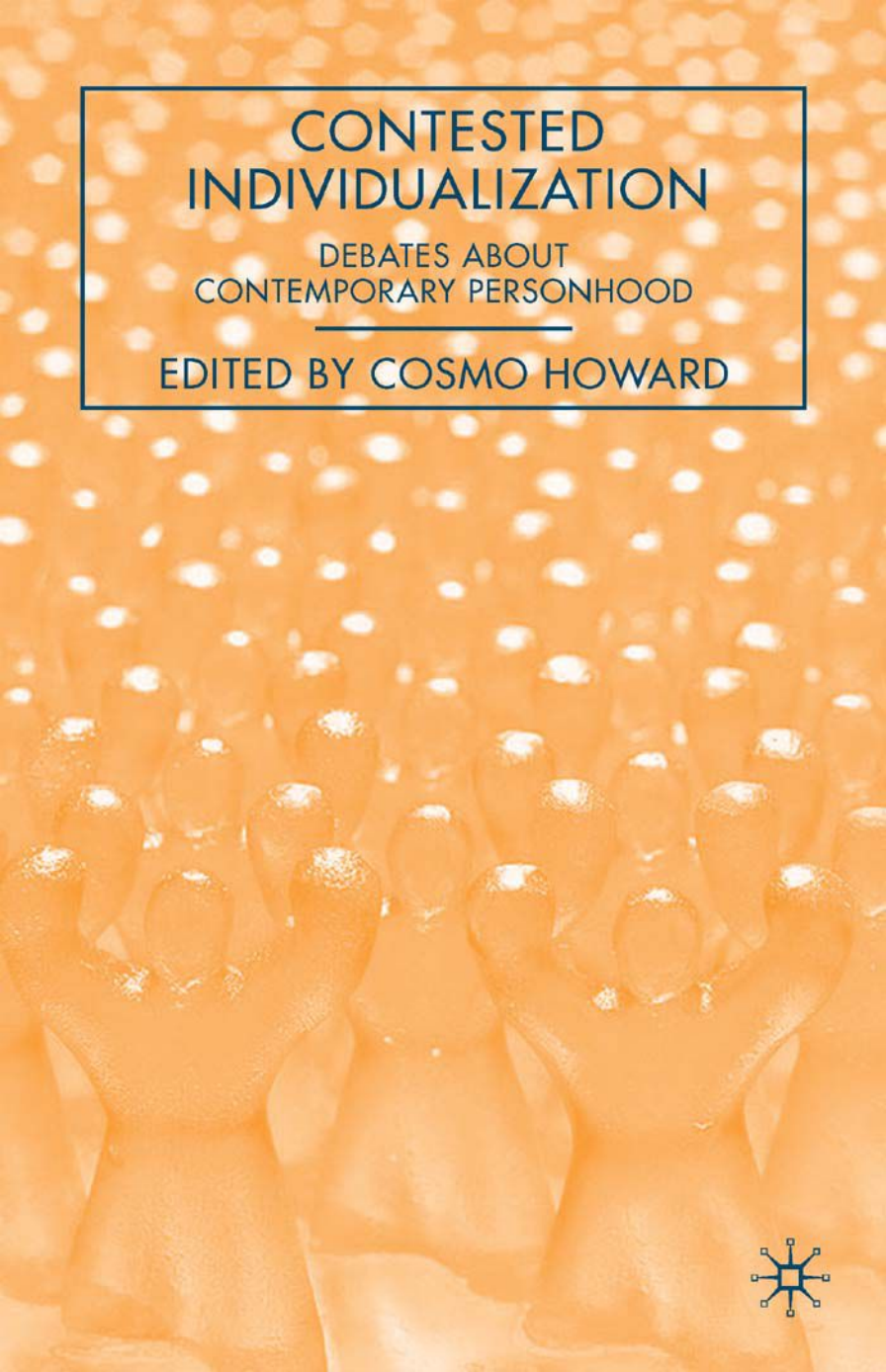
CONTESTED INDIVIDUALIZATION

DEBATES ABOUT CONTEMPORARY PERSONHOOD

EDITED BY COSMO HOWARD



Contested Individualization

This page intentionally left blank

Contested Individualization

Debates about Contemporary Personhood

Edited by Cosmo Howard

palgrave
macmillan

Contested Individualization: Debates About Contemporary Personhood

First published in 2007 by
PALGRAVE MACMILLAN™
175 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10010 and
Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire, England RG21 6XS.
Companies and representatives throughout the world.

PALGRAVE MACMILLAN is the global academic imprint of the Palgrave Macmillan division of St. Martin's Press, LLC and of Palgrave Macmillan Ltd. Macmillan® is a registered trademark in the United States, United Kingdom and other countries. Palgrave is a registered trademark in the European Union and other countries.

ISBN-13: 978-1-4039-7770-0
ISBN-10: 1-4039-7770-4

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Contested individualization : debates about contemporary personhood / edited by Cosmo Howard.
p. cm.
Includes bibliographical references and index.
ISBN 1-4039-7770-4
1. Social psychology. 2. Social problems. 3. Social policy. 4. Social change. 5. Individualism. 6. Socialization. I. Howard, Cosmo.
HM1033.C663 2007
302.5'4—dc22 2007011893

A catalogue record of the book is available from the British Library.

Design by Scribe Inc.

First edition: November 2007

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

Printed in the United States of America.

Contents

Illustrations

This page intentionally left blank

Acknowledgments

I would like to thank a number of individuals and organizations for helping me to bring this book to publication. The project began during my tenure as a Killam Postdoctoral Fellow at the University of Alberta, where I was able to organize an international workshop on individualization. The Social Sciences and Humanities Council of Canada provided a grant for the colloquium, at which the authors in this volume presented earlier versions of their chapters. The Faculty of Arts at the University of Alberta and the Faculty of Human and Social Development at the University of Victoria also provided funding to support the workshop, which was hosted by the Department of Political Science at the University of Alberta. I would also like to thank Janine Brodie and Anna Yeatman for their helpful advice in the process of putting this colloquium together. Jaimie Smith-Windsor provided valuable research assistance for the book. Ella Georgiades and Joanna Mericle at Palgrave gave ongoing assistance throughout the production process. Finally, I wish to thank Jessica Worsley at the Centre for Public Sector Studies, University of Victoria, for assisting with grant administration.

