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From: Bronwyn Boon<bboon@business.otago.ac.nz> in conjunction with Bryan Parker, Steven Lamb and Gemma Munro
Subject: **Beyond prose ... but not without reason: Creativity in ‘plastic cages’?**
To: submissions@ephemeraweb.org

Dear Editors,

I am thinking about writing a wee ‘note from the field’ for *ephemera* and wondered if I might pass some ideas before you to see what you think. The ‘field’ in question is an undergraduate (second year) ‘organisational theory’ management paper¹ that I am currently teaching on. The notable issue I want to discuss from this field is that of ‘creative assessment’. More particularly, *I want to begin to explore the consequences of inviting students to use different modes of expression² in their assessment*. My reason for encouraging students to go ‘beyond prose’ was to bring critical theory ‘alive’ for them! Well ... at least to open up the possibility of engagement in a student for whom writing academic prose induces intellectual torpor. Consequently I felt a sense of elation when an amazing collection of thoughtful, acute and creatively articulated responses came across my desk. Indeed I felt that I had tapped into a wonderful subterranean seam of creative expression that would sweeten both their – and my – experience of this management paper. Reflection, however, brought doubt and discombobulation. In that each piece is subjected to the process of rational calculation – so fundamental to contemporary university education – am I not invading some ‘private’ dimension of the student’s self and in so doing rendering these students more totally ‘calculable’³. And what does this do to my sense of pedagogical ‘resistance’? To paraphrase Wendy

1 A Bachelor of Commerce Degree from the University of Otago is a three year degree. Students are able to select their ‘major’ subject (or subjects) from the disciplines of: Management, Marketing, Accounting, Economics, Finance, Information Science and International Business. Apart from International Business, each ‘discipline’ is represented institutionally as a ‘department’. Completion of a ‘major’ generally covers 54 – 66 of the 120 points required for the degree. Additional points are therefore gained across other commerce subjects and/or - in part- across other university faculties. The organisational theory paper that is the ‘field’ of this discussion is a 6 point second year paper within the Management Department. Management majors - and other commerce subject majors - voluntarily select this paper from a total of nine other year-two options. The two year-one Management papers are compulsory pre-requisites for admission into this paper. In turn, the completion of this paper enables a student to proceed on to two year-three organisational theory papers.

2 Different from essays and tests written in prose.

3 As with Thayer’s cadets, described by Keith Hoskin and Richard Macve (1988) ‘Accounting and the Examination: A Genealogy of Disciplinary power’, *Accounting, Organizations & Society*, 11(2): 49.

Brown⁴, am I merely fabricating something like a plastic cage that reproduces and further regulates these students in a way that this exercise was designed to confront?

I have two main motivations for wanting to publish this 'field note'. The first is to literally put some of these pieces 'out-there' for the academic 'critical management' community to enjoy. The second has something to do with my negotiation of the relationship between theory and practice within the pedagogy of a 'critical' management undergraduate paper. The problem of undergraduate commerce student engagement with critical thinking is an important issue for all academic management departments that contain a 'critical' element. These early level undergraduate papers are often a time when students are first exposed to a conceptual space that enables them to challenge orthodoxy, question power relations and disrupt the normal⁵ accounts of work /management / organisation. To get to that point, however, these students have to engage with the argument that there *are* established social orders and dominating discourses⁶ informing knowledge about organisations and the people who inhabit these social spaces. Importantly, these 'privileged'⁷ students also have to put themselves into the picture. As bell hooks suggests 'privileged students are often downright unwilling to acknowledge that their minds have been colonized, that they have been learning how to be oppressors, how to dominate, or at least how to passively accept the domination of others'⁸. (And these are students of Literature and Women's Studies she speaks of.) I have also found the practice of engaging these management students in the 'personal-is-political' aspect of a 'critical' agenda an ongoing challenge. It is, however, an important component of a 'critical management' paper. The process of learning the conventions of privilege, oppression and domination must surely be more explicit and programmatic in a Commerce Degree. It is, therefore, not surprising that a significant number of the commerce students I deal with exhibit a sense of discomfort, hostility, resistance and apathy with some of the material of the course.

