

Introduction

Liberal Vistas and the Political Economy of the Sign

The word 'democracy' has its origins in ancient Greece, where the concept emerged to describe a form of rule by the demos, which can be translated as a city state in which citizens governed. In this polis, human beings are essentially 'political animals', whose intellectual and moral capacities can only be attained by the uninhibited participation in democratic institutions structured to promote virtues in citizens. In comprehending, the relation between politics and virtue, Aristotle (384-322BC) pronounced that democracy was an educative phenomenon, which gives expression to the self-realization of human capacities stimulated by participating in political life. A principle feature of this operative conception of the virtuous individual as the good citizen, resides with the ability of education to actualize the intellectual, emotional and moral capacities, of an entire populous to their full potential. The nature of citizenship, Aristotle, declared in *Politics*, is reliant on cultivated self-knowledge. Thus, politics has aesthetic dimensions and '...if politics be an art, change must be necessary in this as in any other art' (Aristotle 2000:80).

Enlightenment discourse retained elements of Aristotle's concern to protect intrinsic rights through erudition, self-improvement and catechetical instruction. Nevertheless, a notable disjuncture appears in the seventeenth century, with the emergence of classical liberalism's 'possessive individualism' (Macpherson 1983). For Aristotle, 'political life must be seen as in large measure a means to the attainment of virtue understood as an end in itself' (Galston 1988:1280). Conversely, in the core components of 'possessive individualism', the Aristotelian 'relation of politics and virtue are reversed: virtue becomes the means, and the political community provides the ends' (ibid). The liberal economic market, of seventeenth century Europe, professed moral values and political ideals that emphasized the sovereignty of the individual. For, classical liberals 'what makes a man human is freedom from dependence on the wills of others' (Macpherson 1983:263). A liberal society is characterized by individuals that exist prior to social interaction and whose natural state is irrevocably a-social. The natural state of human nature is, therefore, 'atomistic' (i.e., isolated) and 'egoistic' (i.e., directed by self-interest). As Holton (1992:55) observes, classical liberalist human beings, 'represent self-contained atoms, whose objectives and strategies for action are formed without any necessary interaction with others'. Individual sovereignty is the natural predisposition of the human being, and thus to act, any differently, might be the result of the arbitrary coercion of some unnatural intervention. Suffice to

say, that the individual is the definitive point of reference in liberal market society. In the sense that individuals are fundamentally atomistic, they possess a sense of their own self-interests, which motivate their human action and personal ambition. Thus the very humanity of human beings depends on, naturally ascribed desires and interests. And this suggests a further level of disassociation from a notion of collective will, i.e., the advocacy for self-reliance and a profound incredulity for unnecessary dependence on others. For, political life should assert the values of self-determination and 'freedom from any relation with others except those relations which the individual enters voluntarily with a view to his own interest' (Macpherson 1983:263).

This classical liberal account of individual sovereignty, informed a broad range of intrinsically educative practices, grounded in the assumption that, prior to entering social interaction, individuals articulate knowledge of their own objectives. Historically these, atomistic dispositions were regarded by economists as 'tastes', that is 'preferences analogous to the natural peculiarly personal requirements' of the individual (Holton 1992:56). Only individuals can fully discern their tastes, since these derive from the pre-social self rather than as a product of interaction with others. It is also taken as axiomatic that individuals are inherently rational and technically efficient in the satiation of their tastes. One consequence of this principle, is that classical liberalism is committed to an instrumental account of rationality 'where rational action is regarded as a characteristic of the way we choose means to reach a given end' (ibid:58). Economic liberals have traditionally bridged the pre-social dimensions of the individual and the necessity of social life, through the construct of private property and commitment to self-regulating markets (ibid).

Classical liberalism's overriding concept of market society fundamentally implies the cultivation of individual self-fulfillment and a 'commitment to developing the capacity of individuals...to pursue their own version of the "good life" for themselves, free from manipulation by others or from external pressures and constraints' (Carr and Harnett 2002:44). From this perspective, the task of actualizing classical liberalist virtues is axiomatic with the promotion of property rights, and the presumption that the possessive accumulation of material wealth is the principle vehicle through, which sovereign individuals can achieve their self-interests. The logical implication here is that sovereign individuals come to adopt a certain entrepreneurial form of practical relationship to their selves. Enterprise is represented here as playing a vital translating role, promising to align general political-ethical principles, with the goals of industry and the self-regulating activities of individuals (Miller and Rose 1993:100). Within this political-ethical environment, individuals are constituted as both objects of enterprise and instruments of enterprise as they make 'entrepreneurs of themselves, seeking to maximize their "quality of life" through the artful assembly of a "life-style" put together through the world of goods' (ibid:98). To this extent classical liberalism can be seen as a precursor to modern forms of governmental rationalities, which have become reliant upon the self-regulating capacities of subjects, configured

and normalized by disciplinary technologies (ibid). Of significance here is the disciplinary affect of 'technologies of sign systems' (Foucault 1988).

Michel Foucault's accounts of disciplinary technologies, render intelligible liberal virtues in terms of very particular 'truth games related to specific techniques that human beings use to understand themselves' (ibid:18). 'Technologies of sign systems' reflect and reproduce 'a matrix of practical reason' (ibid). This book argues that sign technologies are both the medium, and outcome of liberal virtues. Indeed, liberalism's past, present and future need to be understood in relation to the disciplinary tactics of 'sign technologies'. In more specific terms, this book interrogates advertising as a 'sign technology', integral for the translation of global liberalized capitalism into geopolitical tactics.

