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The Development of Development: A Post-Marxist Analysis of the Development of Hegemonic Developmental Psychology

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Abstract *In this paper, using Marxist and post-Marxist theory of political economy and subjectivity, I will explore the question, 'what might a theory of developmental psychology look like if it were molded to the contours of today's contemporary social reality?' I will apply the Marxist idea of historical tendency in order to examine how hegemonic discourses that make-up mainstream North American developmental psychology have developed according to the material and social conditions in recent history. In particular, I will examine how historical tendency might have played a role in how the work of the 'father of developmental psychology,' Jean Piaget, has been interpreted and in some cases misinterpreted. I will then briefly consider a different conception of developmental psychology based on the current conditions of our political economy, which may point to a hegemonic conception of developmental psychology in the future.*

The key to Marx's method of historical materialism is that social theory must be molded to the contours of contemporary social reality. [...] Marx explains in his 1857 introduction to the Grundrisse, [...] that our mode of understanding must be fitted to the contemporary social world and thus change along with history: the method and the substance, the form and content must correspond. That means, however, that once history moves on and the social reality changes, then the old theories are no longer adequate. We need new theories for the new reality.
(Negri & Hardt, 2004, p. 140)

It is with the above philosophy in mind that I engage this writing. Accordingly, I will explore the question: What might a theory of developmental psychology look like if it were molded to the contours of today's contemporary social reality?

*I*n order to build my argument, I will first examine a brief history of developmental psychology, linking dominant theory with the material and social conditions of the time. I will trace the development of a few key hegemonic discourses that make-up mainstream North American developmental psychology. The development of these hegemonic discourses will be contextualized within a post-Marxist view of political economy and subjectivity. In Part II, I will briefly consider a different conception of developmental psychology based on the current conditions of our political economy, which may point to a hegemonic conception of the future.

There will always be people whose thoughts manage to escape the dominant subjectivity. But because these people do not fit the 'norm', it is quite likely that they will be misunderstood or misinterpreted. The history of ideas and meanings is complex. It is quite possible that what we consider as new or revolutionary ideas today have always existed but failed to take a hegemonic form and were instead, appropriated to suit dominant needs. Although there are a multitude of other influences that came to shape developmental psychology, the work of Jean Piaget can be seen as significant in shaping the overall linear and progressive structure of developmental psychology. Piaget himself is indebted to the work of others; philosophically, in many ways Piaget draws on Kantian and post-Kantian thought and biologically, Piaget's work may be viewed as rooted in Darwinism (Wartofsky, 1983). What is most interesting, however, is how the nuances and complexities of Piaget's work were/are often overlooked and/or misinterpreted by mainstream Western audiences.

Thus, I will argue that certain ideas from Piaget's theory of cognitive development were appropriated as part of mainstream developmental psychology in the early to mid 20th century when they arose in dominance. I will focus on three main hegemonic discourses of mainstream developmental psychology that these ideas were appropriated into: development as uniform and linear; development as progressive and product focused; and development as individualized. I will illustrate how these three hegemon-

ic discourses may be linked to the social, political and economical conditions of the time by applying Marxist and post-Marxist views of political economy and subjectivity.

This paper will most often engage with post-Marxist authors. As the beginning quotation informs us, capital itself can be seen as developing with its environment. Proponents of post-Marxist thought position capital further within the new and current material conditions, material conditions that Marx may have predicted to some degree, but nonetheless did not live to experience and thus could not incorporate into his work on the development of capital. In essence, post-Marxism follows and is indebted to the methodology founded by Marx, but the results and interpretations of this very methodology when applied within current conditions are inevitably different. Further, because the Marxist approach to theory is embedded within its material conditions, the theory itself can be seen to transform in the process of interpretation (Negri & Hardt, 2004).