Which brings me to the 'alternate' assessment option. The setting of assessment tasks for the paper is one of the times when I more consciously confront the issue of student engagement. This time I decided to respond more thoughtfully to the problem. Again I found a passage from bell hooks⁹ helpful.

When one provides an experience of learning that is challenging, possibly threatening, it is not entertainment, or necessarily a fun experience, though it can be. If one primary function of such a pedagogy is to prepare students to live and act more fully in the world, then it is usually when they

4 Wendy Brown (1995) 'Introduction: freedom and the plastic cage', in *States of Injury: Power and Freedom in Late Modernity*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 28.

5 As Steffen G. Böhm; Campbell Jones and Chris Land (2001) suggest in their opening editorial of *ephemera* 1(1):1-10.

6 Matts Alvesson and Stanley Deetz (2000) *Doing Critical Management Research*. London: Sage.

7 I use 'privileged' here in reference to bell hooks "pedagogy and political commitment: a comment" in *Talking Back*. South End Press: Boston, MA.

8 bell hooks (1989: 102), as above.

9 Indeed another passage from bell hooks (1989: 103), as above.

are in that context, outside the classroom, that they most feel and experience the value of what they have shared and learned.

In bringing together the two aspects of 'engagement' and the 'outside-the-classroom context' I came up with a variation of 'form'. The standard form I have used in the past is of course 'the essay' - a form of expression that is strongly (completely) associated with the 'inside-the-*management* -classroom context'. Prompted by hook's argument, I wondered how these young people express ideas and issues *outside* their management courses? How could I alter the medium through which they engage with these ideas and therefore shift the context in which these ideas are experienced? In other words, how can I bring critical theory closer to their experience of living? In drawing on hooks and the past experiences of Malcolm Lewis¹⁰, I included a creative option in the final assessment piece¹¹. My 'blurb' in the course outline went something like this:

Critical thinking can be presented in all sorts of ways. While essay writing is the usual form of expression in academia, other modes of expression can be equally powerful. For example poetry, visual art, oral expression, or video film etc can be used critically and creatively. In this essay I invite you to address the following issue using an alternate mode/s of expression. You can of course write an essay if you prefer.

For my own sense of 'calculative competency' I asked those who selected the 'alternative expression' option to include a brief written commentary (500 – 750 words) on how their 'presentation' spoke to the issues described in the assessment prescription.

While only 11 of the total 105 students took up the invitation to articulate critical thinking in an alternative way, I was – as they say - 'blown away' by some of the pieces. The creativity and power of the work not only raised my flagging end-of-the-year-assessment spirits it sparked the idea for a research project on different modes of assessment in under-graduate management education¹². I have included here three 'pieces' I would like to 'exhibit' in the 'field note'. They include a painting, a piece of music and a poem. All three are based around critical reflections of the 'machine' metaphor¹³/discourse.

10 A colleague – in the Management Department, University of Otago – with whom I had taught in the previous year. At that time he invited students to 'respond' to an essay on 'postmodernism' in terms of substance and form – which also had interesting and creative results.

11 A 'compulsory' exercise that counted for 20% of the final grade.

12 Indeed this text represents a very preliminary reflection on this experience.

13 Gareth Morgan (1986) *Images of Organisation*. London: Sage.

Bryan Parker submitted this *acrylic & paper collage on canvas (20"*16")* titled: '19 Henry Ford's + Parts'



(This is a coloured picture; please see PDF file at www.ephemeraweb.org/journal)

This is Bryan's commentary about his work.