Theoretical Frameworks: Liberalism and the Political Economy of the Sign

Foucault's (1982, 1991a) interrogation of the production of truth, examines liberalism in terms of practices concerned with the regulation of bodies in time/space, the government of conduct and the formulation of the self. Thus, Foucault is skeptical of the 'theme of liberation' in so far as it refers 'back to the idea that there does exist a nature or human foundation which...found itself concealed, alienated or imprisoned in and by some repressive mechanism' implying that 'it would suffice to unloosen these repressive locks so that man can be reconciled with himself' (1988a:2 cited in Simons 1995:47). For, 'the man described for us, whom we are invited to free, is already in himself the effect of a subjection much more profound than himself' (Foucault 1991a:30). In so far as power is embedded in the 'social nexus', subjectivity exists in reciprocal relation to power. Individual self consciousness is configured through the exercise of power within, which apprehensions of personal identity come to be engendered. As Foucault expresses it:

...the individual is not a pre-given entity which is seized on by the exercise of power. The individual, with his [sic] identity and characteristics, is the product of a relation of power exercised over bodies, multiplicities, movements, desires and forces. (Foucault 1976, in (ed.) Gordon 1980:73-74)

Accepting that power is multiple and ubiquitous thus involves appreciating that there can be no 'true' essential subjectivity to be liberated from power. To this extent, power is positive in its existence and productive of self-identities along with their regimes of truth; rather than manifest in 'interdiction and operating by repression and deduction' (Dean 1994:156). Within the scope of this micro-physics of the self, Foucault depicts liberation movements, and their quest to emancipate subjects from the abuse of arbitrary power, as in fact bound up with disciplinary technologies directed at both constraining and enabling the power of subjection. For, it is evident that power/knowledge directly imply the preservation

of the classical liberal autonomous self, against constraints that would undermine its sovereignty. Liberalism's propensity is not freedom but unfreedom as it binds us ever more 'tightly to our subjectivities through our efforts to liberate ourselves' (Simons 1995:47). Indeed, the historical emergence of classical liberalism, also marks the ascendancy of disciplinary technologies that make possible the accumulation of capital and 'a political take-off as the traditional, ritual, costly, violent forms of power were superseded by a subtle, calculated technology of subjection' (Sheridan 1994:157).

Initially conceived, as a quest for the freedom of the sovereign individual from arbitrary power, the advancement of liberalism has been accompanied by the evolution of disciplinary technologies and normalization processes (Foucault 1982:213-4). The object of these technologies is the 'soul', to be understood as an entity, unlike in the Christian theological sense as a supernatural quality 'born in sin and subject to punishment' (Foucault 1991a:29). Rather, Foucault's account of the soul, regards it as a substantive category, 'born...out of methods of punishment, supervision and constraint' (ibid). As he expresses it:

This real, non-corporal soul is not a substance; it is the element in which are articulated the effects of a certain type of power and the reference of a certain type of knowledge, the machinery by which the power relations give rise to a possible corpus of knowledge, and knowledge extends and reinforces the effects of this power. On this reality-reference, various concepts have been constructed and domains of analysis carved out: psyche, subjectivity, personality, consciousness, etc.; on it have been built scientific techniques and discourses, and the moral claims of humanism. (ibid:29-30)

It needs to be emphasized that Foucault is not assuming that the real human subject and, object of intellectual knowledge has been substituted for a non-corporal soul. The micro-physics of power permeates the entire society and operates through the soul on the body (Sheridan 1994). Thus 'a soul inhabits him and brings him to existence, which is itself a factor in the mastery that power exercises over the body. The soul is the effect and instrument of a political anatomy; the soul is the prison of the body' (Foucault 1991a:30). Suffice to say, that the soul is the product, and instrument, of technologies of: production; sign systems; power and the self. The *raison d'être* connecting these technologies is the exercise of power upon the body, 'the body and its powers and capacities which are to be transformed in the processes of individualisation, and the body and its desires which are transformed in the construction of the self' (Marshall 1996:114).

There are historical reasons why our modern era is characterized by disciplinary technologies. The eighteenth century had witnessed a profound transition away from the spectacle of monarchical law, in which the body bore the inscription of monarchical sovereignty (Foucault 1991a). In the *Ancien Régime's* code of governance, transgression was punished by spectacular visual displays of violence against the body. Techniques of discipline assumed a certain art of

inflicting pain on the body, ‘...tortured, dismembered, amputated...symbolically branded...exposed alive or dead to public view. The body [was] the major target of penal repression’ (ibid:8). There is clearly an astonishing coincidence between ‘the art of punishing’ and the undertaking of ‘technologies of sign systems’. In the Ancien Régime, criminality was conceived as transgressing the embodiment of the law, i.e., the absolute monarchy. Punishment had thus to assume a symmetry of vengeance, in which a complex theatrics of barbaric retaliation inflicted on the criminal’s body, marked the re-instituted supremacy of the monarch’s power. In the Ancien Régime ‘the role of the criminal in punishment was to reintroduce, in the face of crime and the criminal code, the real presence of the signified – that is to say, of the penalty which, according to the terms of the code, must be infallibly associated with the offence’ (ibid:128). The body thus bears on it the inscription of the monarch’s power, and the obscene spectacle of punishment abundantly circulates the reinvigorated spectra of absolute power. Punishment is thus a ‘technology of sign systems’, an object of representation and the ‘individual correction must, therefore, assure the process of redefining the individual as subject of law, through the reinforcement of the systems of signs and representations that they circulate’ (ibid).