This page intentionally left blank

Chapter 1

Introducing Individualization

Cosmo Howard

> I would not have any one adopt *my* mode of living on any account; for, beside that before he has fairly learned it I may have found out another for myself, I desire that there may be as many different persons in the world as possible; but I would have each one be very careful to find out and pursue *his own* way, and not his father's or his mother's or his neighbor's instead. The youth may build or plant or sail, only let him not be hindered from doing that which he tells me he would like to do.
>
> —*Henry David Thoreau,* Walden *(1854, 53; emphasis original)*

In the wake of the alleged "death of the social" (Rose 1996a), one can find growing interest in the individual as a key unit of social-scientific inquiry. The individual is widely and increasingly regarded as the fundamental agent of human action and the ultimate target of governance. Contemporary processes of "individualization" are said to undermine and dissolve old constraints that bound people to certain lifestyles and to open up many areas of life to personal choice (Bauman 2000; Beck and Beck-Gernsheim 2002; Beck, Giddens and Lash 1994; Giddens 1991). Some of the most influential and insightful commentaries on individualization understand the phenomenon as one that is fundamentally social in character. They recognize that the contemporary shift toward the individual is being driven by collective processes that involve new forms of socialization, regulation, and resource allocation, all of which promote particular kinds of individuality. This new sociological interpretation of individualization challenges traditional perspectives on individuality, as well as dominant neoliberal political ideologies, in which individuality is regarded as the simple absence of external structures. The new approaches to studying individualization reflect a growing interest among social theorists and empirical researchers in determining how individual action and choice can

be reconciled with the complex and unavoidable interdependencies that dominate contemporary human experience.

No social phenomenon of this scale and significance can be taken for granted, nor can its dimensions and implications be easily known. The processes associated with individualization are having profound effects on contemporary life, yet these consequences are not always transparent, even to those who attempt to study individualization systematically. Furthermore, there is currently intense debate and disagreement about the nature of individualization. This is partly an academic discussion concerning the best methods and theories to use in understanding the rise of the individual. It is also a fundamentally political debate carried on between actors who deploy the language of individualization with varying degrees of calculation and in the name of particular political ends, often with unintended consequences.

This collection of studies was assembled to emphasize the contested nature of individualization. The chapters include contributions from researchers working in the major fields that have engaged with the phenomenon of individualization, including class research, critical policy studies, gender studies, life-course methods, liberal political theory, post-structuralism, psycho-social perspectives, queer theory, and social work. While the chapters included within this book represent different paradigms and understandings, they also share some important commonalities. In particular, they all engage with influential work in political sociology on the "individualization thesis," which includes the theories of Zygmunt Bauman (Bauman 2000, 2003, 2004, 2005), Ulrich Beck (Beck 1997; Beck and Willms 2004), who frequently collaborates with Elisabeth Beck-Gernsheim (Beck and Beck-Gernsheim 1995, 2002), and Anthony Giddens (Giddens 1991, 1994b). The individualization thesis posits that, as a result of the changes wrought by social modernization in the twentieth century, human lives have been extracted from the bonds of family, tradition, and social collectives, which once prescribed in detail how people were to behave. Humans have been liberated from these detailed determinations to take greater control of and responsibility for their own lives. At the same time, however, these writers claim that people are now more dependent on a series of modern institutions and structures, including the welfare state, education systems, and labor markets, and that these impose new and often contradictory demands on individuals.

Current debates surrounding individualization are complex and difficult to summarize. However, we can gain an insight into these disagreements and struggles by interpreting individualization as a discursive field (Weedon 1997). Within this field, some discourses are more powerful and

influential than others. Neoliberalism is currently the most influential political discourse within the discursive field of individualization. It draws inspiration and legitimacy from specific academic theories, and its assumptions are embedded in many powerful institutions. Yet neoliberalism does not enjoy absolute hegemony in the discursive field of individualization. Alternative discourses challenge and destabilize the existing hierarchy of perspectives and practices. An important virtue of the individualization thesis, as a contribution to the discursive field of individualization, is that it challenges the neoliberal assumption that individuals can operate independently from social institutions and relationships. In this respect, it helps to make sense of the central importance of social institutions and structures in forming and shaping individual lives, as well as the tensions and contradictions that humans experience in "late modernity."

This chapter is structured as follows: The next section establishes the case for regarding individualization as a discursive field. Following this, I address four fundamental debates surrounding the individualization thesis. I discuss debates regarding the extent to which individualization is liberating individuals from external constraints so that they are becoming free agents. Then I investigate the vexed question of whether or not classical theories of the individual, particularly in political science and sociology, can adequately describe and explain contemporary individualization. Thirdly, I look at different perspectives on the influence that institutions have on individual lives, and the debates about how much and what kind of behavioral "content" is supplied to individuals by modern institutions. Finally, I address debates about the extent to which historically salient dimensions of stratification such as class and gender have declined in significance as a result of individualization. I outline the structure of the book at the end of the chapter.

The Discursive Field of Individualization

It is difficult to summarize neatly the astounding range of debates and struggles currently underway in academic and political circles regarding the nature and implications of individualization, yet several central factions can be identified. One prominent grouping champions neoliberalism, drawing upon assumptions and theories from liberal political thought, rational choice theory, and economics (Clarke 2004b; Hindess 1996; Rose 1996a). In neoliberalism, individuals are interpreted as rational and self-interested beings who seek material advancement, while rejecting public or social intervention into their lives. This paradigm equates individuality with freedom; the latter is assumed to mean the absence of

outside interference in people's lives. Other movements, including advocates for the rights of former and current subjects of colonial rule, gays and lesbians, persons with disabilities, recipients of state assistance, and women, do not see individuality in such clear opposition to external impositions and collective institutions, but rather try to understand how public interventions and organizations can be used to promote the autonomy and self-determination of members of traditionally marginalized social categories (Yeatman 1994). These movements are supported by empirical and theoretical work in critical theory, feminism, postcolonial studies, and poststructuralism (Weedon 1997; Roseneil, Chapter 7 of this volume).