The dominant discourse this painting is depicting is that of 'the machine'. 'The machine' is a metaphor for "the way of thinking about the exercise of 'production', ie: a way of organising /managing /controlling work, organisations, society." (Boon, 2000). 'The machine' can also be thought about as the actual thing being made or used in the process of 'production'. The man in the collage is Henry Ford, and of course we know that Ford's great invention was the automated assembly line. The reason why Ford was replicated on the left of the canvas was inspired from the artist Andy Warhol. Warhol depicts in his paintings "how conformity is abetted by mass production technology and advertising strategies, the former resulting in the standardization of products, the latter contributing to the standardization of habits." (Stich, 1987). Warhol had even said that he wanted to be a machine. The repetition and replication of Henry Ford signifies the replication a machine can produce with flawless copy after copy of the product. Ford himself did this on the assembly line at his plant.

The sets of eyes, ears, noses and mouths mirror the way a machine and Ford's motor car was a complexed (sic) product made up of simple parts. The human face is a complexed (sic) product of nature, but even when you are drawing a face as a child, the simple body parts of a nose, mouth, ears, etc. can be easily constructed and placed to form the product of a face. The idea of using paint and the collage of paper together is inspired from the artist Robert Rauschenberg. Rauschenberg's idea was that the paint would link the collage and make it part of the painting.

The numbers in the painting signify the quantitative part of 'the machine' and are inspired mainly from the work of Jasper Johns. They are also painted mainly in black to align with Ford's policy of "any colour you like as long as it is black." The numbers also illustrate the dehumanising aspect of working in a mass productive, mechanistic environment.

This brings us to the critical discourse of the painting. The critical element is that of 'the machine's' and Ford's exploitation of the worker in the process and production of a final product. This is shown by the blue paint depicting the blue collared worker. The reason for painting over Henry Ford's eyes is to link the way that Ford had the goal of mass production. The only way he could see this goal being achieved was to see the worker as a tool of his to exploit. This brings in the Marxist ideas of the worker being exploited by the employer for the benefit of the employer.

The black part of the painting in the centre depicts uncertainty. It links the blue of the worker with the collage of Ford 'the employer' and shows the divide and the uncertainty inherent between the two identities. This uncertainty and link between the two identities is a reflection of the employer/employee relationship in that without the employee the employer would not get any production done and without the employer the employee would not earn any money to live off. The numbers also link in with the black colour of uncertainty by showing that 'the machine' being an efficient thing that it is, can have uncertain outcomes and problems that have the opportunity to occur. An example of this is the Y2K scare.

The red colour of the painting depicts blood. The blood, as a symbol of life, shows that amongst 'the machine' humans are also a part of the grander picture. The splattering of blood over the painting shows the human cost, that has and potentially can occur, of the workers and the rest of society in general if 'the machine' remains a dominant part in organisational culture. The red colour also depicts the communist values inherent with the discourses of 'the machine'.

To conclude, Andy Warhol's following quote may be a fitting insight into the dominant and critical discourses that are part of 'the machine'.

"Someone said that Brecht wanted everybody to think alike. I want everybody to think alike. But Brecht wanted to do it through Communism, in a way. Russia is doing it under government. It's happening here all by itself without being under a strict government: so if it's working without trying, why can't it work without being Communist? Everybody looks alike and acts alike, and we're getting more and more that way. I think everybody should be a machine." (Warhol cited in Stich, 1987).

References: Boon, B. (2000) Lecture 5 'The Efficient Machine', Management 211 Lecture Notes, University of Otago. And Stich, S. (1987). *Made in U.S.A.*, University of California Press, California:USA.

Steven Lamb submitted a piece of music – 8 and a half minutes long – which he wrote, arranged, recorded (all 8 tracks) and mixed.

[Please access this piece at the ephemera|journal homepage at www.ephemeraweb.org/journal]

BEHIND THE MACHINE

For this assessment I chose to try and present the machine discourse, and the alternative discourse in a musical form. I chose to present it in a solely musical form with no lyrics, as this allows more musical freedom, but it will take more explaining. The way in which I tried to present the piece is mostly symbolic, either in the sound of the sound created, or the mood trying to be expressed...