While it is the case that much of *Discipline and Punish* is preoccupied with the transition from the spectacle of punishment to the ‘birth of the prison’, the book is not merely a genealogy of the penal system. Rather, it is Foucault’s observation that the technologies of discipline that emerged, in the context of the prison, later cascade into other contemporary institutions and are taken up by modern forms of governmental rationality. In this transformation two processes are in operation; the growth of liberal humanism and the displacement of the visceral body as a target for technologies of signs. And this association will become more evident when we reflect historically, on the transitional period of the Enlightenment. For, it was during this period that punishment is less prevalently a complex of signs marked onto the body of the criminal. The art of representation’s punitive intervention is gradually driven asunder by the ineluctable march of a new juridical ethic that is predicated ‘on a studied manipulation of the individual’ (ibid:128). By the latter part of eighteenth and the beginning of the nineteenth century ‘the representative, scenic, signifying, public model’ of punishment is less prominent, as it comes to be replaced by a ‘corporeal, solitary, secret model of the power to punish’ (ibid:131). The disappearing ‘social play of the signs of punishment and the prolix festival that circulated them’ marks not just a new orthodoxy in penal reform, but a transition in the modality of technologies of sign systems (ibid). The apparatus of corrective penalty, becomes less reliant on the improvised extravaganza of embellishments that pronounced the *raison d’être* of sovereign power. The point of application is less inclined to be the symmetry of vengeance, but rather the ‘transparency of the sign to that which it signifies’ (ibid:106). What is necessitated is the establishment within ‘the theatre of punishments, a relation that is immediately intelligible to the senses and on which a simple calculation may be based: a sort of reasonable aesthetic of punishment’ (ibid). In short, the divergence from the inscription of

marks on the criminal's body, is bound up with a new regime of penal power of 'exercises not signs: time-tables, compulsory movements, regular activities, solitary mediation, work in common, silence, application, respect, good habits' (ibid:128). Up until Foucault's analyses, historians tended to take for granted this transition from a punitive corporal action to the new juridical ethic and 'too readily' attributed it 'to a process of "humanization", thus dispensing with the need for further analysis' (ibid:7). Conversely, Foucault's intellectual skepticism ceaselessly interrogated the emergence of the liberal humanist penal reform. Foucault's observations lead him to argue that the 'birth of the prison' instituted a 'technique of coercion' that has as its objective not so much the creation of the judicial subject, but rather 'the obedient subject, the individual subjected to habits, rules, orders, an authority that is exercised continually around him and upon him, and which he must allow to function automatically in him' (ibid:129).

Axiomatic with this juridical ethic is a new modality of sign technologies. In the monarchical law of the Ancien Régime, punishment signifies absolute sovereignty; 'it uses the ritual marks of the vengeance that it applies to the body of the condemned man...and it deploys before the eyes of the spectators an effect of terror as intense as it is discontinuous, irregular and always above its own laws, the physical presence of the sovereign and of his power' (ibid:130). The reforming 'truth' of liberal humanism saw punishment as a means to rehabilitate 'individuals as subjects, as juridical subjects' (ibid). The 'birth of the prison' signifies the institutionalization of an advanced mode of sign technologies, which no longer 'marks' the body, but rather deploys signs as 'coded sets of representations' designed, in operation, to render intelligible 'a concerted orthopaedy applied to convicts in order to reclaim them individually' (ibid:130). Thus disciplinary technologies of sign systems coexist with 'a whole learned economy of publicity' (ibid:110). Where monarchical law was based on the mark of terror 'engraved on the memories of the spectators', with the birth of the prison, discipline 'is now based on the lesson, the discourse, the decipherable sign, the representation of public morality' (ibid). Signs operate to reinforce public cognizance of the link between the crime and the particularity of its punishment. In monarchical law, one witnessed in the penalty the metaphoric presence of the sovereign. Conversely, with the 'birth of the prison' one reads in the signs of punishment 'the laws themselves' (ibid:110). Moreover, the penalty is a sign economy of time 'as soon as the crime is committed, the punishment will follow at once, enacting the discourse of the law and showing that the code, which links ideas, also links realities' (ibid). Thus, 'posters, placards, signs, symbols must be distributed, so that everyone may learn their significations', and in so doing punishment assumes less the 'physical effect of terror' (ibid:111). In this promotional code of signifying practices punishment assumes the function of a school in, which the scope of the audience extends beyond the guilty person and is directed above all 'at others, at all the potentially guilty' (ibid:108).

It is within this positive mechanics of discipline that 'discourse will become the vehicle of the law; the constant principle of universal recoding' (ibid:112). For