In particular, this paper will engage with one of the primary elements of Marx's methodology: the notion of historical tendency. In their book, *Multitude* (2004), Negri and Hardt explain that the hegemonic form of production "imposes a tendency on other forms of labour, transforming them in accordance with its own characteristics, and in that sense it has adopted a hegemonic position" (p.141).[1] It is with the idea of historical tendency in mind that I seek to examine the aforementioned discourses of developmental psychology, with the corresponding modes of production of a given era driving their form and hegemony.[2]

Part I

Müller, Carpendale and Smith (2009) reveal that nearing the end of his life and career, Piaget himself felt largely misunderstood. Müller et al. (2009) speculate that this sense of misunderstanding is due to the fact that many scholars separate his epistemological, that is theoretical, framework from his empirical research, which are contingent on each other. Such a decontextualization of Piaget's work has inevitably led to misunderstandings and misinterpretations. Although Piaget's theory of cognitive development can be said to lie prominently at the heart of contemporary developmental psychology, the way his theory has been received is not always the way it originated (Burman, 1994; Müller et al. 2009; Piaget, 1995).

Undoubtedly, Piaget's most significant contribution to developmental psychology is the notion of 'stage and structure' which is largely responsible for the dominant stage theory of development (Burman, 1994; Müller et al. 2009; Kesselring, 2009). A common view of this theory is that the stages are static, discontinuous and universal structures that define a child's thinking (Müller et al. 2009; Kesselring, 2009). However, Piaget himself noted that the stages were not rigid nor homogeneous, but rather, quite the opposite. In several places, Piaget noted that variability should be expected (Müller et al., 2009).

Another key point of misinterpretation was Piaget's research methodology. Piaget utilized and encouraged a flexible, semi-structured interviewing technique. But this was often criticized as inconsistent with the scientific method and objectivity (Burman, 1994; Hsueh, 2009). In fact, the opposite philosophy in Western methodology was pursued: rigid, standardized testing (Burman, 1994). Ironically, developmental psychology utilized a 'streamlined' version of Piaget's stage theory to justify standardization and normalization in the methodology of child psychology. In both of the above misconstruals of Piaget's work by Western scholars, we see the dominant discourse of linearity and uniformity emerging and, in essence, taking over.

Such an appropriation of Piaget's work is unsurprising when contextualized within the hegemonic subjectivity and political economy of the time. In his *Twenty Theses on Marx*, Negri (1996) gives his interpretation of the class situation in contemporary times by expanding on several strands of Marxist theory, including further developments within the division of labour. Negri argues that there are two phases of the period of industrial revolution. The first phase spans 1848-1914, while the second phase is from 1914 until 1968. It is in the second phase that developmental psychology builds momentum; this phase is characterized by the hegemony of the mass worker (Negri, 1996). The mass worker is situated at the time when Fordism is instituted. The Fordist model of mass production increased efficiency and profit by making several products (originally cars) at a time, instead of one product at a time. A precursor to this production style can be seen in Marx's *Capital: Volume I*, where he describes how division of labour in manufacturing may lead to the detail labourer: "a labourer who all his life performs one and the same simple operation, converts his whole body into the automatic, specialized implement of that operation" (Marx & Engels, 1978, p. 390). Detail labours are then assembled together to form collective labourers, each one producing one part of the whole, forming "a class of so-called unskilled labourers" (Marx & Engels, 1978, p. 392). Lee (2001) further describes the Fordist model and life for the 'collective labourer,' or 'mass worker,' who in this era is now further aided by the assembly line:

1 It is important to note here that for Negri and Hardt, labour goes beyond simple employment, and reaches into immaterial realms, or forms of social labour. Social labour is further explained in Part II, as the mode of production that underlies the total subsumption of capital. (The total subsumption of capital being the new era many post-Marxist scholars argue we are currently experiencing under capitalism.)

2 In this paper, I also engage in other parts of Marx's methodology as interpreted by Negri and Hardt; however, the notion of historical tendency is most prominent in my analysis. For further insight and a more detailed explication, I would recommend reading "Excursus 1: Method: In Marx's Footsteps" - a chapter in Negri and Hardt's (2004) Multitude.

> Fordist mass production became the standard model of 'blue-collar' manual work. As long as Fordist businesses continued to be profitable, employees could look forward to very stable conditions of employment. Once one had learnt one's task on the assembly line well enough to keep up with the pace of production, one need not seek to change one's range of skills. Further, since so much capital had been invested in the factory in which one worked, according to a long-term plan, one could feel relatively confident that one would continue to work in the same place and among more or less the same people until retirement (p.11).