Yet another faction is comprised of those who emphasize the overriding importance of culture and community in determining the actions and beliefs of individuals. Communitarians suggest that individual attitudes and beliefs are fundamentally derived from the groups they belong to, such that individual freedom and personal identity are predicated on the membership of specific communities (MacIntyre 1984; Taylor 1989). Ideological variants of communitarianism suggest strengthening local bonds and empowering communities with greater authority and resources to make decisions and deliver public goods and services on behalf of individuals (Etzioni 1993; Putnam 2000). In a similar vein, advocates of multiculturalism highlight the importance of culture in establishing a secure basis for individual identity and suggest the need for state protection of the rights and values of minority ethnic groups (Kymlicka 1991). Finally, some commentators reject the notion that individuality has become more prominent, pointing instead to the rise of conformity and new kinds of "tribalism" in modern times (Maffesoli 1996).

A useful way of thinking about these debates and disagreements is to characterize individualization as a "discursive field" (Weedon 1997). Weedon draws upon Foucault to suggest that personal experiences and social relationships are structured by discursive fields, which are each made up of several alternative discourses. These discourses represent ways of "giving meaning to the world and of organizing social institutions and processes." Discursive fields offer individuals "a range of modes of subjectivity" (Weedon 1997, 34), meaning that they provide a number of alternative ways of experiencing the world and interpreting life experiences (Weedon 1997). In this poststructural view, humans do not possess an unalterable inner world of desires, experiences, and meanings insulated from their social relationships and surroundings. Instead, experience and meaning are only made possible through social surroundings, via forms of language and other practices that social institutions and interactions provide to the individual.

Importantly, these alternative modes of subjectivity are not usually given equal weight; discourses are typically arranged in a hierarchical fashion within discursive fields, based on how much institutional support each of the different discourses enjoys. Thus, certain discourses carry more weight or have more power, so that particular experiences and interpretations of experience are favored, legitimized, and celebrated, while others are criticized, marginalized, and problematized. While discursive fields are hierarchical, they are not homogeneous or hegemonic, so there is always a degree of contestation and resistance directed at powerful modes and practices of subjectivity, and discursive fields are characterized by continuous struggle (Weedon 1997). Within poststructuralism, there is a deep suspicion of dominant discourses because they are seen to exclude and delegitimize particular experiences and practices, and to undermine the possibility of change and reform (Weedon 1997).

We can clearly observe these tendencies in the discursive field of individualization. Although the field is replete with competing discourses, there is a power hierarchy that favors certain discourses and marginalizes others. Neoliberalism is presently highly influential in politics and public policy, and its underlying theoretical assumptions dominate several academic disciplines (Clarke 2004b; Rose 1996a; Brodie, Chapter 9 of this volume). Neoliberalism suggests, encourages, and compels certain interpretations of our thoughts, actions, and desires. To borrow from the governmentality literature, neoliberal state policies implore individuals to become self-critical, to take personal responsibility for their lives, to adapt specific practices of self-regulation and improvement, and to embrace entrepreneurial and materialistic self-identities (Dean 1999; Hindess 1996; Rose 1996a; Brady, Chapter 11 of this volume; Henman, Chapter 10 of this volume). Importantly, these policies and practices are aligned with and motivated by broader governmental agendas of economic and political liberalization. Yet there are competing discourses of individualization that provide alternative ways of experiencing the world. Many of the chapters in this volume explore alternative models of individuality, including different forms of language, seeking new accounts of individual experience that do not fall prey to the assumptions of the dominant discourse within this discursive field.

Poststructuralist theories about discourse and power stress the role of language in framing debates and experiences (Weedon 1997). The discursive field of individualization includes many overlapping and competing terms and concepts, many of which are used interchangeably by authors. Furthermore, contributors to the discursive field of individualization use apparently straightforward terms in strikingly different ways. The definition

of the "individual" is a case in point. It is sometimes used as a "species concept" to refer simply to a single person, the smallest division of society (Beck and Beck-Gernsheim 2002, 27). It has been used in a "descending" sense to refer to deviants who depart from cultural, social, or traditional norms, as well as in an "ascendant" mode to refer to those who rise above or step out from the population through their impressive achievements or distinctive personalities (Foucault 1977, 193). Finally, it is often associated with specific human capacities, practices, and subjectivities, such as emotional, legal, material, and psychological self-reliance, personal autonomy, agency, self-determination, authenticity, and rationality (Yeatman, Chapter 3 of this volume).

As we shall see, different definitions have important theoretical and political consequences. In the spirit of poststructuralism, I acknowledge that key terms and expressions in this discursive field are examples of power, insofar as they bring certain realities into being and occlude others (Law and Urry 2004), while at the same time validating and denigrating certain experiences, practices, and identities. With this in mind, I do not wish to formalize and fix the meaning of concepts within the discursive field of individualization, for this would support the view that the individual and individualization have a universal meaning and deny the existence of contestation and debate.

Individualization and Personal Freedom

Conventional approaches in political science and sociology tend to give historical and ontological priority either to individuals or structures, and to equate individuality with the absence of external or social constraints. In liberalism, the dominant political doctrine of the industrialized world, humans are regarded as naturally autonomous and self-determining (Yeatman 1994; Yeatman, Chapter 3 of this volume). According to this view, humans inherently posses the capacity to be reasonable and to conduct and regulate their behaviors according to an internal "will." This will, which forms the basis of a person's distinctiveness and individuality, is authentic to the individual and not created or significantly influenced by external factors. It follows that individuality is reduced where external controls and constraints interfere with one's capacity to act according to one's will. When individuals live together in societies, it is usually necessary to create general rules that restrain individual behavior so as to prevent certain individuals from unreasonably interfering with the freedom of others to act upon their own internal wills. The imposition of these external controls and compulsions is justified where individuals collectively agree to be

obliged to adhere to laws that protect their freedoms from the encroachments of others. Such self-imposed laws, reflected in the notion of the "social contract," form the basis of the liberal society of individuals. Norbert Elias (1939) notes that the liberal view suggests that social structures and processes come after individuals, and this implies that individuals can exist prior to their relations with others, as fully formed, reasonable, self-determining, and self-regulating beings. As Anna Yeatman points out in Chapter 3, this idea of the ontological precedence of the individual is carried through into contemporary neoliberalism.