the birth of the prison, in actuality marks a more insidious sign of governance, discrete yet nonetheless capable of an effective inscription on the body and soul of individuals (Foucault 1991a). Much of the affect stems from liberal humanism's regalia of human rights and the growing belief, 'that to insist on the punishment exceeding the crime in savagery was, in a sense, to repeat the crime' (Sheridan 1994:137). This incredulity for the punishment-as-spectacle had the affect of transferring punishment further away from the domain of the everyday and into 'that of abstract consciousness' (Foucault 1991a:9). And in so doing the instructive mechanism of punishment alters its operation, for 'publicity has shifted to the trial, and to the sentence' (ibid). Within the liberal humanist regalia of human rights, 'the body now serves as an instrument or intermediary: if one intervenes upon it to imprison it, or to make it work, it is in order to deprive the individual of a liberty that is regarded both as a right and as property' (ibid:11). The body is now entangled within a castigating system of 'privations, obligations and prohibitions' (ibid). From being the object of unbearable physical pain, the punishment-body relation is transformed into the primary vehicle for 'an economy of suspended rights' (ibid). It is here that discourse unquestionably becomes a vehicle of the law. This is because the new humanist penal regime required 'a whole army of technicians' to take over from the key personnel, who were previously responsible for executing punishment-as-spectacle. As punishment begins to assume the much higher ambition of rehabilitating, 'curing' and reclaiming the criminal, there develops, exponentially, a new model army of 'warders, doctors, chaplains, psychiatrists, psychologists, educationalists' who 'by their presence near the prisoner, they sing the praises that the law needs; they reassure it that the body and pain are not the ultimate objects of its punitive action' (ibid:11). Thus, initially directed at the individual, the application of disciplinary sign technologies extends 'the whole length of the social network' so as to obfuscate a source of power and instead install the power to punish 'as an immediate reaction of all in relation to the individual' (ibid:130).

Discipline, then, will tend to become the most obscure dimension of the social order. In the milieu from, which the spectacle of monarchical law has disassociated from punishment, the process of discipline has 'taken to judging something other than crimes', namely, the soul of the individual. Indeed, now that 'the scandal and the light are to be distributed differently' (ibid:9), it is discourse that marks the social world with a litany of private rights, and judicial rituals to protect against the arbitrary infringement of these rights. Nowhere is this transition better illustrated than in the spectacular progression from the political order of neoliberalism, to global liberalism and the 'sign technologies' that are its condition and consequence.

Marketing the Soul

In the writings of Michel Foucault we are challenged to interrogate liberal humanist virtues. For more than twenty years of his academic career Foucault was concerned to trace a history of the manifold ways in Western culture ‘that humans develop knowledge about themselves...’ (1988:18). In an essay entitled *Technologies of the Self*, Foucault clarifies very important conceptual tools necessary for decoding liberal humanism as a system of knowledge with, ‘specific “truth games” related to specific techniques that human beings use to understand themselves’ (ibid). These techniques, assume four major forms of ‘technologies’ and each mode constitutes a vehicle of practical reason. The first is ‘technologies of production’, which permit the transformation of natural objects into resources for the mobilization of human interests. Foucault recognizes synergies here with dialectical materialism, ‘for instance one sees the relation between manipulating things and domination in Karl Marx’s *Capital*, where every technique of production requires modification of individual conduct—not only skills but also attitudes’ (ibid). The theme of transformation is evident in, ‘technologies of sign systems’, the second mode of technology that humans use to organize social life and develop knowledge. Foucault describes this technology as modes of discourse and discursive practice, ‘which permit us to use signs, meanings, symbols, signification’ (ibid). In his book *Discipline and Punish*, technologies of sign systems enter into a matrix of practical reasoning that functions in a manner, which exceeds a positivistic ontology of the image as representing a mirror of the world that merely needs decoding. Instead, technologies of sign systems are integrated into penal practice and in so doing operate as modes of administration, regulation and discipline. Technologies of sign systems work in conjunction with the third specific technique that human beings have created to know themselves, i.e., ‘technologies of power’. Foucault’s focus here is premised on elucidating technologies that ‘determine the conduct of individuals and submit them to certain ends or domination, an objectivizing of the subject’ (ibid). These objectifying technologies form a recurrent theme in *Discipline and Punish*. And in his later work *Histories of Sexuality* technologies of power, are detailed in conjunction with the fourth of Foucault’s technologies i.e., ‘technologies of self’. These permit individuals to voluntarily carry out practices ‘on their bodies and souls, thoughts, conduct, and way of being, so as transform themselves in order to attain a certain state of happiness, purity, wisdom, perfection or immortality’ (ibid). According to Foucault, these four technologies often operate collaboratively, ‘although each one of them is associated with a certain type of domination’ (ibid). That is to say that each involves a regime of training and modification in the individual, directed not merely at the acquisition of skills but also in the development of attitudes. It is my intention to apply, Foucault’s (1988) concept of technologies to render intelligible globalized liberal capitalism in terms of advertising sign-systems, concerned with the constitution of subjects, objects, regimes of ‘truth’ and subjugation.

The definition, here, of sign technologies draws attention to a genealogy of governance in terms of three operational axes of advertising sign-systems: (1) their propensity to substitute for political resistance the seductive enigmatic pleasure of things; (2) their capacity to inculcate humans into becoming subjects and objects of disciplinary technologies and (3) their capacity as a vehicle for governance at a distance. More specifically, my genealogy of governance examines advertising as a powerful inscriptive technology crucial to modern forms of governmental rationality. These issues raise, important concerns regarding the self-reflexive cultivation of political identity, in the context of an increasingly sophisticated genealogy of cultural politics articulated through advertising truths and the 'marketing of the soul' (Knights and Sturdy 1997). It is the central objective of this book to highlight and address these concerns.