To try to explain the piece, I tried to convey the differences in the discourses, by breaking the piece into four sections. A discourse is a collection of statements about a topic that allows you to talk about it, but only from a certain stance. The piece is a progression of how the machine comes about and where it leads and the effect this has on the people involved. I tried to make the difference between the machine and the worker (the worker being a symbol of the alternative discourse, i.e. the emotion and alienation or dissatisfaction of the people) very clear, and I hope this comes across. The workers that I talk of are the proletariat, the working class, and not the wealthy owners of capital. This is a more Marxian view of the machine, as an exploiting machine, using the worker as a means of production, ignoring their humanity. I think it would be best to try to describe the four sections individually and then how this comes together as a whole. In the explanation I apologize if the musical explanation, while important, seems hard to understand though I will try to explain as best I can.

The first section is set before the machine discourse comes about. I chose to depict this with a piano part (actually synthesized), played in free time, that is it is free to speed up and slow down as it pleases and it is not controlled by anything else. It is very unregulated. I tried to convey a sense of romanticism, in contrast to later in the piece. This symbolizes the workers when they only needed to work when they wanted, not regulated by the clock or any sense of time. A flute to introduce melody soon joins the piano. I chose a piano and a flute, as they are acoustic and woodwind instruments and therefore are very non-mechanical (though you could argue the piano is), so this in itself symbolizes a simpleness (sic) of pre-industry. This hopefully gives a sense of calmness.

The second section introduces the machine. To symbolize the machine I used an effected drum kit, with an industrial sound with lots of clanking and the like. If you listen carefully when it enters, you can hear the breath sounds of the workers behind it on the 1st and 2nd beat of every bar. The beat chosen to represent the machine, is a slow chugging, pulsating beat. The beat is electronically produced, in itself significant in that it represents a highly rational, extremely accurate rhythm, never a millisecond off, just like the machine it symbolizes. This is like the view given by Morgan (1990), one of rationalization of everything. That is everything is calculated and made scientifically explainable, I suppose like I'm doing (sic) now. That is trying to rationalise and explain what I did and why I did it. The beat is also standardized, uniform and there is no room for deviation from it, the "Beat of the System". This is in contrast with the piano previously; which had the freedom to go where it pleased, the instruments locked in a type of normative control. The idea was to make it sound like a factory. When the distorted guitars enter, they play a marching type rhythm, which symbolizes the monotonous rigor of work. Here I chose to adopt a different scale to emphasize (sic) the difference in tonality. I chose a phrygian mode for the guitars to give it a nasty, harder sound, compared to the piano. The other guitars, especially the slide guitars were an attempt to sound like pistons in the machine. The mood I tried to get across here was one that you could not escape and that the beat and groove of the machine inevitable, the proletariat being forced into the wage labor as their only option. In the middle of this section there is an interlude where the machine slows, and a new melody enters that was supposed to reflect the yearning of the worker for something better, but soon enough the machine takes over again, back to the grind. This was to reflect the different interests of the workers. A quote that illustrates this is "Primarily, labor is a process going on between (sic) and nature, a process in which man, through his own activity,

initiates, regulates, and controls the material reactions between himself and nature" (Marx, 1867, p. 169). This suggests that the machine is self-imposed.

The third section is supposed to look at the workers life outside the machine. This is the alternative discourse. I tried to present what the worker wants and feels. The previous section showed the machine and also the workers submission to it. In this section I reprised the piano, with a string section, to give it a relatively more sad feel. One of the points I symbolically tried to make here is that there are some hangover from being tied to the machine. One is that the piano now plays simple arpeggios in a regulated time, as now the effect of rationality has set in on him/her, and is no longer allowed the same freedom that they had at the start. This was to give the feel that the worker is always on the clock and is never free from (sic) it, even when away from the machine. In the background you can hear the pulse of the machine, fading in and out, reminding the worker that the machine is inescapable, and wage labor has them tied to it.