Thus, we see that life for the mass worker[3] is underlined by linearity and uniformity. "Fordism, with its stability, reliability and standardization of products, was not just a business strategy, it was a 'total way of life'" (Lee, 2001, p.11). As Lee (2001) further argues, "between 1945 and the early 1970s across the industrialized world, economic arrangements between businesses, governments and employees were such that once one was in employment, one could reasonably expect that one's working conditions would remain stable" (p. 12). This hegemony of linearity and security might be seen as reflected in the subjectivities of those producing ideas of mainstream developmental psychology; misinterpretations of Piaget's theory and methodology may be seen as ideas appropriated to align with the development of large-scale industry and its tendencies. This is not only seen in some interpretations of Piaget's work, but in other theories that came to dominate developmental psychology at the time. For instance, a prominent theory that would have been situated within ideologies of industrial capital is Erik Erikson's life-stage theory of human development. Erikson's ideas were first published in his widely popular book, *Childhood and Society*, published in 1950 (Erikson, 1993). Erikson's life-stage theory focused on the successful resolution of each life-stage's dilemma, or crisis, as the key to healthy development. Failure to resolve a particular life-stage's development points to personal growth being stunted (Coon & Mitterer, 2007). Erikson's theory, similarly to industrial capital, points to a desire for linear and stable development. A similar sentiment might be seen in John Bowlby's theory of attachment, which was also first developed within the time-frame of industrial capital; Bowlby began developing his theory in the 1950s (Bowlby, 1988). Bowlby's theory of attachment stresses that there are patterns of infant attachment (secure, anxious-resistant, anxious avoided and disorganized) which profoundly affect the future development of individuals (Bowlby, 1988). Although there are no stages underlying Bowlby's theory, there is a favourable outcome, with a secure attachment yielding the most successful developmental results. In general, what Bowlby's theory proposes is that certain kinds of interactions will provide certain kinds of outcomes, suggesting tthat although diverse, there is still uniformity in development.

Although ideas of linearity and uniformity were by no means new at the time, they were certainly intensified at this phase. The rise of fast-food franchises (with uniform menus and procedures), the post-war suburbanian explosion (with zoning laws dictating the uniformity of houses), and the publishing of the first DSM (the standardization of mental disorders) are only a few examples of this intensification.

It is interesting to note that the notion of uniformity in development dates back to pre-Darwinian times; however, even Darwin's ideas were misconstrued to focus upon uniformity in heredity, as opposed to variability in heredity, which was Darwin's actual focus (Burman, 1994). Here we see again how even the theory of evolution has been appropriated to fit hegemonic ideals of development of the time. On the other hand, what is accurately taken from the theory of evolution is its subscription to idea that life progresses towards an ideal: "Comparisons between child, prehistoric man and 'savage' presupposes a conception of development, of individual and evolutionary progress, as unilinear, as directed steps up an ordered hierarchy" (Burman, 1994, p. 11). This highlights the dominant discourse that development is progressive and product focused.

We see this discourse being perpetuated further in another common misunderstanding of Piaget's theory: that there is an ultimate stage of thinking that the child is trying to reach (the rational adult); that each stage is quantitatively better than the previous one. Here, the discourse of progression and the focus on an ideal end product, glosses over key nuances in Piaget's epistemological underpinnings. In Piaget's theory, "developmental levels are levels of intellectual construction; they are not levels of knowers" (Müller et al., 2009, p. 6). In other words, what Piaget's developmental levels refer to are processes, not products. As such, each level of intellectual construction would examine what one can do with any set of ideas, as opposed to examining the level of a "knower." The level of a "knower" is not referring to a process, but instead a static characteristic: what ideas does one have, instead of what one can do with any set of ideas. As Müller et al. (2009) further explain "the formal properties Piaget wanted to describe were forms of thinking, that is, different ways in which children approach the same kind of problem" (p. 7). Although, there is certainly a sense of teleology in Piaget's work, the nuances of his theory that are highlighted within dominant developmental psychology may be seen to reflect an alienated capitalist subjectivity. Such an "abstraction of developmental time is associated with that of exchange, such that developmental maturation is linked to the return on a financial investment" (Burman, 1994, p.16). Thus, Burman argues development parallels capitalism. To be more specific, however, we see that development parallels industrial capital. The idea of the "knower" can be seen as a final product that one is striving for, or a sort of 'profit' that one is

3 It should be stressed that other types of work did exist at the time, and that the mass worker was certainly not representative of the average citizen. Thus, the mass worker represented not the majority, but was rather seen as the hegemonic norm of the time creating a tendency towards its own characteristics.

relying on in terms of successful developmental maturation as Burman points to. The focus here being more so on the product of thinking (bourgeois ownership), rather than the process (proletariat productivity). In essence, with the privileging of the *product* of thinking, we see thinking separated from its labour, the *process*, and resulting in the alienation of the thinker. Such an interpretation removes us from several of Piaget's original intentions as Piaget also insisted that each form of thinking should be content and context specific (Burman, 1994; Müller et al., 2009).