Methodological Reflections

There are a number of methodological procedures operating in my intellectual examination of sign technologies and cultural politics, in the context of, global liberalized capitalism. Of significance is the abandoning of a whole epistemology of 'truth' that presupposes the objectivity of knowledge, and its premise on the ideal 'that knowledge can exist only where the power relations are suspended' (Foucault 1991a:27). In this epistemological tradition, the mechanism and modality of knowledge are presumed to reside outside the mobilization of power; shielded from powerful interests and demands. In contrast to the 'renunciation of power', as a primary condition of knowledge, Foucault convincingly impresses 'that power and knowledge directly imply one another' (ibid). As Foucault further expresses it 'there is no power relation without the correlative constitution of a field of knowledge, nor any knowledge that does not presuppose and constitute at the same time power relations' (ibid). A perhaps more revolutionary epistemological feature, of Foucault's power-knowledge couplet is the realization that 'the modalities of knowledge must be regarded as so many effects of these fundamental implications of power-knowledge and their historical transformation' (ibid:28). This has direct implications for the epistemological status of the Enlightenment's Cartesian subject. In Descartes *Cogito Ergo Sum*, it is the knowing subject 'that produces a corpus of knowledge, useful or resistant to power' (ibid). Conversely, Foucault's discursive examinations of the human sciences render intelligible, the subject of knowledge as inextricably tied to power-knowledge, 'the processes and struggles that traverse it and of which it is made up' (ibid). To this extent the system of power 'determines the forms and possible domains of knowledge' (ibid). Axiomatic with this account of knowledge is a conception of power, conceived not as a zero-sum property imposed on a powerless domain. Foucault's 'micro-physics' of power requires the abandoning of a conception of power seen as the possession of a privileged dominant entity. Rather than focusing on a source of power, Foucault urges that we decipher its exercise. In so doing, we are encouraged to appreciate power as a strategy.

The concept of power refers, here, to procedures and programmes, which operate 'in' and 'through' advertising net-works of social relations that are themselves perpetually in tension, in activity. And, this rhizomatous morphology intentionally presumes that power 'is manifested and sometimes extended by the position of those who are dominated' (ibid:27). In so far as, liberalism professes an inviolable sovereign self, whose freedom consists in the unrestrained, will to acquisitive materialism, it fails to appreciate that 'power is not exercised simply as an obligation or a prohibition on those who do not have it' (ibid). Rather the relations of power delve deep into the crevices of society and 'are not localized in the relation between the state and its citizens or on the frontier between classes' (ibid). This would require that we refrain from conflating politics with the materiality of a viable state in terms of its resources, personnel, institutions and citizens. Instead, we should be concerned with the 'body politic as a set of material elements and techniques that serve as weapons, relays, communication routes and supports for the power and knowledge relations that invest human bodies and subjugate them by turning them into objects of knowledge' (1991a:28). In this sense, liberalism is recognized 'less as a consequence of legal theorizes than as a chapter of political anatomy' (ibid). It is my intention here to demonstrate that, if it is to be accepted that power/knowledge relations invest the body politic, it is axiomatic that sign technologies, designed to liberate and preserve the autonomous self, are a spectacular practice of political anatomy.

Organization of this Book

This book traces brand 'new times' in cultural politics and global advertising media. In Part I, I examine the centrality of advertising to the new marketized governmental field of international corporate capitalism. Part I argues that, post-Fordist developments in the advertising industry coupled with the advent of postmodern visual cultures, during the 1990s, constituted a decisive transition in the governance of social life from 'biopower' to 'biopolitics'. According to Negri (2008:16), biopower is 'totalitarianism: the result of nineteenth and twentieth century struggles, the construction of welfare, the social dimension of consensus have all been absorbed by the totality of the state'. This definition of biopower is resonant with Foucault's (1977) account of modern power relations and the application of disciplinary technologies to individual bodies through processes of subjectification and objectification. It is evident that Foucault's genealogy of modern power traces the advent of governmental rationality in relation to a transition from biopower to 'biopolitics'. Foucault (1979) defines biopolitics as an insidious circulation of power through the social body so as to control populations by governing their humanity. In biopolitics, 'life now belongs to the field of power' (Negri 2008:31).

Part I: Governmentalization of Visual Culture

Drawing upon Foucauldian analytics, Part I of this book, argues that the rise of post-Fordist management practices in the 1990s extended ‘reflexive accumulation’ (Lash and Urry 1999) into the marketization of governmental practice. The primary intention of Chapters 1 and 2, of this book, is to critically analyse the integration of advertising into neoliberal market reforms of governmental practice. Chapter 1 provides the intellectual prologue to Chapter 2’s comparative analysis of state healthcare market reforms in the United Kingdom (UK) and United States of America (US).

Chapter 2 is divided into four sections. Section one, entitled ‘Signs of the Times: Neoliberalism and Aesthetic Accumulation’; examines the extraordinary prominence of advertising as an integral feature of neoliberal capitalist market reform. The central theme here is that axiomatic to market reform is the creation of ‘market analogues’, which take the form of advertising practice, and are directed at enabling market relations of competition and ‘choice’. Section two entitled; ‘Neoliberalism, Advertising and the Aestheticisation of Healthcare’, demonstrates advertising as integral to market reforms of healthcare in the UK and US. Section three, entitled; ‘DTCA and the Aestheticisation of Healthcare Services in Global Context’, critically case studies the rise of Direct to Consumer Advertising (DTCA) in the UK and US healthcare service. This section uses document analysis to detail cultural politics directed at resisting the spread of advertising cultures in healthcare provision. Section four, entitled; ‘Advertising Technologies and the Medicalization of Social Life’, examines academic debates intent on criticizing the role of DTCA in the medicalization of social life. While detailed in their critique of DTCA, it is my contention that these studies fail to appreciate advertising’s role in what Foucault (1990) describes as the ‘cultivation of the self’. For, it is through the cultivation of the self, that ‘the self-regulating capacities of subjects shaped and normalized in large part through’ advertising cultures ‘have become key resources for modern forms of government’ (Miller and Rose 2008:26). It is my aim in Part I of this book, to deconstruct advertising technologies so as to reveal their political role in the support of a ‘micro-physics’ of power directed at the reflexive cultivation of a subject, self-disciplined into assuming individual responsibility for their present welfare and future healthcare; a process that Knights and Sturdy (1997) describe in the context of the UK financial services industry as the ‘marketing of the soul’. It my intention to apply this concept, to the analysis of advertising, in the context of contemporary neoliberal market reforms of healthcare in the UK and US.