The final section revisits the machine, and portrayed here is the growing domination of the machine as it builds up to the climax of the piece. The increase of the frequency of the beats represents the increase in efficiency of the machine, even if only for its own benefit. The beat changes to give the feeling of building up, about to vent. A solo lead guitar is used to give the feel of the growing of the machine and the taking over of it. The speed and dynamics, along with the mood all are meant to give a feeling of uncontrollability and the piece builds to climax. I left the end of the piece somewhat ambiguous, as its hard to say whether efficiency today will build to the point where it burns out, or slows down as people become content with what they've got.

In summary, the purpose of the piece was to convey the dominant discourse of the machine and how it is efficient and regulated, to give the feel of a factory, like mass production. The alternative discourse was presented as the workers (the more natural instruments) being forced to submit to the machine's regularity, although they still want something better, but are forever changed. The third goal of course was to make a piece of music that, all other things aside, simply sounded good, which is of course up to the listener.

References:

Marx, Karl (1867) *Capital*, translated by Eden & Cedar Paul (1933), London: JMDent & Sons

Morgan, Glenn (1990) 'Rational Calculation, Professional Power and the Managerial Division of Labor?' in *Organisations in Society*, MacMillian Educational: UK

Gemma Munro submitted a poem.

A hollowed tooth snaps a gash in his cardboard portrait
He falls into line behind him
The limbs of an industrial millipede
Wind-up workers stamping factory time on concrete floors

Gaunt eyes that don't look alive
Two mirrors looking each other in the face
The rolling belt dictates the pace
Making one fraction of an object
It moves on, leaving him in his place

Bent to fit around the steel
They work while watched by whips
Making wages for a meal
Efficiencies sweat shines the concrete floor.
The pig who gluts the profits
still wants more

the tooth bites
at the end of the day
an empty hole
is all it has to say

Overview

A brief outline on what the poem's essence is as follows: it describes an employee's subjection to the industrial society where everything has a process, and the employees are merely pawns on a chessboard, as they are treated, as nothing more than an input of production to the heartless capitalist. It explores the Marxist idea of the emptiness attached to not creating anything tangible for the employee...

Structure

The structure of the poem is very simplistic. Examples of some of the structural techniques include the following. The shortening of the lines (sic) in the poem represent the sense of diminished self-worth the industrial worker experiences as the day progressed and then eventually ended. The violence in the punctuation in the opening line portrays the dehumanisation of the whole work process. The rhythmical rhyme of 'face, pace and place' represent the machines 'stamping' or 'pounding' monotony nature...

Analysis

A hollowed tooth snaps a gash in his cardboard portrait

This line is referring to the rational process of calculability as a means for predictive control, in this case workers and money. It lets the capitalist measure how much profit they have made with the use of the 'time-clock'. The machine discourse sees it as the 'betterment for all', i.e. the

employee gets the money they clock in for, they are not working extra hours and minutes even seconds and not being paid. Realistically however the time-clock represents the rational, efficient, calculable process where the employee works and the clock deducts pay from every second they do not work. The cardboard portrait refers to the dehumanising aspect of the machine discourse i.e. everything can be reduced to a number, the employees wages are probably based on serial numbers.

He falls into line behind him

It refers to Marx's notion of the 'exploitation of workers' i.e. labourers are lined up and herded into the organisation. Here it also draws reference to the dehumanising aspect of the industrial society, no employee has a name as there is no socialisation in the work place and they are merely an input of production.

The limbs of an industrial millipede

This incorporates Ford's notion of specialisation. It is an illusion of the assembly line and it constructs the position of workers in the division of labour. No one has an idea of the final product but every employee is needed in order to complete the final product. The millipede needs all 1000 of his legs to walk and function correctly, but separate one of those legs on its own, and it is worthless to the millipede, as is one employee who tightens bolts on the assembly line, if no one else was there to play their part. Hence the functions of each leg (employee) are all co-dependent on the legs beside them. They do not have autonomy; it is connected to a greater whole or weight. The legs' job is to support this great body of weight above them, i.e. the bourgeoisie is the greater whole that lies above the proletariat, and hence, the capitalist can not function without the employees.