This discourse of progress and end product is intertwined with the underlying discourse of individualism. Although the Fordist model of production during the time of industrial capital offered new ways of social organization for the workers – the standardized work day and workplace enabling mass mobilization – it also brought a new level of abstraction to labour which can be associated with individualism and alienation (Negri, 1996). Each individual does their part but is disconnected from the whole of production. This individualization of labour can be seen to improve efficiency and therefore the end goal, profit (Marx & Engels, 1978; Lee, 2001).

This notion can be seen in the way Piaget's stage model was widely received as having discontinuous, or individual stages. In fact, in the US, developmental research even came to focus upon the acceleration of development (known as the 'American question'), attempting to "teach children to do Piagetian-type problems at even earlier ages" (Burman, p.156). In other words, such an approach attempted to quantify Piaget's original qualitative model. Hence we see how normalization and standardization is made more 'efficient' through processes of individualization. Mainstream development focuses on producing a 'normal' child; in other words, a rational, able-bodied, male who will eventually sell his labour for the sake of profit.

Similarly, Nakata (2010) discusses how the politics of childhood rights are primarily framed around the child 'becoming adult'; in particular, the governed liberal adult citizen. Nikata (2010) quotes Nikolas Rose on how normalization plays a central role in this becoming:

> Nikolas Rose has observed that 'children [first] came to the attention of social authorities as delinquents threatening property, and security, as future workers requiring normalization and skills, as future soldiers requiring a level of fitness' and that 'childhood began to be seen as a distinct period during which bad habits could be laid down that would have a lifelong influence' (1999, 123 and 52 respectively). This reflects the government of the sinful child, in need of reform and attention before they reach adulthood so that they will become good and productive citizens (p. 11).

We see here that the norm or the ideal is reinforced by its aberrations. For Nakata this is seen in the 'sinful child.' In dominant developmental psychology we see the governance of the ideal enforced by abnormal developmental psychology (Burman, 1994). The ideal child, developing healthily towards rationality and thus production, is defined by the abnormal child, the developmentally stunted and thus, unproductive child. Or put in another way, the idea of the abnormal child allows for the disciplining of the normal child. Foucault's concept of the panopticon can be useful here. The panopticon refers to a particular architectural configuration that allows for the observance of subjects without them seeing the observer. Most notably, the formation of the panopiticon is exemplified in the prison guard's watch tower. Where the tower is situated in such a way that all prisoners can be seen, and all prisoners can see it, but cannot, however, see the observer, or prison guard. This leads to the internalization of the gaze, and hence the self-disciplining of the subject, without the observer even being present (Mills, 2003). Thus, this diagram of discipline can be seen to spread from a physical one into a social one (Skott-Myhre, 2008). Developmental psychology through the means of education is one way that we cans see the engagement with such a diagram. Skott-Myhre (2008) links the diagram of the panopticon to industrial capital: "a similar diagram was constituted in the assembly line of the Fordist factory, which extended itself from disciplining workers so they would efficiently produce goods into a deployment within the practices of education that disciplined child bodies into the habits of good factory workers" (Skott-Myhre, 2008, p. 78).

The three hegemonic discourses embedded within developmental psychology reflect and create a society of discipline that characterizes late industrial capitalism (Deleuze, 1995). Or as Burman (1994) puts it, "turning the complex disorder of individual development into orderly steps to maturity reflects explicit social interests in maintaining social control within and between social groups and nations" (p.19). The 'social control' Burman speaks of contextualized within a disciplinary society are based on sites of confinement. As the work of Foucault has explicated, the space of confinement is epitomized by the prison, but is reflected in other spaces such as the hospital, school and of course, the factory (Deleuze, 1995). The ideals behind sites of confinement include: " bringing everything together, giving each thing its place, organizing time, [and] setting up in this space-time a force of production greater than the sum of component forces" (Deleuze, 1995, p. 177).

