzer – efficiency, calculability, predictability and control of the organisation and its subjects (Ritzer 2000b).

Another effect is that the very form of these data also represents a form of power that produces 'truth' about each subject – how he or she rates or ranks against each other worker and against the norms imposed by the organisation. Subjects are literally set into a relation of physical forces upon their bodies and minds (collectively, their souls, as indicated by Rose (1999c)) in order to be produced as rankable and rateable artefacts. The fact that these people are set into relations such that they can be seen to vary according to common scales of measurement makes them amenable to other forces aimed at making them *more productive, more calculable, more predictable and more controllable* – tactics that, as has been shown, typically act to put the subject face to face with this 'truth' in order to evidence the subject's deviance from that truth and justify further action upon the subject (or by the subject upon one's self). All of this arises from the way the workplace and labour process are divided and reorganised, and the way subjects' actions are set into these divisions and reorganisations to make them observable, inscribable and examinable in particular ways.

Similar means and technologies are employed in producing hierarchical observations and normalising judgements of a 'quality' worker/subject. However,

rather than being automatically accomplished through the division of workers into

cubicles, and through phone and computer connections making each agent

individually 'visible' by the ACD, a manual process must be accomplished in

fulfilling the surveillance and rating of workers according to categories defined by

the organisation to comprise 'good quality' (Figure 2) labelled 'A', 'B' and 'C' are

three different sets of criteria defining the 'proper' scripting, improper contents and

ratings for quality in the *DeliveryWorldwide* call centre (similar rubrics exist for each

other call centre included in this report). The component of the form (Figure 2)

labelled 'D' is a technical means for recombining these discrete components into a

form that makes each agent's 'quality' efficiently comparable with that of each other

agent.

The result of the overall process of dividing and recombining is demonstrated

by the way *DeliveryWorldwide* makes each agent's combined productivity and

quality ratings visible against organisationally imposed norms or values (Figure 3) –

a simple form that both evidences the manufactured reality of the call centre, and

puts each subject face to face with a manufactured 'truth' about one's self established

by comparison to a set of organisationally imposed norms.[289]

The programmatic product of these practices is a particular subject of TMTL

– a subject whose behaviours and actions are selectively disciplined and governed,

made observable and inscribable into forms that permit them to be efficiently and

calculably recombined into an abstracted representation of each individual, and

ultimately, the recombination of data collected from all individuals into a simple

two-dimensional array that represents each subject as a point on a graph – a product

of a series of technical and scientific operations, each of which successively divides

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[289] As indicated in the preceding chapters, similar technologies and strategies are employed in the other call centres participating in this research project.

workers and the work into pieces and selectively makes some of these pieces visible, countable and recombinable (while obscuring others) such that a particular *way of being* and *seeing* the subject in TMTL is manufactured.

At the same time, by putting the subject face to face with this 'truth', the official Knowledge of one's self, this simple form of representing the subject is presented to workers as a gaze penetrating directly into the minute choices, behaviours and actions of each individual worker: how 'friendly' one sounds, how many times one was three minutes late for one's shift, how one makes use of one's allocation of 'unavailable' time, one's logging into an unused ACD mode – complete with the strategically implicit assumption that (for example) missing one's shift start or using more unavailable time than allotted are interpreted as *intentional acts of insubordination*. Strategically blending the 'objective' with the 'subjective' measures in this way, not only is the 'truth' about a subject produced from explicit details of the data selectively collected and compiled, but also inductively by what the data are said by the organisation to symbolise, and what *responsibility* the subject has for those things. That is, *the organisation can be seen to strategically appropriate and demonstrate the means to manufacture both the 'reality' of TMTL, objective truth about each subject, and also the meaning of these data and how they assemble into an official subjectivity*.

As described above, this can be perceived by subjects in the form of a continuous 'threat' of being found, of being 'seen' (as noted above, both physically and indirectly through the statistical representations of the self) in ways that might produce the organisationally-defined appearance of deviance and with it a fear of retribution – a 'panoptic' fear that acts within the worker to continuously discipline himself or herself to the rules, to the organisational 'truth' about his or her own self.

By putting the subject face to face with this 'truth' about one's self, the organisation instantiates what becomes recognisable as a strategy to produce compliant and docile, if fearful, subjects.

But this is not the entirety of what the organisation 'does' in its production of TMTL and its subjects. As described in the second chapter in Part 2 of this report, the organisation also makes considerable use of psychological tactics and strategies to shape and condition the perspectives of agents. Interviews and other means for assessing candidates for work are used to identify particular individuals for work in call centres – those who have knowledge, skills and attitudes that are consistent with the aims and subjectivity the organisation wants to propagate and maintain. In fact, with consideration of the organisation's willingness to disassemble and reassemble its workers through the tactics described above, it is sensible to consider that the organisation is not so much choosing *individuals* as it is choosing *components* that it is willing to accept, to work on and work with in further shaping and manufacturing the subject in TMTL.

Once the organisation begins to produce the subject in its tables and graphs (Figure 1 - Figure 3) – in forms that homogenise the workers and render them in relief against the standards and statistical expectations defined by the organisation – its members are now seen to strategically develop and apply psychological practices by putting the subject face-to-face with the manufactured 'truth' about one's self. These practices are aimed at: (a) closing gaps between the individual subject's knowledge of one's self and the organisation's official Knowledge of him or her, and eventually (b) instilling the company's values into the worker so that he or she observes and patrols his or her self in the statistical displays of productivity and quality, and develops or adopts technologies of the self to alter one's own conduct so

as to continuously, and very economically, be in alignment with the organisation's manufactured subject and subjectivity. Counselling, coaching and occasional haranguing of workers to 'see themselves in the stats', to separate their emotions from their conduct at work, to affect a company-defined 'friendly' demeanour while talking with customers, and the like, are all tactics and technologies aimed at the strategic manufacturing of subjects who are continuously docile and self-modifying in the face of whatever is displayed in their statistical representations of productivity and quality – subjects who readily 'shadowbox with data' presented in the statistical 'truth' about their selves in order to affect their rating, ranking or other forms of value imposed by the organisation. This is similar to what Rose describes in terms of 'psy-power' in various zones of society in the 20th century (Rose, N. 1999c, p. 251ff). What differs here is that evidence of their 'truth' is not embedded in subjects as if by psychoanalytic, advertising or other means that are accessible to psychological interrogation, but outside of the self in the form of statistical graphs that represent an imputably unquestionable, objective and scientific truth about the self – the subject *is what the stats say one is* and he or she is expected to work on his or her self to *fix one's self* (if one's statistical self is found wanting against the organisation's desires) or continue being what the organisation wants. This erects a more direct and imputably objective truth, similar in some ways to that manufactured in secondary labour where one's self is measured by one's productivity, but one in which the subject is made responsible and accountable in ways that penetrate deeply into the many decisions and actions made every day, and that even find the subject accountable and responsible for things that are uncontrollable – weather, traffic conditions, poorly functioning equipment, etc. Tactics that connect governmental forces with the disciplinary forms of power noted above.

In combination, the disciplinary and governmental practices instantiate technologies, tactics and strategies for efficiently producing Knowledge and 'truth' about the work and workers, while at the same time producing relations of physical and affective force that manifest power to act upon the minds and actions of workers to inculcate that Knowledge and 'truth' – recursively enforcing its own efficiency through the production of an 'objective' reality that makes apparent what is most convenient for making what the organisation wants to make and obscures other possibilities. On the surface, one strategic doing of all of these is the design and manufacturing of an ecology, an automatic and self-regulating system within which its Knowledge appears self-evidently 'true'; an apparatus for economically doing and managing 'service' and for producing a self-policing and self-modifying subject who is made up of those factors that the organisation has deigned worthy. This is an ongoing strategic doing of the program of TMTL – to: (a) manufacture a reality in which (b) each individual can be separated from whatever else one might be and (c) manufactured or 'measured into existence' such that (d) each becomes susceptible to techniques for comparison against organisationally-produced standards that assert a particular 'truth' about one's self; in this, (e) the individual is made susceptible to techniques for making one's self responsible for one's deviation or compliance, and if 'necessary' (f) refashioning his or her behaviour and thoughts such that they become consistent with the imputed 'truth' of the manufactured reality of the organisation. That is, one strategic doing of TMTL is to set up conditions to literally manufacture subjects who reify its own manufactured reality and maintain its appearance as objective and scientific.

Additional support is provided 'internal' to these organisations by the imbrication of common methods. Following from the way TMTL is divided and

reorganised, and the homogenising scientific forms in which 'truth' about the subject is displayed – lists, arrays, graphs of numeric data – each subject (or, more properly, each subject's 'data') is rendered auditable using scientific and technical tools. The audit is, like the technology-mediated surveillance of subjects in TMTL, something that does not require line-of-sight visibility. Instead, it is accomplished *on the data*, and as a result can be accomplished anywhere at any time, as demonstrated by *DeliveryWorldwide*'s six-month evaluation of agents, *BigTech*'s yearly performance reviews and *MedAdvise*'s occasional 'chart reviews'. The result is an official and 'neutral' scientific test that vets the efficacy of the organisation's apparatus all the while it reifies it (Hacking 1982; Hines 1988; Hoskin & Macve 1994; Miller, P. 1994; Miller, P. & O'Leary 1987; Morgan, G. 1988; Power 1994; Townley 1996, 2001). This 'neutral' and scientific test can be said to be efficient, calculable, predictable and controllable simply because it is (ideally) made to follow particular well-defined rules and procedures (Mautz & Sharaf 1961; Miller, P. 1994; Power 1994).