Part II: Postmodern-Political Caesura

Postmodern developments in advertising aesthetics have been integral to this extension of governmental rationalities, most especially the spectacular pervasion of commodity culture. Part II, of this book, argues that the ‘biopolitical’ regime that emerges with the advent of global liberalized capitalism corresponds, with a

profound political caesura in modernist politics of representation. The emerging, postmodern visual culture provides individual subjects with a ceaseless array of social, familial and sexual lifestyles. Undoubtedly the cavalcades of signs and sounds that saturate our daily lives are splendid; indeed spectacular. In the shopping arcades of the Western metropolis the aesthetic of spectacle gathers momentum as fractal objects, and fractal forms bombard our senses with a single discernable oration 'I am therefore I shop'. But this seduction of the real is achieved through an abreaction. Postmodern advertising visual culture is a 'simplified operational mode...in which all particular contents are annulled at the very moment when they can be transcribed into each other' (Baudrillard 1994:87). It involves the negation of the core dichotomies of modernist thinking i.e. (i) the subversion of differences between real/imaginary, public/private and (ii) the dissolution of the classical modernist juxtaposition between subject and object. In modernity such binary modalities garnered 'weighty enunciations' as they protected 'articulated forms of meaning' from the superficialities of culture, and ensured 'that they cannot be translated into each other' (ibid). In postmodern advertising culture the modernist postulation of representation is displaced by the sheer contiguity, irony and hyper-reality of the postmodern sign. The effect of such a breakdown in the signifying chain is to subvert modernism's presumption that the 'meaning of truth preceded and determined the representations that communicated it' (Ryan 1988:559). In this sense, postmodern advertising culture proffers simultaneously the possibilities for the renaissance of cultural politics and for its dissipation through indeterminacy.

Baudrillard argues that this phenomenon pre-stages a situation in which the social becomes overwhelmed by its solicitation and 'turns itself into advertising' (1994:88). According to Baudrillard this convergence between the social and political marks a society 'where the political economy, literally speaking is finally realized' (ibid). That is to say the political has become fully incorporated into commodity culture and predominated by the dynamics of exchange value. Baudrillard's startling visualization, anticipates an absolute solicitation of sociality realized through the permeation of advertising throughout everyday life. All distinction between the real and imaginary dissipates into 'a vestige of sociality hallucinated' everywhere and nowhere in particular (ibid). For Baudrillard, the omnipresence of advertising also precipitates its eventual demise. This is because the ephemerality of postmodern advertising has escaped any claim to advertising as informative communication. In so doing, advertising has forsaken 'the social and moral dramaturgy', crucial to its establishment as efficacious professional practice (ibid:89). For, Baudrillard, these conditions signify the death knell for advertising, not necessarily as a result of our apathy or even a disinclination to heed the clarion call of consumer culture. Baudrillard observes that today advertising is losing its power to another form of language even more adept at simplifying the social. The language, which mesmerizes Baudrillard, is the digitality of computer science. He observes that the micro-processing language of cybernetic systems is exceeding advertising's ability to reduce sociality into abstract self-referential signs. The digital language of micro-processing has overtaken advertising's ability

to instantiate a 'rhetorical continuum' of sounds and signs; a three dimensional 'total environment' of simulacra (ibid:89). Baudrillard observes that 'the "thrill" of advertising has been displaced onto computers and onto the miniaturization of everyday life by computer science' (ibid). While Baudrillard's observations, concerning the figuration of sociality through digitalization, appear consistent with contemporary developments in media, his anticipation of the demise of advertising is misconceived. Indeed, the fascination of advertising still remains and this has been largely achieved by its integration into ethical trading networks, themselves configured by a revolutionary convergence of advertising with the micro-universe of digital communication technologies.

Part III: Geo-Political Caesura

Technological innovations in clothing production are integral to the proliferating fashion cycles, which have since the 1980s dictated women's fashion. It is evident that the prêt-a-porter glitz and short product cycles of women's fashion has disconcerting trajectories in the spatial disaggregation of global textile production. As Dicken (2003:329-330) expresses it:

The highly concentrated purchasing power of the large retail chains gives them enormous leverage over textiles and garments manufacturers. When the market was dominated largely by the mass market retailers, demand was for long production runs of standardized garments at low cost. As the market has become more differentiated and more frequent fashion changes have become the rule, manufacturers are forced to respond far more rapidly to retailer demands and specifications. Under such circumstances, the time involved in meeting orders becomes as important as cost.