The hegemonic discourses underlying mainstream developmental psychology can be seen to align with the ideals of spaces of confinement. We can see standardization, uniformity, and individualizaton as disciplinary forces for the sake of future production and profit[4]. Hence, developmental psychology can be seen as an

4 In other words, capital uses spaces of confinement as a way of domination and exploitation. Here we see where Deleuze (as well as Guattari) is indebted to Marxism, as Deleuze (1995) himself comments that his political philosophy always turns on "the analysis of capitalism and the ways it has developed" (p. 171).

immaterial space of confinement; confining the developing child to a hierarchical and quantifiable notion of teleological time and thus a hierarchical and quantifiable notion of value. Anything or anyone not fitting this confine is rejected as abnormal.

This confinement can further be reflected through the misunderstandings and misinterpretations of Piaget's theory which was appropriated into the rigid structure of a dominant developmental stage model. Piaget's work can be seen, in essence, to have been disciplined to fit the needs of capital at the time.

Part II

Today the theories of Piaget and other theorists of his time, would inevitably be interpreted and appropriated differently, as social conditions have changed and new needs have arisen for capital. Specifically, I will argue that had Piaget's theories arisen today for the first time[5], they might be more accurately interpreted as such interpretations may suit the hegemonic needs of today's society more effectively. Marx himself states that "consciousness can sometimes appear further advanced than the contemporary empirical relationships, so that in the struggles of a latter epoch one can refer to earlier theoreticians as authorities" (1978, p. 195). Negri (1994), along with others (Deleuze, 1995; Negri & Hardt, 2004; Hardt, 1998) argue that since 1968 there has been a new shift in the means of production. Factory manufacturing has given way to new technologies, displacing the mass worker. Industrial capitalism, the period of the mass worker, has shifted into the total subsumption of capital, in which the 'social worker' becomes hegemonic. The total subsumption of capital is the moment in which everything – material or immaterial – becomes for sale (Skott-Myhre, 2008). The total subsumption of capital experiences the deregularization of capital, and the opening up of the market to the entire world; in other words, the globalization of capital. Negri (1994) describes: "the models of regulation are extended along multinational lines, and the regulation passes through monetary dimensions which cover the world market to a continually greater extent" (Negri, 1994, p.156).

Since the globalization of capital displaces the Western mass worker to periphery spaces in which labour is cheaper, hegemonic labour in North America shifts to a different focus. The organization of labour "becomes progressively more decentralized spatially. It is instead focused on the expropriation of social knowledges, on the capitalization of the social labouring networks: in short, it concentrates on the exploitation of a working figure which extends well beyond the bounds of the factory. We call this figure the social worker" (Negri, 1994, p. 163)

The social worker's life is defined by flexibility; everything is "short-term and rapidly shifting, but at the same time continuous and unbounded" (Deleuze, 1995, p. 181). As Harvey (1996) further explicates, production turnover time was accelerated by technological advances, which in turn affected labour processes in a respective manner. This, however, also sped up exchange and consumption times, creating a "general speed-up in the turnover times of capital" (Harvey, 1996, p. 495). Harvey continues on,

> In the realm of commodity production, the primary effect has been to emphasize the values and virtues of instantaneity (instant and fast foods, meals and other satisfactions) and of disposability (cups, plates, cutlery, packaging, napkins, clothing, etc.). The dynamics of a 'throwaway' society, as writers like Alvin Toffler (1970) dubbed it, began to become evident during the1960s. It meant more than just throwing away produced goods (creating a monumental waste-disposal problem), but also being able to throw away values, life-styles, stable relationships, and attachment to things, buildings, places, people, and received ways of doing and being. (...) Through such mechanisms (which proved highly effective from the standpoint of accelerating the turnover of goods in consumption) individuals were forced to cope with disposability, novelty and the prospects for instant obsolescence (p.495).

The underlying effects of such acceleration have been increased forms of control, under the guise of flexibility. With the turn over of capital being faster than human production (or a 'twinkle of an eye' as Marx would have it), people are forced to keep up with capital. In essence, capital controls us, we do not control it. These are the qualities that begin to underlie a society of control.