This makes recognisable a goal to manufacture and reinforce a particular social reality that satisfies the organisation's aims. This is not altogether new in its forms or its norms. Forms of geographic division and of rationalising the labour process are nothing new in business and industry (Braverman 1974; Smith, A. 1991 (orig. 1776); Taylor, F. 1947). Similarly, attempts to render the subject into calculable forms are not a new trick, and fold into the historical rationalisation of labour process (Hoskin & Macve 1994; Taylor, F. 1947). Attempts to divide the subject into discrete and manageable components, and the development and application of psychologically-informed tactics and strategies to act upon the subject's mind and body are now commonplace (Rose, N. 1999c, 1999d). With this

in mind, one can ask, what have we with TMTL? What is new about it and what about it is particularly 'dangerous' and requiring our intervention (Foucault, Dreyfus & Rabinow 1983, p. 231)?

What we have appears as an amplification and a further embedding of tactics, technologies and strategies faintly or starkly recognisable from historical forms into contemporary apparatuses that continuously produce a particular Knowledge and 'truth' about subjects, automatically apply that Knowledge to the discipline and governance of minds and bodies, and continuously obscure their own operation. With this hidden operation of the production of Knowledge and power, what we have is an apparatus for producing 'truth' about individuals as members of a particular subset of society. The 'truth' about individuals, and mechanisms for converting 'bad' agents into 'good' agents – or providing evidence and justification for removing them as rejects – are produced within what appears as a durable, self-contained, scientific and highly objective apparatus, an apparatus that appears to leave no room for questioning because it has been engineered to selectively remove from consideration any factor that does not contribute to its program. Through this report, what has become visible in the apparatus of TMTL are values, beliefs, goals, facts, etc. that produce a closely coupled and simultaneous manufacturing of 'objective' reality – the physical environment – and tactics of observation, abstracted inscription, examination, etc. that rate, rank and otherwise measure people against the manufactured, embedded and obscured ideals, values, goals, etc. of the coordinated manufactured environment; an apparatus that attaches the subject to a set of external devices for manufacturing or 'discovering' the 'truth' about his or her self, and that provides various forms of pressure upon the subject to accept this 'truth' and work on his or her self to meet the organisation's goals.

Together these comprise ways of 'making up people' (Hacking 1986a), of producing what appears to be an independent, autonomous and transcendent 'truth' that can be manipulated to 'objectivise' and justify the aims of business, industry and government (Rose, N. 1999c, 1999d). That is, TMTL manifests a location in which the 'truth' about people is manufactured in a constellation of geographic, technical, rational devices, and appropriated, captured and frozen in them, while the individual knowledge and subjectivity of actual subjects in the situation have little, if any, official place except where they may be reconstituted into an institutionally-useful form. *TMTL appears as an imbrication of Knowledge, power and 'truth' production that imposes, if subjects allow it, a truth about themselves that aims to replace or displace their own knowledge and their own subjectivity with manufactured and scientific forms, which they are then made responsible for responding to in order to 'fix' themselves so as to maintain this truth* efficiently, calculably, efficiently and controllably (Ritzer 2000b). It is worth reiterating, however, that, unlike the somewhat fatalist vision of Ritzer and others who adopt a similar view, this is not evidence of a power that erects an impenetrable and permanent iron cage of rationality that forever separates us from our transcendental selves (Ritzer 2000b; Sennett 1998). Instead, this only clarifies the organisational program and its obscured strategies (Gordon 1980, pp. 236-239).

b.   *Strategic Production of Subjectivity & Resistance:*
Shadowboxing with Data

While the technologies, programs and strategies that together make up official organisational Knowledge and power can be mobilised in order to economically affect the subject's knowledge of the self, the chapters in Part 3 of this

report make it clear that one does not have to submit to the subjectivity handed down by the organisation – though this appears to be the case much of the time. Such resistance and secondary adjustments are possible because, within any discourse, in any interlinked body of Knowledge and possibilities for action, there are always spaces that can be taken up in tactics that do not necessarily facilitate the realisation of the organisation's program. 'Spaces left free' are regions within a discourse that are not totally controlled by its norms and forms of Knowledge, power and 'truth' (de Certeau 1985; Foucault 1972, pp. 72, 200, 205, 209ff; 1990a, pp. 98-102; Michael & Still 1992). Thus, 'spaces left free' are regions of a discourse in which its inhabitants are able to influence their own subjectification and subjectivity (Foucault 1996a; Knights & McCabe 1998; Sturdy & Fineman 2001), even while being produced 'inside' the power of a discourse(de Certeau 1985; Foucault 1972, pp. 72, 200, 205, 209ff; 1990a, pp. 98-102; Michael & Still 1992). That is, the subject is always involved in agonistic relations through which both power and his or her self are actively produced – technologies of power and strategies of power are not necessarily oppressive forces upon the subject, separating the subject from his or her own innate, transcendental self; rather power is a product of both historical and contextual factors that are brought together in a particular setting and in which the subject is produced.

As documented above, the supervisors at *DeliveryWorldwide* and *BigTech* were shown to actively introduce their subjective judgement of workers into the process of agent evaluation – an observation that affects the efficacy of the 'pure' apparatus' ability to manufacture and defend its 'truth'. But in both cases, this is obscured by the technology used to produce the ratings. For *DeliveryWorldwide*, the technology is a software program that allows the supervisor to introduce minor or

gross alterations that are covered over by the production of statistics; for *BigTech* the technology involves a practice of force fitting evaluations to standard deviations in the hypothetical 'normal distribution'. Additionally, while at one time the use of 'online adjustments' to one's schedule at *BigTech* was used as a means to determine an agent's ability to manage his or her own work time, it has been covertly changed so that it now can be used within an audit process as a measure of deviation from standards – another way of 'objectively' contributing to a manufacturing subjectivity. As described above, even though the overall processes/technologies of agent evaluation at *BigTech* have remained the same, the goals of the organisation have changed from employee development to cost reduction and outsourcing. The agent evaluation process has been strategically altered to manufacture evidence that effectively renders a 'truth' about agents that can justify their assignment to the list of employees that will lose their jobs during the next 'WFR' (workforce reduction). That is, the organisation's technologies may stay the same while the strategic meaning of the products of those apparatuses may be made to vary – *there is no single truth, even within the same apparatus*.

This points to a strategic deployment of management authority that does not operate following the cold, rational, process implied by the superficial appearance of the disciplinary parts of the organisation – things characteristic of the prototypical 'modern organisation' (Hoskin & Macve 1994; Savage 1998). Rather it operates opportunistically, and in response to changes both within each individual and elsewhere in the organisation. The Knowledge, power and 'truth' arising in these various technologies, strategies and tactics effectively change with the prevailing conditions and forces felt by supervisors – outcomes that are genealogical because they are influenced by local and contextual events rather than *purely* by structural

relations. The original program of efficiency appears to remain, but strategic relations arise and afford management the ability to alter the way data are produced and interpreted so as to shift Knowledge, power and 'truth' to produce different things. Rather than producing evidence of individuals who require more training, or those who are worthy of pay raises, now the organisation manufactures evidence of one's continued employability or 'destiny' for WFR.

The point here is that the organisation's apparatus affords the strategic production and deployment of excess authority by supervisors and management, while at the same time allowing this authority to be hidden in the apparatuses that produce the official archive of data from which Knowledge, power and 'truth' about subjects are produced and exercised. On the surface, the operation of the apparatus appears prototypical of the bureaucratic modern organisation, but when contingent authorities are discovered and factored in, a new strategy is found to arise instead. This strategy permits management a measure of authority that goes undocumented and unexposed, and permits them to render into 'objective numbers' an employee rating that hides a limited arbitrary authority of supervisors and managers. The scientific apparatus remains intact and its data are continuously collected, but by strategically varying the rules for interpreting the data, different subjects and subjectivity are continuously possible at the whim of the organisation.

Management demonstrates a strategy to operate within 'spaces left free' in its own scientific discourse in order to manipulate appearances and manufacture evidence that supports and justifies its decisions, *whatever they may be and whenever they may arise*. The 'truth' is not inherent to the apparatus or its data. 'Truth' is a product that varies with other attributes of the apparatus, and the organisation continuously demonstrates the use of these spaces for its own ends.

With this manipulation of appearances in scattered places – obscured in numbers the instant it is performed – the overall efficacy of the data-driven apparatus is apparently never affected so much as to bring it to ruin.[290]   In activating the potential immanent in these spaces left free, management sets up the conditions that permit it to act in excess of the rational program to both support and justify shifting aims. While these conditions make *multiple outcomes possible*, only one of those outcomes is actually manifested following *local contingent forces*. This is a genealogical doing of doings – something that is produced in the locally contingent confluence of factors and not solely controlled by the cold rationality characteristic of the manufactured reality.

The authority to introduce changes into the apparatus while not appearing to change the apparatus itself is not reserved for management, however. Workers also have the power to locate and create 'spaces left free' within the disciplinary and governmental Knowledge and power that comprises the 'truth' production apparatus of these organisations. Workers too have the ability and knowledge to draw upon the inherent gaps in the panoptic technologies and governmental tactics in order to produce the appearance of compliance and conformity, all the while they may be busy in other ways – they can tinker with the organisation's Knowledge and with the imputed 'truth' produced in it. This, as above, provides workers a measure of freedom and authority that goes undocumented and unexposed by deflecting or redirecting the 'eye of power' (Foucault, Barou & Perrot 1980) manifested in the functioning of the surveillance, inscription and examination systems. In this way, they can be seen to strategically appropriate part of the apparatus as an accomplice that both hides their actions and presents a façade to the organisation with which *it* is

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[290] Or perhaps the apparatus is so dependent upon the unofficially authorised knowledge of management that its modernity is only a façade. For more on this possibility, see Latour (1993).

made to 'shadowbox'. The organisation does not, in fact, Know what it thinks it Knows, and the manufactured 'truth' about subjects is not what the organisation thinks it is. Rather, it can also be a composite of the actions of agents in excess of the disciplinary and governmental power of the organisation, and that disciplinary and governmental power itself. That said, it is important to note that the subject has not freed one's self of power. Rather the subject has *altered the constitution of* Knowledge and power so that it is more accommodating of one's self and one's subjectivity. He or she has done so by exercising knowledge of the self and of the system in ways that are unconstrained by the system itself. In so doing, he or she is demonstrating a responsibility to the maintenance of that knowledge of self, independent of or in addition to the knowledge of one's self provided by the organisation's apparatus. This responsibility to the 'truth' – whether it be the 'truth' provided by the organisation or by the self – is part of modern business and modern society (Rose, N. 1999c) and this responsibility is made evident when an individual is caught in breach of the rules that in part comprise the production of organisational 'truth'. In such a situation, the individual is held responsible for his or her infraction – one is always responsible for one's actions in the face of 'truth', regardless of how pliable 'truth' may be.