Advances in electronic communication enable manufacturers to map consumer preferences through Quick Response (QR) management systems. According to Cammett (2006:32), QR systems were first defined in 1985 and are so named because they dramatically accelerate the supply chain 'by speeding up order fulfilment and enabling retailers to respond quickly to shifting consumer tastes through improved information and merchandise flows'. Cammett suggests the emergence of QR, in the 1980s, coincided with an extended period of flagging sales and the imperative for retailers to stimulate consumer engagement in fashion. Formulating multiple fashion 'seasons', was a central marketing strategy, designed to invigorate relatively inelastic demand. It has been observed that 'by the mid-1980s, the standard six-month season was fragmented into at least six fashion cycles and many retailers began to offer about twelve distinct product lines annually' (ibid:31). Innovations in marketing management systems needed to be matched by retailers and their suppliers. It became imperative that retailers maintained perpetual turnover, limited costs, advanced forecasting and delivery reliability so as to curtail inventory risk. In and of themselves these innovations

are insufficient without concomitant changes in manufacturing. Retailers needed suppliers that could keep pace with the relentless demands to replenish fast-selling stock. It has become increasingly evident that the manufacturing solution to accelerated apparel production cycles is, outsourcing. But to who's cost?

The rapid development of industrialization in developing countries, coupled with the liberalizing agenda of the World Trade Organization has encouraged many developing countries to become Export Processing Zones (EPZ). Analysts concur that clothing production within these EPZ is mostly carried out by females, indeed 80 per cent of workers within the industry are female and the vast proportion of this labour-force is unskilled or semi-skilled labour (Dickens 2007:256). The level of skill coupled with insidious gender divisions of labour often mean that 'such workers are easily hired and fired and have no protection over their working conditions' (ibid:258). It has been observed that a vast proportion of these workers are 'employed in contravention of government employment regulations' (ibid). Even where countries have a legal minimum wage 'in some case this is lower than a realistic minimum living wage' (Allwood et al 2006:x). Each month new and more sensational accounts of the 'sweatshop' working conditions experienced by women and children in EPZ are beamed into our lives. Global media diligently broadcast the disgraceful working conditions of unregulated sweatshops, where unions are prohibited and unscrupulous factory owners demand excessive working hours, with little regard for unions, health and safety protection or fair wage.

Global fashion labels exacerbate these conditions. This is because their histrionic public renunciation of 'sweatshop' practices contradicts their adoption of lean supply strategies that subject manufacturers and buyers to quality controls and insurmountable contracting delivery times. Consequently, while it might be the case that a global brand will stipulate the codes of practice to which its supplier must adhere, the constricting delivery times of global supply chains put pressure on suppliers to subcontract production. It is here that the clothing industry's low levels of capital investment attract small scale manufacturers producing garments in small plants with limited technology and high labour intensity. The labour force in these less regulated provinces of the global supply-chain is often poorly educated, unskilled women and children.

Fair Trade is a revolutionary geopolitical challenge to the exploitative relations of global capitalist accumulation. The Fair Trade movement supports sustainable and ethical relations of exchange and production, in countenance to the structural inequalities and economically destructive relations characteristic of global capitalist accumulation. Fair Trade emerged in the 1940s and 1950s as a form of fairer international system of goods exchange coincident with the development regime of the Bretton Woods era (Fridell 2006). Established in 1944, the Bretton Woods system inaugurated two international finance institutions, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (eventually renamed the World Bank). Alongside these institutions was formulated a development regime orientated towards international market regulation as a primary means for the improvement of the economic plight of

Southern producers. Consequently economic development in this era focused on the imposition of international controls on capital flows and international market regulations of commodity production. For its part, the Fair Trade movement in its formative era (i.e., 1940s-1970s) fostered the re-embedding of international trade into a system of equitable economic trade-relations that benefited Southern producers (ibid:10). It was optimistically anticipated that Fair Trade networks would lay the foundations for a new trading system constituted by 'alternative trade organizations that would form part of a new international economic order based on strong state intervention at the national and international levels' (ibid). Although the Fair Trade movement remains committed to the alleviation of poverty and propagation of sustainable development, its strategic approach changed markedly in the 1980s in reaction to the spread of global neoliberalism (ibid). In the neo-liberalized markets and declining capital controls of international trade, it was no longer apposite to promote sustainable development in terms of the state regulation of international markets. In response the Fair Trade movement, introduced a new conception of alternative trade built on voluntaristic trading partnerships between producers and exporters. In place of the fetishized exploitative exchange relations of market capitalism, the Fair Trade movement prompts the achievement for providers of a fair price secured above the world's market's and protected against the market volatility that besets capitalist accumulation. Central to this alternative trade strategy is the inscription of products with labels designed to certify that the product accords with specified international labour standards and environmental sustainability conventions. The alternative trade labels also certify that the conditions of production are subject to regular inspection. Perhaps the most vital feature of the product labelling process is that the labels testify to the existence of 'long-term relations of solidarity between groups of producers, consumers and intermediaries committed to alternative trade networks' (Friedberg 2003:30). Part III of this book, extensively examines aesthetics, ethics and the political economy of Fair Trade citizen branding.