Instead of a society of discipline, it is argued that today we are within a society of control (Deleuze, 1995; Hardt, 1998; Negri, 1994). As Deleuze (1995) further explains, discipline is enforced through confinement: one is confined to an enclosure (the home, the hospital, the prison, the school, etc.). One moves from confinement to confinement molding herself to each one's rules and regulations. Control, on the other hand, is all encompassing. Discipline is always starting over and over, as one moves to and from each confinement; control never ends, you never finish anything. The discipline created in sites of confinement through segregation almost melts away as control is continuous, already embedded in our thoughts, speech and desires (Deleuze, 1995). This is not to say that notions of discipline no longer exist, but that they are giving way to new technologies of social control, specifically focused on technological advances in communication, as the new hegemonic worker is socially based (Deleuze, 1995; Hardt, 1998). Because of the total subsumption of capital and the rise of the social worker, capital is no longer contained, but dispersed and decentralized throughout the social world. What we have now is a "free-floating control", controlling through our means of communication, demanding that all our time be used towards capital

5 I realize this is quite a contradictory argument to make, as if Piaget's work had arisen today, it would be shaped by current times and inevitably be quite different. However, for the sake of this exploratory argument I will ignore this contradiction and imagine his theory as the same as it first might have been.

(Deleuze, 1995; Negri, 1994; Skott-Myhre, 2008). Flexible, part-time contract work reflects this shift. The day is no longer divided into work time and leisure time; all time is 'game' for exploitation and appropriation by capital. Spaces of containment premised on the structure of the prison, give way to an all encompassing space of control and surveillance premised on the structure of the online shopping mall. The notion of 'choice' dominates the market, and is conflated with increased freedom and liberation (Hardt, 1998). The illusion that freedom lies in choice-making covers up that choices are pre-made by the market and are actually an intricate control mechanism, recording and digitalizing consumer choices into traceable, and hence controllable, identities.

With such changes to the socioeconomic conditions of our time, the three hegemonic discourses structuring mainstream developmental psychology would inevitably see similar changes. A dominant view of development, if arising at this time, would most likely not be focused on uniformity and linearity[6]. In fact, we might see a greater focus on variability, as this conception better suits the demands of a society of control. Within the total subsumption of capital, linearity is no longer seen as productive, but as limiting, as it is finite. Capital has run out of room on its own playing field, and deregulates and blurs boundaries in order to progress. A population that is 'normal' and 'uniform' is not as profitable as a population which has variability. A population whose hegemonic focus is normality is a limited consumer base, or audience, for capital, as only a select few can come close to attaining this status (or as Burman (1994) points out that no one can actually attain it completely as it is a pure abstraction). Capital, in this stage, needs to target as many populations as possible in order to make profit. For this reason it could be argued, there have been strong recent movements towards inclusion of differences within certain strands of developmental psychology. This influence is exemplified in inclusive education. Although there has been some debate as to what inclusive education really is, several proponents[7] would agree that essentially "inclusion is about valuing diversity rather than assimilation" (Hick, Kershner & Farrell, 2009, p. 2). Philpott (2007) reveals that the philosophy of inclusion has become so widespread that most of the literature in the field has become "dominated by criticisms of special education and the benefits (and challenges) of inclusion" (p. 4).

Hick et al. (2009) argue that historically psychology has generally been opposed to inclusion, creating more problems and barriers for inclusive education, rather than garnering support. Their recent book, *Psychology for Inclusive Education*, brings several contributors from around the globe together in order to facilitate a more productive relationship between psychology and inclusive education, as the authors argue that psychology has much to contribute in support of inclusion and diversity. Such a shift towards inclusion and diversity can be seen not merely based on a change of attitudes within people, but this change of attitudes might be seen as a result of the shift in the economy, as in the total subsumption of capitalism capital is desperate for more consumers in order to thrive. Henceforth, we see the variability that Piaget's theory (as well as Darwin's theory of evolution) proposed coming to the forefront. Indeed, variability can be said to be a primary concern to neo-Piagetian theory (Rose & Fischer, 2009). The desire to fulfil diverse developmental needs can be seen to in fact, support the mechanisms of a society of control, as the study of detailed variability can be used to inform the market on how to diversify itself and thus create even more 'choices' to control its ever-growing consumer base.