Additionally and retrospectively, the knowledge of those responsible for conducting quality evaluations can be seen, similar to that of managers, to be strategically smuggled into the disciplinary technology of examination rubrics, such that they can selectively inscribe data into the apparatus while at the same time allowing other data to be ignored or left unseen by the apparatus. In so doing, they give themselves the authority to activate their unofficial knowledge and to inscribe it into the Knowledge, power and 'truth' producing apparatus of the organisation. As

above, it appears that the overall efficacy of the data-driven apparatus is never affected so much as to bring it to ruin.[291, 292] These examples demonstrate that within the disciplinary and governmental apparatuses, the organisation has also unknowingly and unintentionally set up conditions that permit workers and management to act excessively and at the same time obscure their actions from the gaze of others. The result is the production of 'altered' forms of Knowledge, power and 'truth' – forms that are produced by the agonistic actions of individuals, and not by the universal power of structures and timeless 'truth'. As above, however, one cannot say that the subject has freed one's self of the effects of power. Instead, by acting *within* the apparatus through which it is created, power, Knowledge and 'truth' may be altered in ways that are seen to better accommodate the values, beliefs and goals of the individual, or at the least, that include occasional alterations to the rules in order to accommodate local knowledge of its members.

Such actions are not totally invisible, and when these resistance and secondary adjustment practices or other failures of the programme are caught, the program is not collapsed, but rather reinforced and set running anew. For example, in the *BigTech* call centre, apprehending an agent 'flashing' the ACD does not collapse the apparatus, it only introduces a counter force against which QSSs amplify their efforts to discipline and govern the workers to comply with the system (though perhaps only temporarily due to other forces in the organisation). This is analogous to Gordon's example that a failure of prisons to fulfil their programme of reform is actually an impetus to continuously reform with the original vision of the prison in mind. Techniques and discourses are continuously developed and implemented in

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[291] Of course, it is not the case that the resistance and secondary adjustment practices I am alluding to here (see the chapters in Part 3, above) are performed by everyone, all the time. In fact, it is arguably the case that they do not happen most of the time.
[292] See footnote #290.

order to try again and again to achieve the original goal (Gordon 1980, p. 250), despite its inherent and ever-present gaps. The upshot is that power, Knowledge and 'truth' are continuously adapted, exercised, amplified, altered, etc. by actors in the context in which they arise in response to local contingencies. Nobody is *caused* to act based solely upon programmatic, technical or structural factors, and all actors are 'free' in ways that allow them to exercise their own knowledge and action (and they are always responsible for those actions). However, actors are never free of power. They always participate in relations of power, though they may, through their participation, alter its form and its doings.

All of this is made possible by the programs and technologies employed to increase the efficiency of the workplace – both in the discipline and governance of the work itself and in the process of management. These things increasingly rely upon particular 'idealised' labour processes, the maintenance and management of which rely upon technologies of regulation, which rely upon technology-mediated hierarchical observation and normalising judgement, which in turn are increasingly dependent upon programmatic and abstracted inscriptions of conduct, which rely upon the way the organisation and its processes are divided and reorganised. Because each of these is designed with a particular programmatic goal in mind, they are not able to account for all of the possible alternatives they facilitate, and actually produce 'spaces left free' for workers to locate, create, and use. The program and technologies actually put into place the conditions through which individuals can develop their own ad hoc tactics to fulfil them or, alternatively, to locate or produce 'spaces' invisible to the systems – *the very components that make TMTL and its norms and forms possible are also components that permit excessive actions by management and labour*. Once such spaces are located or produced, individual actors

have the tools with which to deploy their own knowledge into the discourse and simultaneously hide this activity, effectively altering the norms produced in it without noticeably altering the technical and programmatic forms through which Knowledge production occurs and 'truth' is represented. The result is a system that can be seen to allow continuous change, continuous use of local contingencies in organisational 'blind spots', such that the organisation *must* adapt, *must* change and *must* continuously be policed by management in order to either take advantage of these gaps for its own ends or attempt to close them off from use, all of which has various effects on the production of Knowledge, power, 'truth', subjects and subjectivity in the organisation. The system actually contains elements and 'promotes' doings that ensure the continuation of recognisable strategies.

Perhaps the 'highest level' strategic outcome of TMTL arising from all of the above is the existence of several forms of 'shadowboxing with data' that all hinge upon the manufacture and representation of the work or agents as data in a 'scientific' and imputably objective form – the rows and columns of ACD-computed productivity tables and graphs that simultaneously display and afford the manufactured Knowledge and inter-agent comparison of productivity and quality as it is defined by the organisation. In this process, each party (management or labour) is supposed to see the work and workers and respond consistent with the program and according to the technical rules of the organisation. In the metaphor of 'shadowboxing with data', each of these forms analogues the 'scientific' data with the shadow against which a shadow boxer reacts, and as a consequence of such reactions, reifies the apparent objectivity and reality of the data/shadowboxing-opponent – simultaneously reifying its 'truth' value and demonstrating how one is acting within power relations to affect Knowledge, subjects and subjectivity in

TMTL. This comes with several dimensions that affect the ongoing construction of subjects and subjectivity in TMTL.

- Management can manipulate the way agents are rendered into categories ranking the productivity and quality of their performance. Management uses this data to evaluate workers' productivity and quality, and perhaps to award pay raises or move workers into categories that are exposed to termination.
- Workers can expose themselves to or hide from the technology-mediated surveillance system such that they produce statistics indicative of a 'good agent' regardless of their 'real' activity. Management uses this data to evaluate workers' productivity.
- Personnel responsible for agent evaluation can insert into evaluation rubrics – or prevent from insertion – data that represents the worker in particular ways in the official archive of data. Management uses this data to evaluate workers' quality.

Each of these operate within the power produced in the technological discipline and governance of time, space and activity in the setting to introduce changes into the official archive of data representing productivity and quality, and hence to influence what others in the organisation 'see', thus influencing what is Known, how that Knowledge can be arranged and what is thus 'true' about subjects, and in turn, what they 'know/Know' and what they can (officially) do in response. At the same time, the dependence of TMTL upon technical apparatuses of observation, data processing and examination produces its own gaps in which the system is

continuously accessible to forces that alter what is 'seen', 'Known' and what counts as 'truth'.[293]

However, within the networks of power in the organisation there is still the continual pressure and even responsibility to come to know one's self and create one's self within its manufactured world. One is always expected to 'shadowbox with data', and to continually Know one's self and work on one's self (or accept the organisation's tactics in this regard) to be what is expected. The statements and actions of Ty, Taz and Sal at *BigTech*, Sheila, Kalie, Fiona and Stevie at *DeliveryWorldwide*, Krin, Kam, Rabbie and Verity at *MHealth* all demonstrate, at one time or another, how they have accepted the organisation's efforts in producing this. The individual is always produced within relations of power, though in some cases these relations are altered, if only temporarily, to accommodate particular contingencies felt by the individual.

So, while the programs and technologies employed in TMTL appear to be *intentionally* aimed at manifesting a particular outcome – an economical, calculable, predictable and controllable workplace and subjects – these same things produce opportunities and conditions in which actors can be seen to tactically tinker with the apparatus and its products.

Given these processes and products, and an understanding of how this official Knowledge is produced, both management and labour are able to surreptitiously and strategically introduce local knowledge and individual values into the Knowledge production apparatus. In so doing, both management and individual workers are able

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[293] Of course, this form of 'shadowboxing with data' can occur whether management or labour is acting in 'spaces left free' or not. It is also the case, as noted above, that even when the apparatus works as it is intended to do – without the tinkering of management or workers – shadowboxing with data still occurs. This is the case when a worker begins to accept the disciplined and governed self and, as Kam at *MHealth* implored the agents, to "...see yourself in the data..." such that the agent engages in a recursive performance of work, reflection upon the stats, assertion of technologies of the self to affect 'better' stats, performance of work, reflection, etc. – a continual 'shadowboxing with data' produced in one's action in the apparatus.

to effectively alter the contents of the official discourse/Knowledge without altering the forms through which it is produced. The result is not the 'pure' one described in Part 2 of this report and in the previous section of this chapter, but a set of realities manufactured by three sets of values, desires, goals and expectations (Figure 76), with each of them affected by the official apparatuses implicated in the production of Knowledge, power, 'truth' and subjectivity.
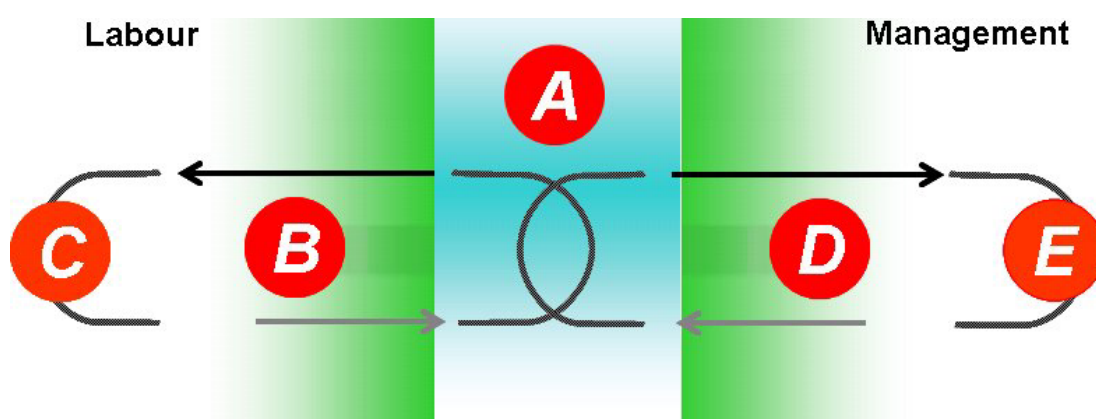

Figure 76. Shadowboxing with Data in TMTL

The overall image in Figure 76 is intended to depict the profile of a translucent screen 'A' with labour on one side and management on the other. Upon the screen 'A' is supposed to be cast an image or shadow of the worker as a product of the official organisational apparatus, comprised of observation tactics, abstracted inscriptions, examinations and representation of the subject in 'scientific' forms. This image or shadow is visible to both labour and management, and is the imputably 'true' image of the subject produced by the organisation's apparatus – the official Knowledge of the organisation.