In contrast, modern sociology has tended to emphasize the priority and power of social structures over the freedom of individual persons. Underlying this stance is a similar theoretical opposition between internal and external determinants to that which is found in classical and contemporary variants of liberalism. As Beck and Beck-Gernsheim (2002, 12) note, sociology has traditionally opposed social structure with personal agency. In this view, wherever social structures are present, these predetermine human behaviors, leaving little room for choice or variation in individual lifestyles. Even when structures do not explicitly constrain or compel individuals, they have a very strong influence on the underlying values, beliefs, and preferences of individuals. In this respect, the conventional sociological view of the relationship between external and internal determinants of human action is distinct from that entertained in liberal theory, in which the internal will is usually insulated from outside influence.

Although a considerable amount of sociological research has sought to determine empirically the balance between agency and structure, there is nevertheless a strong tendency to stress the general dominance of social structure over individual agency. Hence, C. Wright Mills' (1959) seminal formulation of the "sociological imagination" suggests that sociology's distinctive contribution is to correct the fallacious assumption that individual experiences are unique and unconnected to larger social forces. On this view, individual agency is an error or exaggeration perpetrated by personal consciousness. The function of sociology is to enlighten individuals about social structures and their limiting effects on personal freedom. Beck and Beck-Gernsheim (2002, 15) describe this sociological "credo" in the following terms: "The individual is the illusion of individuals who are denied insight into the social conditions and conditionality of their lives." It is important to note that there is a distinctive tradition of sociological thought that does not oppose structure and agency, and that regards individuality as a product, not an absence, of social structure. This will be explored in the next section.

The individualization theorists give an account of the relationship between individuals and social determinants that is more complex than the "either/or" models of conventional social science. To be sure, they do see individualization as a form of emancipation from particular constraints (Lash 1993, 52). These constraints revolve around several poles. The first is tradition, or the idea that people behave in certain ways and understand their experiences on the basis of historically established forms of behavior and modes of interpretation. In this sense, individualization means the diminishing power of tradition to determine the specific content of behaviors and to justify actions, a process Giddens refers to as "detraditionalization" (Giddens 1991, 1994b). In the place of tradition, human behavior becomes increasingly "reflexive," meaning that it is driven by deliberate human actions and choices and is shaped by self-awareness (Beck, Giddens and Lash 1994; Giddens 1991, 1994b). For instance, the social position of women has changed considerably in recent decades; whereas tradition once substantially determined the content of women's actions and biographies, increasingly, women are permitted and expected to shape their lives and justify these choices with respect to competing personal values and desires (Beck and Beck-Gernsheim 1995, 2002, chaps. 1, 5–8).

The second constraint that is lifted in the process of individualization is the close tie between individual identity and membership of specific social collectives, such as social classes, ethnic groupings, and local and national communities. The individualization thesis suggests that individuals decreasingly derive their identities from social groupings and no longer see their fates as being directly shared with other group members. According to the individualization theorists, traditions and groups do continue to play a role in individual experience; however, the meaning of tradition and group membership has shifted from an external imposition to a deliberate action or affiliation. Thus the act of conforming to a tradition or joining and submitting to a group is increasingly interpreted, queried, and challenged on the grounds that it is a reflexive choice, something done consciously and deliberately by individuals to inform self-identity and personal biography (Elliott 2002).

While the individualization thesis assumes growing scope for personal choice and individual decision making, this does not mean that individuals are free to do whatever they like, unencumbered by social structures and norms (Bauman 2000; Beck and Beck-Gernsheim 2002; Giddens 1991). The individualization thesis suggests that social structure is not receding in its influence; rather, it is changing the demands it places on individuals. Individualization, according to Beck, is "the social structure of the second modernity" and as such, it implies a transformation of social

structures, not liberation of individuals from social processes (Beck and Willms 2004, 101). Increasingly, social structures compel people to become individuals and take charge of their lives. Thus Bauman characterizes the present era in terms of "compulsive and obligatory self-determination" (2000, 32), and Beck suggests that today, individuals are compelled, "for the sake of their own material survival—to make themselves the centre of their own planning and conduct of life" (Beck 1992, 88).

While individualization promotes choice in individual lives, it also removes the possibility of deferring to tradition, depending on the family or the state for protection and guidance, or adopting a pre-existing social role. Nor does individualization mean that everyone becomes distinct and unique, since a "life of one's own is . . . neither the expression of a bubbling individualism and egoism that has reached epidemic proportions, nor a life in which individuals float free in determining themselves, but rather a life of thorough *conformity*" (Beck and Beck-Gernsheim 2002, 151, emphasis original; Mills, Chapter 4 of this volume; Henman, Chapter 10 of this volume). Furthermore, although individualization compels individuals to take responsibility for their own problems, it does not follow that these problems are caused or can be solved by individuals. Bauman (2000) and Beck and Beck-Gernsheim (2002) accept that many social problems remain structural, and thus individualization produces tensions, contradictions, and paradoxes, since there is a "yawning gap between the right of self-assertion and the capacity to control the social settings which render such self-assertion feasible" (Bauman 2000, 38).

If humans are currently forced to become reflexive individuals, what or who is doing this compelling? According to the individualization theorists, recent transformations in the social structure have elevated the role of *institutions* in shaping individual lives. For Giddens (1991, chap. 1), social institutions play a central role in late modernity by enabling, obliging, and structuring individual choice. Contemporary social institutions take the form of "abstract systems," which include "symbolic tokens" such as money, and "expert systems," made up of specialists holding narrow knowledge and lay individuals who depend on expert understanding. Giddens (1991) believes abstract systems enable and structure individual choice in several ways: Firstly, by routinizing and regularizing social processes, they produce a Weberian "field of calculable action." Secondly, they also empower individuals with new kinds of knowledge and techniques that they can use to shape their own lives and deal with problems and uncertainties, such as the insights provided by medical systems and psychotherapy practitioners. Thirdly, institutions enable and structure choice through the "sequestration of experience," that is, by repressing and

shutting out potentially disturbing questions of morality and ethics that might disrupt individuals' trust in the stability of social institutions, and that could thereby undermine the possibility of developing personal routines and systematic life plans. Hence, according to Giddens, contemporary institutions provide predictability, resources, and techniques so that individual humans can develop distinctive lifestyles.