Wind up workers stamping factory time on concrete floors

This line refers to clock work soldiers and how the machine dictates their pace of work. They do not have autonomy - employees become merely extensions of the machine they work for.

Gaunt eyes that don't look alive

Two mirrors looking each other in the face

The Marxist idea of the employee's productivity contributing to the final product, which is not their own, it does not belong to the employee at the end of the day but to the capitalist. It explicitly states labour is no longer a process going on between man and nature, it is an empty process.

The rolling belt dictates the pace

Making one fraction of an object

It moves on, leaving him in his place

These lines further elaborate the idea that an effective industry organises employees to be part of a process, their part in the process is stagnant, rendering individual contribution insignificant to the whole, the machine is the one that controls the speed the employee must go. It also draws on the aspect of social position, i.e. an employee can not change his social position because the organisation is already ultimately efficient, the capitalist does not need to promote a bolt tightened to a wheel maker because it will involve training and delays. Just as a proletariat can not advance the social ladder to join the bourgeoisie.

Bent to fit around the steel

Again this line refers to the controlling aspect the machine plays over the employee, as the factory is designed around a process, typically the machine. The employees work for the machine - the machine does not work for the employee. The space of the factory is functionalist. The architecture is designed around a process, human interactions are only allowed to facilitate this process, i.e. the 'smoko' room is not located in an open section of the industry floor but separated, both by locality and its architecture.

They work while watched by whips

Making wages for a meal

Efficiencies sweat shines the concrete floor

These lines are all focusing on control. The bourgeoisie own the forces of labour and therefore own the labour process. These lines were inspired by the Charlie Chapman movie "Modern Times". Where the capitalist watched and controlled every employee by a huge television screen, to ensure the organisation was running as efficiently as possible. Because of the very nature of industrial work, as stated earlier, there is no longer a process going on between nature and man when he conducts his work, he is working for money, always just enough to survive on. Here it refers to Marx's theory of 'surplus value' or profit. The way in which an employee's labour is being exploited by the bourgeoisie, as we get more efficient and work harder we create an increase in the capitalist's surplus value, the employee just gets by and reaps no rewards for his sweat, his hard work goes unrewarded.

The pig who gluts the profits still wants more

Again it refers to the notion of the exploitation of employee's labour, in order to increase the capitalist's 'surplus value'. They take on a 'technological imperative' where they see greater efficiency helping to increase the surplus value. The capitalist is never satisfied and continually needs to keep on exploiting the worker's labour.

*the tooth bites
at the end of the day an empty hole
is all it has to say*

These lines refer to the time-clock that opened and now closes the poem. It brings back those feelings of emptiness the labour process is, as the employee is not making something for himself, but is bettering the capitalist. They have made nothing tangible for themselves except money to barely survive - they feel empty. Another reference in this summary is drawing upon the fact workers have been utilised to their fullest potential for the day, they do not feel joy and inhalation (sic) as they have been utilised as a bag of flour is utilised - as it is all part of the production process.

Having presented these three pieces, I suspect it would be timely to offer some sage reflection on the process. So here would be the place to elaborate on the discombobulation I introduced in my first paragraph. At the core of my feelings of disquiet about this 'creative' assessment exercise is a sense of invasion of a private 'space'. No, perhaps it's not so much an invasion but a 'calculation' of a private space. Somewhat ironically I include Glenn Morgan's¹⁴ paper on rational calculation and professional power in the course reading package. I find the way he introduces Hoskin and Macve's¹⁵ work on the 'examination mark' useful as a way of raising the power/knowledge dynamic within the knowledge produced about them as students undertaking this course and as employees and managers in their work contexts. (Indeed Steven Lamb's 'commentary' included recognition of this process.) My current discomfort comes from a sense that I am broadening the domain of this process. Morgan states that:

14 Glenn Morgan (1990) 'Rational Calculation, Professional Power and the Managerial Division of Labour', in *Organizations in Society*, MacMillan Education Ltd – in conjunction with the British Sociological Association, London.