'B' represents the individual agent's image of his or her self as influenced by the organisational Knowledge and 'truth' shown to them in the image/shadow

presented upon 'A'. 'C' represents the individual agent's background knowledge of his or her self: his or her personal values, expectations and goals; knowledge of how the organisation sees and imputably values oneself; how the organisation's apparatus operates and its 'spaces left free' – some of this exists as one's personal subjectivity before being exposed to the organisation, and some of it is 'carried into' the individual's subjectivity by one's experience, discipline and governance in the face of the organisation's manufactured ecology.

Similarly, 'D' represents management's image of how the organisation should function and how agents should conduct themselves as influenced by their knowledge of the organisation and the organisational 'truth' shown to them by the image/shadow presented upon 'A'. 'E' represents management's background knowledge including personal values, expectations, etc. As above, some of this exists prior to being exposed to the organisation and some is 'carried into' management's subjectivity in the face of the organisation's manufactured ecology.

As depicted in the looping arrows in Figure 76 – from 'A', through 'B', 'C' and back to 'A', and from 'A', through 'D', 'E' and back to 'A' – what labour and management see and come to Know is affected by exposure to and experience with disciplinary and governmental practices, and statistical representations of one's self against an imputably objective standard within an imputably objective apparatus. At the same time, this Knowledge influences one's conduct, and as it is performed, one's conduct is converted to official statistical forms. This includes any conduct that is influenced by one's knowledge and use of 'spaces left free', which affects the 'truth' about any given subject and the whole call centre as reflected in 'A'. Both labour and management are continuously able to draw upon their background knowledge and values when producing actions that manipulate the appearance of

particular images of one's self or one's position to the other – labour can introduce resistance and secondary adjustment and so can management. Figure 76 renders this schematically as two intersecting and mutually-influenced circuits. It is important to note that while Figure 76 schematically renders these circuits as mirror images, the actual tactics and strategies employed by each group vary widely, as detailed empirically throughout the chapters above. For example, labour may 'flash', 'bounce', use the mute button, dial an empty line or use an organisationally proscribed mode in the ACD; management may introduce personal judgement when performing evaluations, all in excess of the explicit rules and policies of the organisation.

The image/shadow cast upon 'A' and visible to both labour and management is affected not only by the official apparatus, but also by the performance of strategic acts by both labour and management that are obscured or invisible to the apparatus, but which become inscribed in the official statistical forms. As symbolised by the inter-looping of these actions at 'A' in Figure 76, the image/shadow of the subject cast upon the screen is affected by all of these actions at once. The result, while primarily shaped by the compliance of subjects with the norms and forms of the organisation's manufactured reality, is continuously influenced by the surreptitious and 'free' actions of subjects (both labour and management). The result is an imputed 'objectivity' that is continuously influenced by its subjects as they are continuously influenced by it. That is, the imputed 'objectivity' is actually an obscured set of both ongoing programmatically compliant and agonistic actions with the apparatus, and with the embedded but obscured actions of others. It can be considered 'objective' only when one ignores or cannot see the continuous flow and influence of excessive actions committed by all parties.

The continuous flow and incorporation of individual and contextual knowledge, values, beliefs and goals from both management and labour onto a metaphorical screen upon which official Knowledge of the organisation is continuously presented back to labour and management, demonstrates the ongoing strategic influence of *both* the organisational program upon the indexical actions of individual actors and vice versa – a continuous agonistic relation between organisation and individuals where each is influenced by the other. From this, one can recognise that while there is influence upon workers from the organisation, this is not a 'one way' relation. The organisation does not *cause* the subject to come into being, for, as described in Part 2 and Part 3 of this report, the subjects 'freely' choose to submit their selves to its forces, actively participate in the apparatus and willingly work on themselves (most of the time), but also bring with themselves a body of historical knowledge, values, beliefs and goals which they readily apply in 'spaces left free' throughout the organisation.

As noted above, what is deployed in these 'spaces' is obscured from theoretical viewpoints that treat the organisation as a primary or domineering structure. These actions and their influence only become visible and their effects strategically understandable when one adopts a viewpoint in which stable structures are problematised, and where Knowledge and power are considered to be the product of constellations of heterogeneous forces both local and historical, and personal and organisational. The Knowledge and 'truth' represented in the statistics is thus an agonistic product of both disciplined and governed, and 'free' actions. It is neither totally given by the organisation nor totally given by the subjects. The subject is at once 'free' and engaged in and by relations of power. The subject is always 'responsible' for one's actions in relation to one or several of the many 'truths'

produced by or immanent in these doings, and always held accountable against them (Rose, N. 1999c). This models a production of the subject and subjectivity in TMTL, and depicts *how* the subject comes to be and continues to change within a venue and a society always in motion.

The call centre thus manifests a manufactured environment in which subjects are economically managed, and in which particular 'truths' about its inhabitants are made to appear self-evident through the way they are observed, their actions inscribed and those inscriptions massed into hierarchical observations and normalising judgements. From this manufactured 'truth' about subjects, they are 'responsibilised' to maintain themselves not only as productive subjects, but also as quality subjects, and continuously reflexive and adaptive subjects who avail themselves of 'opportunities' set up by the organisation – and in all of these implicated into becoming responsible and accountable for their own maintenance and management according to rules and representations set up by the organisation. The organisation develops and implements discipline and governance practices such that the subjects are made visible in particular ways. They are cajoled, counselled and harangued to become responsible for seeing and managing themselves in terms of that visibility, and sometimes to adopt the organisation's 'opportunities' such that they continuously fulfil the changing 'needs' of the organisation from within the programmatic and technical forces imposed. All of this is made to exist at the same time as the subject is made to appear as a 'free agent', both able and responsible for choosing one's own actions and accountable for the outcomes, even though one's 'freedom' is constrained to options made available by and in the apparatus set up by the organisation. Participation as a 'good worker' within this apparatus is accomplished by following along with the construction of one's self as modelled by

the organisation's way of representing and governing the worker, and actively producing and fulfilling 'opportunities' for one's self within the organisation. In so doing the individual is continuously produced and wrapped in the organisation's logic and manufactured reality, coming to ratify and reify that reality in one's own self.

c. Summation

Both labour and management in TMTL have and can be seen to deploy personal knowledge, values, beliefs and goals in their day-to-day actions such that these things become embedded into the official discourse/Knowledge – a production of power and 'truth' about themselves and the organisation. This is made accountable in terms of both the disciplinary and governmental forces imposed from the organisation's apparatus *and* the individual's privileged knowledge, as it is manifested in the disciplined, governed and 'free' actions of subjects (that are, nonetheless, tethered by disciplinary and governmental forces). This creates a situation where three separate but related forces continuously influence the norms and forms of TMTL and the subjectivity of its workers – (a) the official Knowledge and power of the organisation as it is disciplined, produced and distributed through programs, tactics and technologies; and the individual knowledge, values, beliefs and goals of (b) labour and (c) management as influenced by the Knowledge and power of the organisation. However, while at least two different groups – labour and management – are seen to affect the way data is entered into this truth-producing apparatus, the maintenance of 'scientific' forms and the invisible nature of most of these manipulations allow organisational Knowledge to be continuously represented as an objective 'truth' that applies to the organisation and each of its members. It is

with this that labour and management actively 'shadowbox' in producing Knowledge of their selves, and they continuously use that Knowledge to effect their selves.

This is not to say, however, that these forces are symmetrical. As described above, the official apparatus of the organisation has substantial influence over who is allowed into the organisation – only individuals with certain characteristics 'useful to the organisation' or pliable enough to fit its program are admitted. Similarly, individuals who do not want to tolerate the expectations of the organisation can exit, or be made to do so, leaving behind a group of individuals who are shown to be more docile and compliant with the organisation's forces. Once admitted, the new hire is subjected to a continuous flow of disciplinary and governmental tactics through which his or her bodily actions, knowledge, skills, perspectives and values are to be 'shaped' or steered into forms that are productive for the organisation. Even the subject who resists is affected by these forces, and comes to be produced, at least in part, through his or her agonistic action with them.

The most apparent of these disciplinary tactics is physically dividing workers into cubicles – something that exposes the individual to particular forms of visual, aural and electronic surveillance at the same time as he or she is exposed to individual direction and pacing by other disciplinary technologies such as the ACD, the phone system and computer software, and the penetrating gaze of the organisation *through* these and other technologies. However, the architectural and geographic enclosing and partitioning, and electronic direction and pacing of workers, are such obvious components of the workplace that their doings 'hide in plain sight'.

It is this sort of very apparent and yet obscured 'doing' that makes it so power*ful.* These tactics make it possible to literally manufacture a programmatic

reality that presents the worker with a set of conditions, technologies, tactics and rules. This reality both disciplines workers, and affords the governance of their thoughts and actions. Workers are continuously exposed to surveillance that examines their selves against fabricated norms that are, nonetheless, arguably *'natural' to the manufactured environment*. It is the relations made possible in this manufactured environment, between the individual and the programs, tactics and technologies described above, that produce and reinforce Knowledge and an imputed 'truth' about individuals and the organisation at large.