Similarly, Beck and Beck-Gernsheim (2002) emphasize the centrality of institutions for contemporary individualization, although they are less formal and abstract than Giddens in their account of how institutions operate. Modern institutions, they suggest, differ from earlier social structures and processes in that they require activity and initiative from individuals; they offer incentives to action, but do not dictate specific behaviors (see also Lash 1993). Bauman also accepts that institutions play a part in individualization. He focuses primarily on the impact of cultural institutions, such as the role of the media in reflexively focusing our experiences and orientations back on ourselves, and the role of shopping malls in furnishing individuals with ready-made, commodified identities (2000). Yet his account of institutions in late modernity is highly pluralistic, suggesting that while institutions in general have an important role to play in structuring individual experience, particular institutions only have a fleeting influence, since late modernity "has . . . brought into being and allowed to coexist authorities too numerous for any one of them to stay in authority for long" (Bauman 2000, 63–64).

The Legacy of Classical Theory

A substantial debate has arisen over the novelty of the individualization thesis. This dispute revolves around two interrelated issues: firstly, the question of how new the phenomenon of contemporary individualization itself is, and secondly, how original the individualization thesis is. While Bauman, Beck, Beck-Gernsheim, and Giddens are vague about exactly when the current form of reflexive individualization emerged, they tend to associate it with the second half of the twentieth century (Elliott 2002; see Chapter 2 of this volume). However, others argue that individualization has been occurring for a longer period, since or even before the arrival of modernity (Weber 1971). Furthermore, some claim that earlier sociologists and social theorists anticipated many of the arguments of Bauman, Beck, Beck Gernsheim, and Giddens (Mills, Chapter 4 of this volume; Nollmann and Strasser, Chapter 5 of this volume).

The previous section of this chapter addressed the sovereignty of the will in liberal political theory and the structure/agency binary in sociology,

and showed these paradigms to be at odds with the individualization theorists' emphasis on the positive interrelationship between individuals and structures. This section reviews the ideas of several classical theorists who also accepted a positive relationship between social institutions and individualization. Although there are continuities between these early perspectives and current work on individualization, the individualization theorists suggest that these older approaches are inadequate because they fail to address the fundamental ambivalence and uncertainty of late-modern individuality.

There is a strong tradition in sociology that assumes a direct relationship between the emergence of certain social structures and the historical rise of the individual. In Max Weber's work on the rise of individualistic and rationalistic cultures in the Occident, the modern sense of individuality, self-responsibility, and personal achievement arose as a result of the individualization of the relationship between humans and God promoted through the Protestant Reformation (Giddens 1991; Nollmann and Strasser, Chapter 5 of this volume). In Émile Durkheim's analysis, individuality is made possible through the emergence of a functional division of labor built upon a complex social structure, in which individuality equates to occupying a unique role in a highly differentiated functional division of social tasks. Thus individuality necessarily requires membership of a highly regulated and ordered system, whereas the absence of such structures leads not to greater individual achievement and expression, but rather to acute and destructive psychological and social pathologies (see Yeatman, Chapter 3 of this volume; Mills, Chapter 4 of this volume). Georg Simmel also regards the development of large differentiated societies as a key condition of the emergence of individuality, although he suggests that mass societies ultimately undermine individual uniqueness (Andersen and Kaspersen 2000, 103–5).

Elias (1939) sets out to overcome the debate between those who think individuals precede societies (he refers to this as the "myth of creation") and those who believe social structures must come before individuals. He begins with the question of how humans become complex and differentiated individual adults. Elias argues that humans are born less developed than other animals, with loose "unformed impulses" that only begin to take on a definite shape and direction through interaction with adults (Elias 1939, 26). As these desires begin to assume a distinct form, the child learns to regulate its thoughts and feelings according to how these will be received by others. For Elias, the child who does not grow up in the context of social interaction is not an individual but rather a "semi-wild human animal" (Elias 1939, 21). Individuals develop and mature in the context of specific

relationships and dependencies. Individuality is "a peculiarity of [a person's] *psychical* functions, a structural quality of his or her self-regulation in relation to other persons and things." (Elias 1939, 57; emphasis original) According to Elias, (1939, 57) "'[i]ndividuality' is an expression for the special way in which, and the special degree to which, the structural quality of one person's psychical control differs from another's." At the same time, Elias argues that society should be regarded as the sum of relationships between individuals who themselves were formed in social relationships, so there is not a clear ontological precedence of the social over the individual.

While these theorists chart the ways in which social processes and structures enable individualization, it is possible to move to a more specific level of analysis in order to explore the specific institutions and mechanisms that brought about the modern individual. While not a "classical" theorist as such, Michel Foucault's highly influential analysis of the relationship between individualization and modern institutions also predates the individualization thesis and invites comparison to current sociological work in this area (Beck and Willms 2004; see Brady, Chapter 11 of this volume; Henman, Chapter 10 of this volume). Foucault (1977) depicts the rise of "disciplinary" institutions in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries and their role in constructing individuals as distinctive members of a larger social whole. He argues that, during this period, there was a shift in the form by which humans were governed, from "wholesale" techniques, which engaged crowds and groups, to "retail" methodologies, which operated directly on individual persons. Discipline emerged first in a series of "total institutions," such as military barracks, prisons, and schools, and operated to individualize subjects in several ways. At the heart of discipline was the desire simultaneously to know each individual's particular traits, abilities, weaknesses, and potentials, while integrating and understating individuals within a larger multiplicity or group, with reference to standards and norms.

Disciplinary power achieves this through several techniques, such as the examination, which tests each person with reference to standard criteria, producing knowledge about the individual, including their strengths and weaknesses, while at the same time placing and ranking them within a hierarchical whole. New technologies of surveillance, including architectural designs inspired by the utopian idea of the panopticon, served to increase the visibility of individual actions, and enhanced subjects' amenability to disciplinary correction and hierarchical direction (1977). Importantly, although such disciplinary practices and relationships originated inside specific institutions, Foucault suggests they gradually spread

into other spheres of life, and came to constitute a general logic of governance (Foucault 1977).