15 Keith Hoskin & Richard Macve (1986), as above; and (1988) 'The Genesis of Accountability: the West Point Connection', *Accounting, Organizations & Society*, 11(2).

(t)his process of construction is simultaneously a process of power and knowledge. In knowledge terms, the question arises as to how to evaluate the individual – indeed, how to ‘know’ the individual as an object of specific organizational practices.¹⁶

It is in the ‘knowing’ of these students as ‘*enhanced* objects’ of university practices of assessment that troubles me. Through this ‘creative’ assessment practice the participating student-subjects are objectified through more than just their prose but their art, music and poetry too. In other words, in reaching into their ‘outside-the-classroom context’ I am making more parts of their subjectivity available for university sponsored rational calculation. It is at this point that my foray into creative pedagogy feels more like a support of ‘enterprise culture’¹⁷. Is this an exercise of expressive liberation, or merely the unification of public and private ‘subjectivities’ under the order of the education-employment marketplace? In my quest to encourage these young students to engage with critical theory outside of the familiar formalized and programmatic essay forum, have I obscured the calculative power of the regime?¹⁸ As I asked earlier¹⁹, am I merely fabricating something like a plastic cage that reproduces and further regulates these students in a way that this exercise was designed to confront? In this sense, have I merely replaced an ‘iron cage’ with a ‘plastic cage’ of assessment?

That is all I wanted to say for now. At this point I would like to hear from ‘the floor’²⁰ as they say. I wanted to bring this research note to the *ephemera* site because of the ‘critical dialogues on organization’ agenda and the interactive technology available to make that happen.

Which now brings me to the issue of an appropriate form for this paper. I think it is important to avoid ‘the standard’ essay format and not only because this paper is centrally about providing the space to move away from the constraints of the essay form. Of course my concerns about pervasive and invasive calculation in terms of university students are completely traceable onto university staff confirmation and promotion practices. So this discussion need not be just about ‘creative assessment’, it could also be about intellectual property investments and rights. But I digress. One of the aims of this piece is to initiate dialogue on the issue of ‘critical’ pedagogy for business / management students. An additional reason for avoiding ‘an essay’ format, therefore, is to reflect the fact that so much thoughtful and productive intellectual dialogue goes on in a myriad of ‘academic’ venues outside of the published essay. The email, the conference, the pub, the corridor, the classroom, the café are perhaps more familiar sites of critical dialogue in our day to day academic practices than our ‘official

16 Glenn Morgan (1990: 99), as above.

17 Nikolas Rose (1989/99) *Governing the Soul*. London: Free Association Books; and Paul Du Gay (1996) *Consumption and Identity at Work*. London: Sage – for example.

18 Wendy Brown (1995) ‘Introduction: freedom and the plastic cage’, in *States of Injury: Power and Freedom in Late Modernity*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

19 By paraphrasing Wendy Brown (1995: 28), as above.

20 Or whatever spatial metaphor is appropriate for an electronic debate.

publications'? So, I was wondering about crafting this piece as some sort of conversation in one of these 'spaces'. What do you think? Would that be appropriate for your journal?

Warm regards and thanks²¹

Bronwyn

the author

Bronwyn Boon is a lecturer in the Department of Management at the University of Otago. Juggling teaching demands and 'quality' family time, she is still struggling to find the time to put a rather mature PhD 'to bed'. Most days she remains optimistic that her treatise on 'career', 'place' and 'subjectivity' will one day be completed.

Address: Bronwyn Boon, Department of Management, University of Otago, POBox 56, Dunedin, New Zealand.

Email: bboon@business.otago.ac.nz

discussion

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²¹ I do want to express my thanks to the Mant 211 students of 2000 who shared their creativity with me and allowed me to use their material in this research. I also want to thank Campbell Jones for his persistent hassling and Shayne Grice, Bevan Catley and Tania Cassidy for their helpful comments with this 'wee note'.