Individuals usually willingly comply, and allow their actions and thoughts to be shaped, and even act to shape their own actions and thoughts, in order to satisfy personal desires which have come to be matched with the programmatic goals of the organisation. For virtually all individuals at one time or another, the overwhelmingly apparent, but 'hidden in plain sight', disciplinary design of the geographic space, tools and technologies, surveillance, inscription and examination practices, and the statistics produced through their activation, are sufficient to constrain and guide workers' actions in time and space so that they conform to the organisation's expectations and the 'truth' it discloses about workers – analogous to Bentham's promise for the panopticon (Foucault 1995, pp. 195-228).

Training in both technical and affective skills provides additional discipline, as do a myriad of other things described above. While, for some, the panoptic fear of being caught in deviation from the organisation's manufactured norms is sufficient to motivate them into compliance, the organisation's governmental tactics are also very influential means for bringing the workers into *a relation with the 'truth'* produced in the organisation's apparatus. Through these tactics workers come to *see themselves in the data* and begin to shadowbox with that data in order to continuously and

reflexively modify their practice so as to manufacture official evidence of their status as good workers. That is, through having been brought face to face with the disciplinary tactics of the organisation, its manufactured environment, a 'scientifically' determined 'truth' about one's self, and the psychologically-oriented governmental tactics described above, the worker comes to manage one's self by adopting organisationally defined practices, and developing and deploying technologies of the self in a continuous reflexive analysis and alteration of one's conduct so as to effect a particular 'shadow of one's self' cast upon the screen of one's productivity and quality statistics – a strategic production of the docile and self-modifying subject.[294]

These technologies of the self are freely adopted, but exist in a relation – just as does any type of power – that is not totally of the subject's own doing or choosing. He or she may be free to choose or abandon, adopt or adapt, but the subject is still affected by local contingencies that influence his or her choices. When 'free' choices exist, the subject is conveniently made responsible for those choices. Subjects are *obliged to* continuously come to terms with a manufactured 'truth' about themselves, *obliged to be free* in their response to that 'truth' and to be *responsible* for their actions in fulfilling that obligation (Rose, N. 1999c, esp. ch. 16), as demonstrated by (a) the options provided Lorene, Sal and Syd at *BigTech* (and their responses, and their supervisor's responses to their responses); (b) the agents at *MHealth* who are implored to 'see themselves in the data' and respond in keeping with organisational expectations; (c) the measures taken against agents at *DeliveryWorldwide* 'caught' while logged into a proscribed ACD mode or dialled into an unused phone number; and (d) the 'card game' conducted with agents at *MHealth* in which they were asked

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[294] See also, Rose (1999c) for other examples of how members of society are put face to face with scientifically manufactured 'truths' and led to adopt them and to accept and develop behaviours through which these 'truths' are reified.

to attach themselves to particular hyperbolic feelings and 'visions' of themselves and their responsibility in the organisation.

The manufacturing of a world, and the responsibility of free subjects to realise and come to know and reify their 'true' selves within this world, demonstrates that the freedom and responsibility subjects have, and the shape of this world, are all latched to particular political programs, tactics and technologies which manifest power, and which come to be recognisable components of a non-intentional strategic trajectory. The subject is always produced in relations that produce power, and power is a necessary component in the production of the self.

This is the case even where the worker is engaging in resistance practices. As described above, even when a worker is 'flashing' the ACD, 'bouncing' calls, and hiding within the ACD's blind spots, he or she is still aware of and face-to-face with the continuous, if flawed, technically-mediated gaze upon him or her, and the possibility of producing traces of activity that will be noticed by the organisation. He or she is always aware of the panoptic system, and has come to believe that he or she is always responsible for those actions if 'caught'. With that in mind, the power *inculcated into the worker in terms of his or her knowledge of the organisational importance for compliance* with methods, rules, shift schedules, statistical measures, and the like, is enough to apprehend and affect most of the workers, most of the time. Through this manipulation of perspectives by the organisation, the individual can be brought to police and conduct himself or herself mostly in accordance with those perspectives in his or her constant reflection upon the 'truth' manufactured within the apparatus designed by the organisation, even when other options are available and may even be more sensible given local and current contingencies – relations that

produce and manifest power that penetrates into the workers themselves at the same as time this power is obscured from easy view.[295]

Through the construction of a manufactured ecology, the development and activation of anatamo-political disciplinary devices and psychologically-oriented governmental practices, the subject is produced as a bio-technical product whose productivity and quality are continuously manufactured and continuously reflected back to individual workers as representations on charts, graphs and in official reports. This 'idealised' subject is one who is fully managed by the disciplinary and governmental tactics and strategies of the organisation. This idealised subject actively 'shadowboxes with data' in order to effect the organisation's manufactured definition of a 'good worker', and actively engages with the 'truth' about one's self reflected in these data so as to reify it *in* one's self.

However, resistance and secondary adjustment practices that make use of 'spaces left free' in this bio-political discourse and its physical instantiations *are* effective mechanisms for agents to 'hide in plain sight' – and for finding and occupying small cracks in the apparatus, and influencing the production of their own selves within the relations of power in this apparatus. This allows individuals to produce alternate knowledge and subjectivity, though still within the framework provided by the organisation. These practices are effective because they allow the worker to take control of a fragment of his or her day and self, while allowing the organisation to go on 'seeing' the worker as if things were going normally. They are recognisable as a set of tactical tricks played on the 'eye of power' through which the subject comes to effect his or her self in excess of the organisation's program, even while remaining within it.

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[295] This begins to resemble the production and maintenance of Hochschild's emotional labour concept (Hochschild 1985) in which the individual worker is inculcated into a viewpoint that foregrounds the organisation's desires, and replaces or displaces one's own personal values, beliefs and goals.

Many of these tactics are individual, for example, 'flashing' or 'bouncing' calls, and dialling into an empty line or an unused ACD mode for a few minutes. Some of them are done by proxy. For example, workers with responsibilities for performing quality evaluations can ensure that deviations from the organisation's norms are rendered invisible to the organisation. The team leader, QSS or one's fellow nurses can alter a quality report, aid the agent in producing 'acceptable' evidence of his or her work, or simply not submit a report if it is thought that it will do harm to the worker's official subjectivity. In all of these ways, the workers' knowledge is smuggled into the organisation's official discourse – the organisation's Knowledge. By affecting the contents of the organisation's Knowledge, workers can be seen to be influencing what the organisation can do with this Knowledge. Workers divert the direction of power, sometimes simply to keep management 'off their backs', and at other times to actually work in their favour – perhaps to do other work at the same time, reflecting the ever-present force of Knowledge and power to be productive. At the same time, these tactics effect an obscured 'truth' about subjects that is different from the organisation's 'idealised truth' described above, and that displaces it without the knowledge of the organisation, because the tactics through which it comes into being are, unless caught in the act, invisible to the organisation's gaze.

It is also the case that more conventional sorts of job actions on the part of workers (approximating the labour strike) can introduce changes into the organisation's apparatus. The 'strike' by flex nurses at *MedAdvise* was effective in introducing contingencies that were taken up and accommodated when changing the policies and practices governing how scheduling is done, creating an official discourse in which all nurses had more say in the matter.

More informal pressures at *DeliveryWorldwide*[296] ensured that the new Quality Administrators (who would be responsible for performing agents' quality evaluations) shared the perspectives and values of agents, so that quality evaluations would continue to utilise the contextual knowledge of experienced agents. In addition, not only was a continuation of workers' influence ensured, but because experienced workers' <u>k</u>nowledge was now formally installed into the new process of performing quality evaluations, it is the case that a more *durable change* was instantiated. Workers were able to alter the organisation so that their <u>k</u>nowledge was rendered into the formal apparatus for the creation of Knowledge. In so doing, new possibilities are created, possibilities that are less one-sided, less 'domineering', and which may account for a broader range of K/knowledge than before. This is consistent with the Foucaultian vision of freedom (Foucault 1988e, 1994b; Foucault, Dreyfus & Rabinow 1983) and the vision promoted by Smith, Haraway and Townley (Haraway 1990; Smith, D. 1974, 1990b; Townley 1994).

It is also the case that workers were able to tactically *use* aspects of the highly regulated and disciplined TMTL workplace in producing personal lives for themselves, whatever their personal values. Some workers demonstrated that the complexity of increasingly common dual-income families, complete with time pressures and problems for arranging continuous childcare, could be managed by ensuring that each spouse worked 'complementary' shifts in a call centre. Additionally, the stresses felt by call centre workers were, if not eliminated, somewhat defused, when partners were intimately aware of the difficulty of the work, and the utility of daily 'bitch sessions' when one's partner arrives home from work. In other cases, workers were able to use resources collected from the

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[296] It is perhaps relevant to note that while *DeliveryWorldwide* was the only unionised call centre in this study, no formal collective job actions, nor any serious threat of them, has occurred since the inception of this call centre in 1996.

workplace to provide an ad hoc lesson to their children on the virtues of 'being a good worker'.[297]

In all of these ways, call centre workers are subject to the organisation's program and technologies, but are variously able to manipulate these programs and technologies to tactically produce their own strategies. As above, these involve some sort of 'shadowboxing with data' – of coming to terms with the manufactured environment of TMTL, adopting or developing technologies of the self that demonstrate and fulfil one's obligation to know that 'truth' about one's self, and to act using that knowledge to become the 'idealised' good worker. This is the case even if one's actions are only to produce the appearance of 'good work', while sometimes temporarily escaping from the seemingly never-ending rigours of the work; or if one is trying to manipulate the workplace and one's actions in a way that permits one to be a personally-defined 'better' parent or spouse – deflecting, altering or appropriating the relations that manifest power to produce subjects and subjectivities. Each of these tactics is accomplished by conducting one's self in different ways, while immersed in the organisation's disciplinary, governmental, surveillance, inscription and examination apparatuses – the very things the organisation uses to manufacture a world, its Knowledge, power and a particular 'truth'. Through this conduct, the workers demonstrate how they can alter (but not replace) the contents of the organisation's Knowledge production apparatus, though always in an agonistic relation with the particular form of the workplace and current contingencies at work and at home. In all cases, accepting and fulfilling the implications of the 'truth' about oneself, whether it is the 'truth' manufactured by the organisation, the 'truth' about one's self as identified by one's own subjectivity or

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[297] Though it is somewhat ironic that the same worker who did and said this, was also one who demonstrated her active creation and deployment of resistance practices in the production of quality evaluations of workers!

some other truth, puts one's self into a relation of factors that manifest and use power.