Chapter 6 provides the theoretical prologue to the empirical analyses in Chapter 7. Of particular concern to Chapter 7 is the possibility of an 'aesthetics of existence'. In its advocacy of a 'beautiful life' (Foucault 1991:349), advertising is promisingly relevant to the promotion of:

a very strong structure of existence, without any relation with the juridical per se, with an authoritarian system, with a disciplinary structure. (Foucault 1991:348)

This is to envisage the possibilities of advertising beyond its conventional imbrications with the problem of discipline and the '*techne* of the self' (ibid). In a way it is to imaginatively conceive of advertising in terms of the '*techne* of life, the *techne tou biou*, how to live' (ibid). This, in turn, leads to an appreciation of advertising as belonging among the cultural inventions and 'treasury of devices, techniques, ideas, procedures, and so on, that cannot exactly be reactivated, but at

least constitute, or help to constitute, a certain point of view which can be very useful as a tool for analyzing what's going on now – and to change it' (ibid:349-350). In many respects advertising, therefore, represents a modern secular ethics no longer grounded in externally imposed political, social and economic structures. Rather, advertising's celebration of a 'de-traditionalized' (Giddens 1993) postmodern consumer culture provides a novel source of encouragement for academic scholars, that seek to rid us of the idea 'of an analytical or necessary link between ethics and other social or economic or political structures' (Foucault 1991:350). It partially succeeds in this advocacy, most especially through its promotion of life as a tapestry for the application of art. In the resolve for a more beautiful life, advertising has clear resonances with Foucault's concept of 'the bios as a material for an aesthetic piece of art' (ibid:348). And this idea relates to the fact that the aesthetics of advertising visual cultures tend not to associate ethical problems with externally imposed quasi-juridical structures. Rather, in the advertising of Fairtrade labelled products the consumer is presented with what Foucault describes as the 'problem of personal choice, of aesthetics of existence' (ibid). In this articulation, ethics is transformed into a creative activity and ontologically bound up with the making of 'ourselves as a work of art' (ibid:351).

Advertising, in this sense forms part of the struggle against the production of ethics that attempt to normalize populations and governmentalize individuality. The kind of relationship that advertising invites us to have with ourselves calls upon an aesthetics of ethics 'which determines how the individual is supposed to constitute himself [sic] as a moral subject of his own actions' (ibid:352). And this implies a unique mode of subjectification, in which individuals are invited to recognize their moral obligations through commodity culture. So political power is exercised by the consumer through an aesthetics of, self-forming, ethical activities in, which the consumer applies deciphering techniques 'in a choice about existence' (ibid:361). As part of 'making one's life into an object...for a *techné* – for an art' (ibid:362), the consumer becomes committed to the application of aesthetic values to 'one's life, one's existences' (ibid). Chapter 7 asks important ethical questions about the outcomes of this mode of subjectification.

Part IV: Techno-Political Caesura

As dominant functions and processes in the informational age, become pervaded by networks, the greatest insecurity is to be 'invisible to the programs commanding the global networks of production, distribution and valuation' (Castells 2009:33). Indeed, the accentuation of the social and cultural exclusion, of vast segments of the world's population from the power centres of global networks, has become a formidable obstacle to sustainable development. It is the backlash of the alienated in the form of anti-globalization movements that constitutes the empirical focus of Chapter 8. On balance the rise of networked global capitalism has paralleled the development of geopolitical strategies organized in the form of global networks. Given that 'the specific structure of communication of a given society largely shapes social

movements' (ibid:301), it is unsurprising that organized resistance to globalized market capitalism is increasingly structured around networks. However, what is uniquely interesting about, globally networked social movements is the integration of multimodal digital communication processing technologies, into geopolitical strategies. Part of the motivation fuelling this micro-electronic technological revolution can be explained in terms of global times, and the increasingly acute distinction between the 'space of flows' and the 'space of place'.

In traditional social theory, space provides a material context for enacting, simultaneously, shared social practices. To this end, 'space defines the time frame of social relationships' (Castells 2010:xxx). Space in this sense is contiguous with the physicality of material place. And thus, the 'space of places' is 'the space of contiguity' (ibid). Advances in micro-electronically operated digital communication technologies have transformed the spatiality of social interaction by decoupling the contiguity of space-time, as a boundary to the communicative interaction of social actors. The emerging re-configured spatial context has been called 'the space of flows' (ibid:xxxii). This form of spatiality is defined as 'the material support of simultaneous social practices communicated at a distance' (ibid). It refers to a radical transformation in communication technologies and the new 'possibility of practicing simultaneity without contiguity' (Castells 2009:34). Given that the dominant logic of global capitalism is the relentless annihilation of space by time, alternative projects for the structuration of trade will involve an engagement with the fact that global capitalist accumulation is rapacious in its annihilation of the space of places. In global times, the disaffected are deeply fragmented by the double logic of their exploited inclusion and alienated exclusion from the space of flows. The resulting local demands for solutions to global problems, have directed the concerns of alternative trade initiatives. Organizations such as the Fair Trade movement directly challenge international commercial relations that operate around abstract market principles that devalue and exploit producers and the environment. In their endeavour to create a more socially and ecologically sustainable society, alternative trade initiatives are orientated towards the 'translation' of global political spaces into local political concerns.

It is precisely because, contemporary advertising technoscapes are multimodal using both convergent communication networks and mainstream advertising media, that they are able to translate the divergent interests of alternative trade networks and thus shape the process of global political change. Focusing on the network structure of the Fairtrade Foundation, Chapter 8 identifies advertising technoscapes as integral mechanisms, for the re-embedding of international commodity-chains into relations of solidarity between globally dispersed actor-networks committed to achieving sustainable development. And this integration of advertising into alternative trading networks has precipitated a systemic transformation in the global arena of cultural politics. Indeed, it is my contention that a profound technopolitical caesura has precipitated a revolutionary convergence between the social and political, thus marking a new and exciting geo-political terrain for cultural politics in global times.