Although discipline has conations of prevention and repression, in Foucault's sense, it is also a positive form of power, succeeding in bringing about new strengths, capacities, and abilities in individuals, while at the same time harnessing such powers to a common cause. In contrast to liberal thinkers of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, who claimed that individuality was the product of emancipation and that sociality was a product of contract, Foucault reminds us that the construction of individuals in early modernity, and their integration into a social whole, required institutions and practices that were deeply and necessarily hierarchical, premised on the maintenance of control, surveillance, and power (Foucault 1977, 194).

While the individualization theorists acknowledge the significance of many of these prior contributions, they also suggest that such theories have important limitations for understanding contemporary individualization. Essentially, they argue that recent transformations in social structure have undermined the certainties that existed in the era of classical sociology. The classical theorists allegedly focus on early modernity and assume the existence of stable social orders with neat "role sets" that prescribe how individuals will behave (Beck and Willms 2004) and predictable "rites of passage" between different phases of life (Giddens 1991). In contrast, the individualization theorists argue that contemporary individuals cannot draw upon established social roles or depend upon the certainty of conventional transitions, but are instead required to assemble their own identity packages from a vast range of competing and contradictory biographical options supplied by institutions. While this implies greater choice and flexibility in how individuals define their identities and shape their life projects, the result is "precarious freedom," since there is considerable uncertainty about the extent to which such choices and strategies will produce the intended biographical effects (Beck and Beck-Gernsheim 2002, 1–2).

Hence the classical theorists studied and described an era of relative social stability and biographical predictability, whereas the individualization theorists seek to understand the nature of individuality in a period of profound uncertainty. As Beck and Beck-Gernsheim (2002, 26) observe, "[t]he main difference is that today people are not discharged from corporate religious-cosmological certainties into the world of industrial society, but are transplanted from the national industrial societies of the first modernity into the transnational turmoil of world risk society." Furthermore, these theorists claim that earlier theories of domination and

oppression fail to capture the instability of power regimes in the current context. For this reason, Beck distinguishes his work from Foucault's analysis of individualization, which he argues has "a more or less *linear* conception of the control function of individualization" and "obscures both the reflexivity and the potential subversiveness that distinguish the radicalized individualization of the second modernity" (Beck and Willms 2004, 66). In light of these differences, Bauman wonders "whether it is fair to ask the spiritual fathers of sociology . . . to instruct us what and how to think of an issue that burst our shared awareness and settled there long after their death" (Bauman 2004, 16) and concludes that "there are weighty reasons *not* to seek answers to our 'identity problems' in the work of the founding fathers" (Bauman 2004, 24; emphasis original).

The Content of Contemporary Personhood

Another important debate within the literature on individualization concerns the extent to which late modern institutions provide individuals with preformed identities and compel them to undertake specific actions. While the individualization theorists contend that institutions have a profound effect on the lives of individuals, they do not accept that institutions supply coherent and complete social roles for individuals to adopt. This section addresses two alternative perspectives. One approach draws on social psychology and suggests that late-modern institutions allocate "default" identities to those who are unable or unwilling to develop their own biographies (Côté 2000; Côté and Schwartz 2002). The second approach is based on the governmentality paradigm, and highlights the degree to which institutions force individuals to take up specific identities and practices of self-regulation that are ultimately consistent with neoliberal policy objectives.

According to Côté (2000) and Côté and Schwartz (2002), late-modern institutions offer a basic or minimum package of "identity goods" to those individuals who make little effort or who do not have the ability to take advantage of the wider variety of options open to them. These authors combine social psychology and life-course theory to argue that those with limited "capacities and preparation" for agency

> can pursue a life course without exerting much mental effort by simply selecting a number of default options now available in the restructured consumer-corporate society and mass culture of late modernity. A common default option involves forming and enhancing one's personal identity by focusing on the latest youth culture fashions and trends to impress peers,

> while ignoring self improvement in areas such as higher order competency refinement, human capital accumulation, and credential acquisition. (Côté and Schwartz 2002, 574)

This "default individualization" involves "a life course dictated by immediate circumstance and caprice, with little agentic assertion on the part of the person" (Côté and Schwartz 2002, 574). The value of this approach is that it highlights the existence of different types of individuality in late modernity, and that there may be disparities in the amount of self-exploration that individuals are capable of and willing to undertake (Mills, Chapter 4 of this volume).

However, it is important to recognize that all lives are increasingly filled with a sense of immediacy and urgency in late modernity (Bauman 2000; Beck and Beck-Gernsheim 2002). Yet it is not clear that this sense of immediacy undermines the importance or significance of agency as Côté and Schwartz (2002) suggest; if anything, the imperative to act quickly and change frequently elevates the role of individual calculation and reflexivity. In addition, it is important to be careful about giving an excessively homogenized picture of cultural trends and fashions, because many contemporary cultural institutions offer numerous identity options (Bauman 2000). Finally, it is necessary to acknowledge that the institutions that shape and govern the "higher orders" of individualization, such as educational and occupational systems, also provide a considerable amount of "default" content. Indeed, one of the important contributions of the life-course literature is its empirical demonstration of the ways in which such systems impose norms and standards on individual biographies (Marshall and Mueller 2003; Mills, Chapter 4 of this volume).

The previous section documented Beck's rejection of Foucault's theories of power and control within disciplinary institutions on the basis that this supposedly linear and hierarchical view of individualization does not fit with the ambivalent and contradictory stance of contemporary institutions. In his later work, Foucault sought to update his account of power to the late twentieth century through the concept of "governmentality," which has been embraced by many authors (Dean 1999; Rose 1996a; Brady, Chapter 11 of this volume; Henman, Chapter 10 of this volume). Governmentality shifts the focus away from total institutions, in which individuals are subjected to direct and severe forms of control, toward new kinds of regulation and manipulation that work indirectly on individuals "at a distance." Foucault and his followers are especially interested in how liberal and neoliberal societies manage to function in a productive and orderly manner, in spite of the fact that they grant considerable freedom to individuals. Techniques of discipline are still involved, but activities of examining,

ranking, and correcting are increasingly conducted by individual subjects themselves. Institutions do not operate by interning their subjects, but are rather engaged in a subtle process of instructing individuals in the use of particular "techniques of the self," which build individuals' capacities to govern themselves and to assess and correct their own physical, intellectual, and emotional deficits (Dean 1998, 1999). Importantly, these "microphysics of power" are linked to broader governance agendas, including economic competitiveness and welfare retrenchment (Dean 1999; Rose 1996a; Brady, Chapter 11 of this volume; Henman, Chapter 10 of this volume).