So, are workers in the call centre as they are made to appear in the statistical representations of quality and quantity, or in annual evaluations? Are workers in the call centre as they act in ways that are officially invisible to the admittedly formidable array of surveillance that characterises a call centre? Are workers produced by the techniques they develop and adopt for accomplishing or coping with the work? Are workers what they intentionally make for themselves when they plan their non-work lives?

The subject *is and can be all of these*, because the subject is neither dominated, nor trapped in an iron cage produced by the rationality of an organisation. While it is surely the case that the worker is immersed within a system that exerts disciplinary and governmental power upon his or her activity, and in so doing renders that activity into a particular sort of productive force, it is also the case that regardless of how strong or total such forces appear, they still cannot totally contain the worker's creative action, and they do not define a universal truth about workers, nor a universal subjectivity for them. One can say, however, that the workers always orient to the organisation's norms and forms in an agonistic way – they allow the organisation to influence the trajectory of their action, whether they are in explicit compliance with those norms and forms, or whether they are in resistance or secondary adjustment to them.

However, while new Knowledge and subjectivity are continuously accomplished, these always arise in and from the present, as the present is defined by the many heterogeneous forces that exist and intermingle in TMTL; there is no returning to some earlier, and presumably 'better', time, and there is no escape from

relations that produce power. Slipping away from the organisation's favoured

relations of power, even if only briefly, does not free one from power, it only alters

the network of factors in which it can be said to arise. There is only moving forward

as we work to change these relations into something we would prefer. In any case,

these are 'free' actions of 'free' individuals who are assigned a responsibility to

produce their selves in work, in society and in their own lives, using the resources

they are given, they have or they can produce (Foucault 1983, 1988a, 1988c, 1988e,

1990a, 1997a, 2001; Foucault & Deleuze 1977; Foucault, Dreyfus & Rabinow 1983;

Rose, N. 1999c).

All of that said, many of the effective, but obscured actions of workers

featured in this report were essentially individual and unorganised, and as a result the

force of their effects scattered and diffused. What would be the product if workers

were more organised in these agonistic actions? What changes might be realised

then? In TMTL, workers have some degree of freedom, perhaps more so than they

might think, especially considering the vast array of disciplinary and governmental

programs, tactics and technologies, and the strategies they come to manifest. It is

worth noting that this degree of freedom occurs in a set of discourses where their

actions are clearly and contextually intentional, but the outcome is not – they do not

necessarily act with the goal of changing the organisation so that it accommodates or

includes their personal knowledge, but clearly, from the evidence presented above, it

is possible for the workers to do that.

In being subjects of the organisation's relations of power, subjects of

relations of power that arise from their own covert or overt resistance and secondary

adjustments, or relations of power they affect through the creative appropriation of

resources from the organisation to affect their out-of-work selves, subjects are made,

and make themselves, in relations with manifold K/knowledge, power and truth. From the above, it is apparent that these subjects have the capacity to alter the norms and forms of power, Knowledge and the 'truth' about themselves that are produced within these things.

In many cases this occurs in TMTL through variations of a process I call 'shadowboxing with data'. Each of these variations involves actions made possible within a particular *manufactured* reality, in which disciplined and governed behaviour is rendered into a technology-mediated gaze that shares features with the panopticon, but that also exposes many of its inherent gaps. Organisations employ and deploy other tactics to discipline and govern workers to see and continuously reify only one particular Knowledge, one particular 'truth', and to respond to one particular power, all in the pursuit of programmatic goals that produce a particular, technology-mediated subjectivity. However, other knowledge, other truths and other power are possible within gaps immanent in the manufactured reality, and can be activated by workers with, it appears, common and distinctly non-heroic effort. Subjects in TMTL are continuously 'free', as are subjects in all of modern society, and also always produced in power relations (Rose, N. 1999c). The self is not accomplished by escaping power, but by tactically activating one's freedom, and acting so as to alter the relations of power and its associated Knowledge and truth, so that one exists in a constellation of factors with a minimum of domination:

> There is always a possibility, in a given game of truth, to discover something else and to more or less change such and such a rule and sometimes even the totality of the game of truth. No doubt that is what has given the West, in relationship to other societies, possibilities of development that we find nowhere else. ... I don't believe there can be a society without relations of power, if you understand them as means by which individuals try to conduct, to determine the behavior of others. The problem is not of trying to dissolve them in the utopia

of a perfectly transparent communication, but to give one's self the rules of law, the

techniques of management, and also the ethics, the ethos, the practice of self, which would

allow these games of power to be played with a minimum of domination. (Foucault 1994b,

pp. 17-18)

In this report, the norms and forms of TMTL, and gaps in these norms and

forms, are described in detail, and through this description an answer to the question

of how the subject in TMTL is produced, is approached and communicated. The

future is as much in the hands of the subjects in TMTL as it can be, given the vast

array of programs, tactics and technologies that surround them. While they do not,

nor can anyone, *have* power, they are obliged, as we all are in the West, to actively

participate in the production of Knowledge and in so doing, affect it and its multiple

'truths' to produce themselves as they wish to be, continuously, in the here and the

now.

3.   Deconstruction & Reconstruction

Through persistent, close and detailed access to the thoughts and actions of

individuals, and the organisational rationality, made possible through ethnographic

methods and post-structural theory, I was able to collect a set of data and experiences

that permitted a deconstruction of how subjects are produced. This deconstruction

penetrated the façade of modernity instantiated in TMTL – a highly 'modern'

workplace – and displays the strategic 'doings of its doings' of management and the

strategic 'doings of doings' of its members.

Through the programmatic and tactical disciplining of space, time and

activity, the subject is produced as an array of numbers signifying productivity and

quality, and is coached, counselled and harangued into seeing oneself in this array of

numbers such that the subject comes to terms with a manufactured 'truth' about one's self and governs one's self according to that 'truth'. Once inculcated into this reflexive, data-oriented gaze, he or she participates in one's own production as a 'service object'. At the same time, however, virtually all of my informants demonstrated to me their ability to fracture this subjectivity, however unknowingly or surreptitiously, and locate or produce spaces for themselves to occupy in which they were able to loosen or alter the official subjectivity. In so doing they demonstrated how much power they can access in what, at first glance, appears to be an impenetrable iron cage, total institution or pure panopticon. In addition, on occasion, direct and confrontational resistance between agents and management personnel demonstrated that, in fact, much of the order manifest in the call centre actually comes about as a result of the worker's voluntary docility and compliance – there can be no domination of workers when they exist in this relation. It was also the case that workers demonstrated how they could not only alter the norms of the organisation through surreptitious access and use of 'spaces left free', but also act in ways that were recognisable as strategies that could alter the organisation's apparatus, while frequently not altering its official appearance. That this occurred in individual and disorganised ways is perhaps another testament to the overwhelmingly common docility of the workers, and the penetrating acceptance and orientation to the 'truth' produced in the programmatically and technologically manufactured environment – its technology-mediated lenses, shadowboxing screens and 'psy-tactics' that work to bring the workers to believe in its objectivity and their 'true' form. Alternately, workers are channelled into the programmatic goals of the organisation by tactical actions that latch their own goals to the resources made available to them through the organisation in the present and promised for the future,

as exemplified by Sal's and Taz' visions to become management at *BigTech* or elsewhere, by agents at *DeliveryWorldwide* who are 'working for their pension', or by nurses at *MedAdvise* who are able to continue to fulfil themselves as nurses in spite of physical limits or family obligations.

In reconstructing these manifold factors, forces and heterogeneous details stitched together into an organisational form, I have shown that the worker in TMTL is a subject as much of one's own doing as of the organisation's doing. It is just that so much of the time, individuals allow themselves to be, and to think they are, subjects of the organisations they inhabit, rather than to *activate* the considerable power they very apparently have access to. Perhaps this brings us full circle. Foucault declared that his research was aimed at inspecting the many ways that individuals were made, and made themselves into subjects.

> ...the goal of my work during the last twenty years ... has not been to analyse the phenomenon of power, nor to elaborate the foundations of such an analysis. My objective, instead, has been to create a history of the different modes by which, in our culture, human beings are made subjects... [This includes] the objectivizing of the subject in what I shall call 'dividing practices.' The subject is either divided inside himself or divided from others. This process objectivizes him ... Finally, I have sought to study ... the way a human being turns him- or herself into a subject. (Foucault 1983, p. 208)

The mode identified here is one that binds a worker to a manufactured reality, made up of a particular geography, pervasive (and imperfect) systems of technology-mediated surveillance, abstracted inscription and examination, the automatic processing of these data into scientific forms, and its display to workers as imputably their 'true selves', along with governmental practices that work to convince subjects to believe in this 'truth' such that they police and govern themselves on its behalf, one variant of what I call 'shadowboxing with data'.

However, the mode described here also involves many hidden 'spaces' in which individual workers can and do demonstrate their ability to escape from and

manipulate this manufactured Knowledge, and build themselves and the organisation in a manner that is more consistent with their detailed knowledge of a different world, a world more of their making while still influenced by the organisational Knowledge, power and 'truth' they are faced with. It is oddly the case, however, that many of the technologies of the self that make this world possible also involve variants of 'shadowboxing with data'. All of these forms demonstrate the contextual and heterogeneous nature and production of Knowledge, power and 'truth' about one's self.