Moreover, as capital becomes infinite, it is no longer quantifiable, nor is value (Negri, 1994). Meaning that binary divisions (i.e., normal vs. abnormal) begin to lose meaning, as qualitative and immeasurable concepts hold more value. In this way we see control in the form of language and codes, instead of binary oppositions that discipline each other. Control encompasses every individual on his or her own terms in detail, but also on a mass scale. In essence the notion of the individual breaks down into the 'dividual' (Deleuze, 1995). The dividual is infinitely divisible, as s/he is coded and digitalized and his/her value can be traced by and defined by the consumer choices he or she makes.

The concept of the dividual would certainly change the way developmental psychology is produced and maintained. For instance, instead of containing the abnormal child within the clinic in order to discipline his (apparent) 'unproductiveness', one might now take him to the mall to make him look like the masses, as he can still be a consumer and controlled. This can already be seen in a study by McKeever and Miller (2004) which examined practices of mothers of children with disabilities. Most of the mothers in the study were highly focused on normalizing the appearance of their children. "Mothers spontaneously reported that they invested enormous cost and effort to ensure their children were dressed well and fashionably regardless of each family's class position, ethnocultural background, or extent of disability" (McKeever & Miller, p. 1187). Focus is no longer on production, so who can produce; but, rather, who can consume becomes valuable (Negri, 1994). The shift to consumerism can be further illustrated by the focus of purchasing skills in adaptive community functioning for individuals with autism spectrum disorder (Cihak & Grim, 2008; Yang Ping et al., 2005). This is exemplified in the title of Marholin et al.'s (1979) study, *"I'll have a Big Mac, large fries, large coke, and apple pie,"*...or teaching adaptive community skills, where consumption is positioned as the key attribute for successful community integration.

6 It should be noted that although Marx viewed history as teleological, this form of linear progress also shifts and is reconfigured within post-Marxist theory. This especially becomes apparent within the total subsumption of capital, as the social worker's labour is no longer confined to regularized work hours, but fragments and proliferates into all time, as the social is all-encompassing. One could argue that Marx was in fact so attuned to the tendency of industrial capital in his time, that for this reason his understanding of time was situated in this very tendency.

7 See also Roach (1995), Rice (2005) and Philpott (2007).

Today, the ideas of development as progressive and with an ideal final product would most likely also dissipate. For example, continuous education is now rising in popularity, leaving the confines of the school, and affecting all individuals, child or adult (Deleuze, 1995). A static end product or ideal is no longer desirable nor profitable, as a shifting ideal affords infinite profit. This points to what Negri (1994) proposes, that scientific methodology will focus more on discontinuities and ruptures, meaning that a qualitative and individually contextualized methodology like Piaget's may become more meaningful. Furthermore, Piaget's conviction that adult behaviour cannot be understood without a developmental perspective might also be taken more seriously at this time. Flavell (1963) remarks on Piaget's disapproval of "what he sees [saw] to be an unfortunate contemporary hiatus between child psychologists and those who study only adults" (p. 16); hence, developmental psychology may see shifts towards towards a psychology that does not separate the child from the adult. We can see the blurring of these lines already occurring with the recent debates about where adolescence ends and adulthood begins. In particular, we see this reflected in Arnett's (2000) recent theory of 'emerging adulthood,' as changes in Western economies have put traditional adult roles into flux.

The above outlines a conceptualization of developmental psychology contextualized within the socioeconomic conditions of today, based on a post-Marxist perspective. A developmental psychology in a society of control might look more like a qualitative psychology focused on variability, divisibility and dividuality and infinite identity production (or is it consumption?). These are not necessarily new ideas; many of these ideas can be found underlying the peripheries of developmental psychology today, as well as the past. What the above analysis does point to, however, is the potential of such ideas to become hegemonic in our times.

Such a stance opens up many new lines of inquiry. Is this a developmental psychology that might open up more possibilities for being and becoming? Or one that might create more violent restrictions than ever? Whether or not such a model of development is desirable is unclear. As Negri (1994) questions, are these changes in our society the indicators of yet another industrial revolution or the beginnings of a true communist revolution? The outcomes are not known; however, such an analysis may provide us with clues about where developmental psychology might be heading in the future.

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