There are two strands of governmentality literature that make subtly different claims about the content of the individualized identities promoted by contemporary institutions. One strand, represented by the likes of Mitchell Dean(1999), Nikolas Rose (1996a), and Paul Henman (Chapter 10 of this volume), stresses the dominant position of neoliberal discourses in the current epoch. These authors claim that although neoliberal governments and policies promote capacities for individual choice and self-regulation, these initiatives almost always contain a strong component of discipline and normalization, which constrains individual freedom and aligns personal autonomy with larger political agendas. An excellent example is the contemporary emphasis in policies and programs on promoting "entrepreneurial" orientations and skills among the general population, so that individuals take on the challenge of adapting and marketing themselves in the context of economic restructuring and globalization (Dean 1998). Importantly, these writers note that neoliberal efforts to build individual capacities are typically backed up with compulsion, especially for those who depend on assistance offered by the state. Individuals who refuse to adopt particular identities and to regulate themselves in specific (neoliberal) ways are threatened with various official penalties, such as the withdrawal of government financial supports (Dean 1998; Brady, Chapter 11 of this volume).

Another strand of governmentality literature emphasizes the complex, contested, and contingent nature of neoliberal techniques and programs (Howard 2006; Larner and Walters 2000; Brady, Chapter 11 of this volume). This approach embraces Foucault's genealogical method, and also Deleuze and Guattari's "rhizome" metaphor (1987), to suggest that there is significant diversity and unpredictability in neoliberal governance (Larner and Walters 2000). These authors emphasize that contemporary governance proceeds by way of adaptation, experimentation, and innovation, such that neoliberal initiatives are continuously evolving and re-forming (Brady, Chapter 11 of this volume; Brodie, Chapter 9 of this volume).

Such writers do not dispute the power of institutions in influencing individual subjectivities, and they accept the contemporary importance of neoliberal technologies of the self. However, they focus on the variations in governance practices between and within institutions and also across different political jurisdictions. This approach is attuned to the possibility that contemporary capacity-building initiatives might vary in the degree to which they normalize and discipline subjects, and that these might provide techniques that individuals can appropriate and use creatively to resist ascendant discourses such as neoliberalism (Foucault 1977; Brady, Chapter 11 of this volume). Thus, in contrast to Beck's argument that the Foucauldian perspective does not acknowledge the "subversive" potential of individualization (in Beck and Willms 2004, 66), contemporary applications of Foucault can and do accept and engage with the points at which individuals use dominant techniques of rule to assist in developing their own freedoms (Heyes 2006).

The Demise of Domination

Of all the controversies surrounding contemporary individualization processes, the one that has attracted the most critical attention is the issue of whether or not social inequalities continue to be shaped by social structures such as class systems, occupational classifications, gender divisions, and ethnic groupings. Some have argued that the individualization thesis implies that inequality is no longer organized along categorical and group lines, but is instead determined according to the actions, decisions, and fortunes of individuals (Brannen and Nilsen 2005; Gillies 2005; Mythen 2005). For example, Beck's "risk society" thesis has been interpreted as suggesting that the risk of material impoverishment has become generalized, since the middle and upper classes can no longer insulate themselves from economic uncertainty, with the consequence that late modernity has an "equalizing effect" (Elliott 2002). Similarly, Giddens's idea of the "pure relationship" has been interpreted to suggest that the internal workings of intimate relationships are decreasingly determined by broader power imbalances between genders, and increasingly shaped by the wills of the parties to the relationship, as equals (Hey 2005; Jamieson 1999).

As a result, the individualization theorists have encountered substantial criticism from those who assert that factors such as class and gender have a very strong influence on the daily experiences and life chances of late-modern individuals (Elliott 2002; see Mills, Chapter 4 of this volume; Nollmann and Strasser, Chapter 5 of this volume). This issue has significant

political connotations, since it goes directly to the neoliberal idea that class systems and other structural forms of domination are in decline, so that fates are increasingly determined by individual abilities and efforts (Coburn 2004; Law and Mooney 2006). This section suggests that the individualization theorists have a more nuanced view of inequality and domination than their critics allow, and that they do not straightforwardly assert the demise of structures of stratification. Instead, they argue that individualization is promoting new systems of inequality that cannot be understood using conventional analytical tools and categorizations.

This point is clearly illustrated in the works of Beck and Beck-Gernsheim (2002) and Beck and Willms (2004). They devote considerable effort to demonstrating the irrelevance of social class as an analytical and political construct in late modernity. Beck and Beck-Gernsheim suggest that declining class identification is a result of the shift away from work as the primary source of individual identity, the flexibilization of the workforce, and the new focus on economic inequalities that traverse national (and therefore cultural and linguistic) boundaries. As Elliott notes, this suggests that inequality is increasingly fragmented across space and time (Elliott 2002, 303). Yet they also contend that socioeconomic inequalities display a "surprising *stability*" (2002, 30; emphasis original) and have, in some respects, sharpened throughout these historical social transformations (2002, 46). Furthermore, while they believe women have moved closer to economic, political, and social equality with men, they nevertheless stress that women still confront systematic barriers to equality within the family, labor market, and welfare systems (2002, 54). At the same time, Beck (Beck and Willms 2004, 100) contends that inequality has been "radicalized" since individuals are now less likely to attribute their material and social position to external causes, even though structural factors still produce patterns of advantage and disadvantage.

Some critics have responded by suggesting that while individuals may now subjectively regard themselves as being in control of and responsible for their own material positions, nevertheless, class and other categorical forms of inequality persist in objective terms (Bolam, Murphy and Gleeson 2004; Gillies 2005; Nollmann and Strasser, Chapter 5 of this volume). This resembles the Marxist notion of false consciousness, and also Mills's (1959) aforementioned arguments about the sociological imagination. The individualization theorists accept the possibility of a disconnection between perception and reality in this context. For example, Beck and Beck-Gernsheim (2002, chap. 7) suggest that while girls are increasingly raised to believe that they will lead a "life of their own," prevailing institutions such as the family, labor market, and welfare state lag behind this idea, so that

women frequently cannot pursue self-determination, and this often creates significant anxiety and cognitive dissonance (see also Harris 2001).