In many cases, this is a self that lives well within the ethics of responsibility imposed by the organisation in which they work. In other cases, the activation of one's freedom and responsibility to provide 'service' fronts one's appropriation of its resources in the production of alternative ways of being. However, even as these actions vary from the organisational program, they afford its maintenance; the heterogeneous plurality of forces that allow it to exist are continuously aimed at it in ways that redefine the meaning of its components, as new voices and new interpretations are inserted and asserted. The ethics of self come into focus as practices through which one produces one's self in relation to Knowledge and 'truth' about one's self. Because, as we see, there is more than one truth, there can be more than one self and more than one way of producing one's self.

Everyone, it seems, has some, however small, part to play in the production of these things. If this is the case, then whatever we believe truth to be is only that, a belief. There is no reason that we have to accept that which is presented to us in our organisations, if we are willing to see and accept our ability to influence it on a continuous basis, to never become slave to one way of creating truth and one way of

creating one's self in relation to this truth (Foucault 1994b, 1997a; Foucault, Dreyfus & Rabinow 1983).

Overall, I present the conclusion that, even in the highly disciplined and governed venue of technology-mediated tertiary labour, the subject is not one who is melodramatically bound in a relation of domination by structures, or inserted into an iron cage of rationality. Instead, the subject occupies a position in the workplace in which he or she is able to freely submit to particular ways of seeing and knowing one's self, and to continually produce one's self through interaction with them. He or she is also afforded unique opportunities to locate and even produce 'spaces' that are more or less invisible to the disciplinary and governmental aspects of the organisation's apparatus; these spaces provide the subject with the ability to introduce one's personal knowledge, values and goals into the discourse and have them inscribed into the official Knowledge of the organisation, affecting the 'truth' about one's self it portends and what can be made of it. That is, workers, either individually or collectively, can effect more durable changes to the organisational apparatuses through which Knowledge is created. These changes begin to account for and even officially recognise the individual knowledge, values, beliefs and goals of workers, such that it is officially installed into the apparatus itself.

While it is the case that there are substantive disciplinary and governmental forces involved in the production of TMTL, it is not the case that these represent some kind of impenetrable domination or iron cage over the worker. Even in the highly regulated context of TMTL, workers are not just subjects of the organisation, but active and willing participants in a production of their own selves – effecting Knowledge of their selves and continuously operating within and sometimes altering the power and subjectivity that can come of it. By not being frozen into a relation

with the organisation's preferred constellation of Knowledge, power and truth, these actors demonstrate that they can continuously alter their worlds in ways which parallel the Foucaultian and feminist vision – if only the strategic and unintentional 'doing' that is empirically evident in this analysis can be raised to a tactical and intentional doing.

Indeed, "it matters what ideas one uses to think other ideas" (Strathern 1992, p. 10); with each different idea used to think with, unique possibilities for the present and future arise (Foucault 1972, pp. 141-142; Foucault & Deleuze 1977, p. 208). By adopting a Foucaultian and post-structural perspective, but not ignoring components of other sociological theories,[298] I have been able to conduct an analytic deconstruction and reconstruction of a particular type of workplace that exposes, describes and clarifies new ways of being a subject and of actively participating in the creation of one's own subjectivity.

4.   TMTL As or Within Control Society?

Nikolas Rose identifies modern Western society as 'control society' (Rose, N. 1999d, esp. ch. 7).[299] This is not to say that everything has reverted to the disciplinary forms reflected in Foucault's 'Discipline & Punish' (1995) or that modern society exists as relations that produce domination. Rather, when Rose speaks of a 'control society', he orients to the notion that 'scientific' norms and forms have come to so permeate society that the 'truth' about any one individual may be continuously and very economically 'manufactured', based on the production and organisation of heterogeneous data collected through his or her actions in society. This 'truth' about every individual comes to exist through and within power

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[298] However, carefully avoiding some of their traps as described in Part 1 of this report.
[299] See also Deleuze (1995).

produced in the abstracted relations of these data – a network of schooling records, licensure records, purchasing history (through credit cards), health records, employment records, etc. The resulting manufactured 'truth' about individuals may be selectively deployed in order to calculate risk, and 'control' an individual's access to other resources made available to them in society. Thus an individual subject's chances and options for the future are in many senses 'controlled' by apparatuses of anonymous surveillance, abstracted inscription and examination that are increasingly orchestrated by no individual, and are rather attached in relations that are made to exist between resources.

These 'controls' do not exist in any single form. They exist as continuously changing programs, technologies and tactics in society, and are reflected in its institutions through surveillance data, and the creation of rules and methods for auditing and interrogating the data-that-makes-the-subject. For example, these data and manufactured subjectivity are used to determine one's ability to be granted access to things like: (a) purchasing credit, credit ratings or low interest due upon credit purchases as regulated by private industry; (b) health insurance, variable premium payments for health insurance, or particular drugs as regulated by private industry's continuously changing rules, goals and programs; (c) educational or training 'opportunities' based on one's prior educational records or vocational history. One's self, as manufactured by particular processes invisible to the individual, and independent of what the individual *knows one's self to be* at any one point in time, can be used to 'control' that individual's access to various resources in society, and to 'manage risk' to the organisation that may or may not grant an individual access to its resources (Ewald 1991).

This continuous management of risk is used to implicitly categorise a person's value to society or to business by 'controlling' access to particular resources. As noted above, however, despite the fact an individual's 'history' is actually the product of some anonymous auditing process, it is made to be one's own responsibility by appealing to an individual's assigned responsibility for the 'free' choices they have made in their lives, regardless of their context.[300] The result is the manufactured appearance of responsibility and an 'intentional' production of one's self, even though that self is actually manufactured by the application of actuarial practices to heterogeneous and abstracted data.

These concepts bear similarities to parts of what is described throughout this report – the continuous collection and inscription of abstracted data: the production of Knowledge and 'truth' about individuals in terms of some manufactured reality; limiting access to the workplace to individuals with evidence of particular skills, knowledge and attitudes; and limiting access to particular options for training or special projects to those who have already demonstrated compliance with other organisational expectations.

With these things in mind, is TMTL a symptom of control society? Is TMTL a contributor to it? Does TMTL provide an example of how individuals are acclimated to control society and its permeating relations of power in Western society?

Before addressing this, however, it is relevant to note that the concept of control society requires an abstract and very wide view across multiple institutions and features of society (Rose, N. 1999c, 1999d). This project does not provide such a wide view, and so does not provide direct access to the societal and institutional

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[300] In addition to things over which an individual has no control, such as his or her genetic makeup.

interconnections required to make an assertion about control society. That said, provisionally, one can answer yes to each of these questions. However, it is perhaps appropriate to characterise the difference between this study and its findings and conclusions, and the more abstract concept of control society.

This project has been dedicated in its focus on only one small facet of labour in society, and has not endeavoured to look very far beyond this focus to the broader implications of its programs, technologies, tactics and induced strategies. From this empirical and local perspective, the disciplinary and governmental tactics, technologies, programs and recognisable strategies existing in TMTL have been highlighted, deconstructed and their 'doings' reconstructed for inspection. These concepts and analytic tools have been useful, and it is not time to abandon them. In choosing and following through with this orientation, other perspectives, such as 'control society' and its gaze upon the high level, manifold and anonymous relations across and within institutions in society and their 'doings', were left unexplored.

With that in mind, perhaps it is useful to consider what is produced here as evidence of both conditions and symptoms of what Rose refers to as control society (Rose, N. 1999d, esp. ch. 7). This is because TMTL depends upon the confluence of factors, forces and resources that individually may not produce much collective alarm, but that have been rendered into a constellation that, when induced 'up' into the more abstract reaches of society, permits them to be seen as what Rose and others describe as 'control' (Deleuze 1995; Rose, N. 1999d, esp. ch. 7). This constellation includes: technology-mediated data collection following invisible rules produced by distant and anonymous others, 'black boxed' into a form over which individuals have limited knowledge and authority; 'compact judges' who follow technical rules for data analysis, but who may invisibly insert local knowledge in ways that affect the

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product; use of abstracted and decontextualised data to manufacture a personal and penetrating 'truth' about individuals that appears 'objective', and that is characterised as always intentional and deliberately produced by those individuals; and limitation of access to resources to only those individuals who satisfy the present rules for demonstrating one's 'fitness', suitability or readiness for those resources. In short, what are presented here as disciplinary and governmental relations of power and resistance, and secondary adjustments, can be hypothetically implicated into the notion of 'control' society when analytically-produced strategies are found to connect between these relations and similar presentations of power in other institutions across society.

However, and consistent with both Foucaultian theory and 'control society', it is not the case that subjects are dominated in their relation with the system in either the local or more abstract orientations. There remains evidence that 'freedom' is an essential component of each. In the local context, resources of the organisation and its tactics and programs are applied so as to ensure that subjects are seen to have freely chosen their actions, and are thus responsible for those actions. By organising resources and 'opportunities' for the subjects, and allowing – indeed requiring – them to 'freely choose' their actions in relation to them, subjects are always seen to knowingly consent to that relation, and thus continuously act to apprehend themselves within the power that arises in that relation.

This type of 'freedom' is an essential component of the neo-liberalism that characterises the subject and subjectivity in modern society (Foucault 1984b; Ransom 1997; Rose, N. 1999c, 1999d) and actually provides a substantive resource to further neo-liberal forms of governance in and across institutions in society. Even while subjects' choices are constrained by tactics, technologies and programs that

come to make up recognisably neo-liberal strategies, subjects are made to be responsible for the 'free' choices they make, and the innovations they may create with the resources provided them. Because their choices are largely constrained by the tactics, technologies and programs of organisations, most of what is possible for subjects to do will contribute to the realisation of an organisational program. When subjects innovate in ways that are not continuous with an organisational program, they are said to have 'freely' produced evidence justifying the deployment of 'reform' tactics so as to 'fix' those subjects. This neo-liberal 'freedom' assigned to subjects ensures that they are not seen to be dominated, while at the same time, it continuously provides for the accomplishment of organisational programs, or the assignment of a deviant status to subjects, thereby justifying other tactics aimed at reforming those subjects. Subjects are continuously produced in the power activated by disciplinary and governmental forces that produce recognisable strategies evidencing 'control society'.

In TMTL and in a control society, one is always free and always responsible and accountable for one's 'free' actions, and always caught up in relations of power that are not totally of one's own making. However, while the identification, deconstruction and reconstruction of disciplinary and governmental power, and the production of subjectivity, allow one to understand and possibly affect local contexts, even the thoroughgoing Foucaultian study of one locale is not sufficient to access the meta-level processes between institutions in society so as to facilitate a grasp of control society as it is currently characterised. To do so, a wider ranging and more society-wide purview is called for (Rose, N. 1999c, 1999d).

5. Epilogue: What's This? What Now? What From Here?

The four call centres featured in this report still exist, but, as one would expect, in the year since the end of fieldwork, they have come to exist somewhat differently than documented here. They too are in constant motion.

DeliveryWorldwide has seen the resignation of its trainer and supervisor, and their moves to another call centre opening in the region. A new supervisor was hired from the ranks of agents, and only about nine months from this change she too has recently announced her resignation to work for *BigTech*, though not in its call centre. Another agent was promoted into the supervisor position. Management at the *DeliveryWorldwide* call centre is actively pursuing economic development grants to permit it to hire up to 150 more employees, and to either move to a larger location in the region or expand its current facilities.

Since the end of fieldwork, the 'new' CEO of *BigTech* has been ousted by its Board of Directors. Despite this, the *BigTech* call centre has continued its outsourcing, and now operates with a much, much smaller crew. While it employed over 900 individuals at the commencement of this project, it now employs only about a third of that, and a higher proportion of those still employed are busy in roles to support the 'NPI' (new product introduction) function, which is in support of outsourcers and only accelerates the outsourcing of work – a legacy of the now departed CEO. The corporate welfare that had characterised *BigTech* for much of its history has been largely abandoned in this call centre, and those workers made redundant through WFR have been mostly 'let go' from the company rather than provided with access to retraining. For those that remain at *BigTech*, some have 'freely' taken on more responsibility in ways that exhibit the power of governmental

rationality, and its ability to channel workers and workers' interests in ways that benefit the programmatic goals of the organisation.

MHealth is also shrinking, but not as a result of outsourcing. It has lost major contracts with primary insurance carriers and gained others, but not enough to support all of the employees there when fieldwork was being conducted. Virtually all of the workers that were present in the *MHealth* call centre during fieldwork have either left the company or moved to other positions within it.

MedAdvise has been the most consistent of all of these four call centres. It employs the same number of clinical and non-clinical agents, and is still attempting to regain its overnight shift from an outsourcer in a neighbouring State. Even within the normal programmatic stability of organisations, constant change is the norm.

It is the study of forms that are caught up in these 'norms' of society – stability and change – that inspired this research. The promises of Foucaultian research are promises for our future to empirically identify: (a) the ways relations between resources are made and taken up such that particular subjects and subjectivities are manufactured; (b) the dangerous nature of these manufactured subjects and subjectivities; (c) that these relations, subjects and subjectivities are not transcendentally 'true', such that there is no option but submission to domination or revolt; and (c) the possibilities of 'freedom' immanent in modern society for altering these relations, subjects and subjectivities. By understanding our ways of being free, and of being made and of making ourselves subjects, we open the possibility for broader participation toward change that produces different subjects and subjectivities – if what we have and what we have made is not what we want or want to be (Rabinow & Rose 2003). Acting on this notion is no trivial matter, however. As demonstrated here, it takes much time and much effort to unpack these relations, to

describe them and their gaps, and to find ways of acting to produce change. There remains much work to be done in society to understand its workings, and to find ways to make this understanding known so that individuals may act in it so as to effect change, if change is what is desired. There is also much work to be done in finding ways to communicate these things to those individuals who can be minutely involved in the process of change. All of these are large scale efforts of which this thesis is only a small part, but a part that has been assembled systematically toward these ends.

By glancing at the table of contents in this report, one can see a distinct trajectory. At the very beginning, I problematise what some see as principal sociological research and theories on work, highlighting their shortcomings and their strengths in terms of the goals mentioned above. Then I begin an empirical and ethnographic tour of TMTL, highlighting the apparatuses and forces through which workers are disciplined and brought to govern themselves within those forces, and how they come to react to the Knowledge and organisationally-manufactured 'truth' represented through those apparatuses – how the workers have come to 'shadowbox with data' in reifying these bio-political forces and activating a particular subjectivity. Next, I pointed out how these bio-political forces are not total, and do not dominate the workers. Instead, I show how workers have developed tactics for locating, creating and occupying 'spaces left free' within the apparatuses that comprise their workplaces. When occupying such spaces, workers can *appear to be* subjects of the organisation, while actually colonising a sort of 'inner' region in which they can, however briefly and partially, be somewhat free of it, and even manage to change it – turning the tables and making the organisation 'shadowbox with data'. Each of these are strategic doings of doings.

Next, I described how workers take advantage of the organisation to satisfy their current desires in ways that permit them to produce themselves as subjects of a wholly different sort – not subjects of the organisation, but family members, parents, peers and spouses. Finally, after these low level, high detail and deconstructive analyses of bio-political practices and technologies of the self, I zoomed out for a high level theoretical reconstruction of the programs, technologies and strategies through which TMTL comes to exist as a distinct type of work, in which subjects are brought to participate in the ongoing production of it and themselves. In this, continuity with the past was found in the forms and norms of these organisations. Subjects were found to be 'free', but also always linked to the bio-political discourse – subjects *in* the discourse in addition to subjects *of* the discourse – subjects who can influence it, but who are still tethered to it, subjects who are 'free' in particular ways established in the discourse, and made responsible for themselves in terms of its norms and forms (Rose, N. 1999c).

From theory to the empirical and back, this depicts the general form of research. One begins with a survey of the ground, picks up tools when planning a project, digs into the subject and then attempts to account for what one has seen and learned. However, as much as I have learned of TMTL, a region of working life affected by new technologies and the subjects themselves, I have learned to use tools of analysis and synthesis – tools to think with. With them the world looks different to me now than it did when the project was begun. With them the world opens up anew. With them, I hope I will be able to depict the world in my future research reports and in my teaching such that others will also come to see it differently and to act with that new knowledge.

My interest in technology and scientific norms and forms, and their part in the production of Knowledge, power, 'truth' and subjectivity, has been deepened and piqued, and I see no shortage of projects that can take me into more detailed analyses of how these flow in modern society. For example, the dramatic increase in subcontracting or 'outsourcing'[301] of technical and other forms of labour in the early 21st century comes with the transmission of work by electronic and telecommunications networks, potentially facilitating the activation of the mechanisms of subjectivity production noted here. Software design, all forms of engineering and even medical research are commonly done between teams of workers across organisations, all with copious contractual documentation, and using procedures and methods of observing, inscribing and examining what is wanted and how it is wanted, all of which extend the power and subjectivity producing potential immanent in 'modern organisations' and modern society, and perhaps set the stage for unique forms of shadowboxing and links to 'control society' along the way.

In these situations, the way historical values, beliefs and methods of measurement are 'black boxed' such that organisational programs are unproblematically packaged and stabilised, acts as a means to allow and extend power. There is little doubt that other forms will emerge, many of which are unimaginable at present. All of these allow the interested researcher to keep busy for as long as he or she desires! This project signals the beginning of my own contributions in this regard.

Other Foucaultian-inspired analytic traditions are also available to facilitate such activity. The work of actor-network theorists cited in these pages (Brigham &

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[301] Call centres are presently a primary location for this outsourcing, as evidenced at *BigTech*. In addition, medical services, such as the decoding of X-Rays and other types of medical imaging of patients in the United States, are now regularly performed by physicians and technicians 'somewhere else'.

Corbett 1997; Kendall & Wickham 1999; Latour 1986, 1987, 1993, 1999b; Latour & Woolgar 1990; Law 1992; Lynch 1993) can inform future Foucaultian-inspired work in this regard, as can the substantive work of Ian Hacking in his agenda for studying what he calls 'making up people' (Hacking 1982, 1986a, 1986b, 1990, 1991, 2004). While Hacking and the work of actor-network theorists aim at more abstract regions of the production and upkeep of society, the work of ethnomethodologists provides an array of tools and reports for analysing the same in a micro-sociological context (Coulon 1995; Garfinkel 1967, 1986; Lankshear et al. 2001; Lynch 1993; Morris & Chenail 1995; Smith, D. 1984, 1999a; ten Have & Psathas 1995; Turner 1974; Zimmerman 1969, 1970). The latter seems to me very compatible with Foucaultian perspectives, and is already a substantial contributor to actor-network theory, or at least its primary venue of 'science studies' (Latour & Woolgar 1990; Lynch 1993). While my current tenured faculty position in the Boise State University, College of Engineering draws upon a previous doctorate in a technical field, tactical changes in what I teach and how I teach it could certainly facilitate access to a substantial array of resources for the sociological study of labour, technology and society. The possibility of sociological analyses of engineering practice, the ways engineered products are distributed and used in society, and the ways these products contribute to the production of subjects and subjectivities, is at present very enticing.

In such pursuits, consistent with a Foucaultian vision, I aim not to identify or insist upon some universal understanding, but to demonstrate for others *how* one can find anonymous strategies immanent in the 'doings' of intentional actions, and, given these strategies, *how* one can understand differently, and through such understanding, act in creating ourselves *as we would prefer to be*, rather than contributing to a headless strategy. That is, I aim to produce a change in perspectives, perceptions and

responsibilities through which individuals can develop new modes of thought and action when that seems the most appropriate and responsible thing to do. I aim to provide members of society and social institutions with access to other means with which they may create understanding and themselves, and by extension, society, in a new figure.

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