However, Beck (in Beck and Willms 2004) does not accept that subjective and objective interpretations of contemporary inequalities can be neatly separated from each other, since this distinction is premised on the idea that social structure is beyond the control of individual agents. Rather, the consequence of reflexive modernization and individualization "is to blur the distinction between substructure and superstructure, between consciousness and class," so that "in this context, individualization can no longer be understood as a merely subjective phenomenon whose deeper reality is revealed by objective class analysis" (Beck and Willms 2004, 101). This is because, in an era of individual and institutional reflexivity, subjective interpretations of inequalities prompt individual actions and reactions that in turn affect social institutions (see also Nollmann and Strasser, Chapter 5 of this volume).

Another way of interpreting the impact of individualization on inequality is to suggest that individuality has itself become a key dimension of inequality (Elliott 2002, 303–4). A popular line of argument suggests that individuality is an experience peculiar to certain privileged groups, such as the wealthy, the inhabitants of Western countries, whites, men, and heterosexuals in heteronormative relationships (Duncan 2005; Elliott 2002; Jamieson 1999; Savage 2000).

Elliott (2002) notes that the kinds of personal management efforts implied in the individualization thesis require significant levels of resources, including education and other symbolic and cultural goods, so that those who do not possess them are likely to be disadvantaged in the current social context. Giddens (1991, 228) provides some support for this view when he asserts that, "in late modernity, access to means of self actualization becomes itself one of the dominant focuses of class division and the distribution of inequalities more generally." A variant of this argument suggests that individualization is a luxury that can only be enjoyed after certain necessities are satisfied. For example, one view draws on Abraham Maslow's hierarchy of needs to suggest that individualization reflects a desire for self-actualization that comes about once basic needs of human survival are met (Mills, Chapter 4 of this volume). Thus, according to these perspectives, individualization is itself unequally distributed and is an increasingly significant dimension of social inequality.

These arguments have met a number of criticisms. Beck, Beck–Gernsheim, and Giddens all reject the idea that individualization is a privileged form of subjectivity. Beck (in Beck and Willms 2004, 102) asserts that "it is a misunderstanding to think of individualization as something that

happens solely to people who are well off economically." In fact, he argues that what makes the contemporary phase of individualization distinct from earlier phases is precisely the democratization of individuality, its extension to lower social orders (Beck and Beck-Gernsheim 2002). Furthermore, the individualization theorists stress the point that individualization is not an exclusively fulfilling and rewarding experience. For many individuals, late-modern life is not full of self-triumphs and authentic expressions of personal biography, but is rather dominated by the imperative to develop personalized "survival" strategies (Lasch 1979; Giddens 1991, 173) in order to cope with the social contradictions of late modernity.

Thus, the notion that individualization reflects a higher or later stage of human development, detached from basic human needs, has been challenged by several writers who argue that individualization is, for many people, intimately and necessarily connected with daily survival. Giddens (1991, 86), for instance, argues that the poor may face a greater imperative and often have more opportunities to be reflexive than those who are better off, since "in some circumstances of poverty, the hold of tradition has perhaps become even more thoroughly disintegrated than elsewhere," and these individuals are forced to develop new ways of coping with "inchoate . . . social circumstances." Harry Ferguson's chapter in this volume (Chapter 8) shows how, in the context of social work and child protection, interventions that help individuals leave abusive relationships and develop personal life plans are often fundamental to victims' health and survival. Similarly, Roseneil's chapter (Chapter 7) highlights the fact that reflexive strategies and the development of negotiated relationships are critical practices of "staying sane" in the context of relationship breakdown and other fragmentary tendencies of late modernity. These arguments challenge the assertion that individualization is a quest for higher-order emotional fulfillment and the notion that it is only relevant to the privileged.

In summary, debates about domination and inequality surrounding the individualization thesis focus on whether or not traditional patterns of stratification have been erased by the rise of reflexivity. The individualization theorists argue that certain structures of inequality remain, but also that these decreasingly figure in individual and collective consciousness. They caution against separating "subjective" and "objective" perspectives on inequality in an age of reflexivity. Finally, there is disagreement about the extent to which experiences of individualization are unequally distributed. While some say reflexive individuality is a privilege restricted to the upper portions of society, other commentators highlight the importance of individualization in the lives of the disadvantaged and marginalized.

Structure of the Book

In Chapter 2, I explore the individualization theorists' shared interest in self-identity and reflexive biography in greater detail. I argue that there are important differences between the perspectives of these authors, to the extent that Bauman, Beck and Beck-Gernsheim, and Giddens each propose distinctive models of individual biography. Although the individualization theorists each purport to oppose neoliberalism, I show how their models are vulnerable to being co-opted by dominant discourses in the discursive field of individualization.

In Chapter 3, **Anna Yeatman** presents an account of different "varieties of individualism." She contrasts patrimonial individualism, in which individuality requires mastery over the self and others, with postpatrimonial individualism, in which individuals come into being once they are able to recognize themselves as unique centers of subjective experience. Postpatrimonial individualism, which is to be found in the practices and attitudes of many new social movements, extends the scope of individuality to those who cannot achieve the sovereign mastery implied by patrimonial individualism.

In Chapter 4, **Melinda Mills** surveys the life-course approach to studying individualization. She highlights the lack of agreement within this paradigm about how to theorize and study individualization processes, and gives an outline of the debates that have arisen as a result. Mills draws upon a survey of empirical evidence within life-course studies to assess the validity of alternative perspectives on individualization, and suggests that the bulk of this research indicates that "default individualization" is the most common experience in late modernity. Mills also reviews the evidence for the demise of class, and compares the findings about individualization generated through quantitative and qualitative methodologies.

Gerd Nollmann and **Hermann Strasser** also utilize life-course research in Chapter 5. They focus specifically on debates about how to interpret social inequality and stratification in the current context. Nollmann and Strasser draw upon Weber's interpretive approach to argue that individualization should be studied in both "objective" and "subjective" terms. They suggest that individualization is best interpreted as a set of linguistic practices that produce individualized attributions of responsibility for social phenomena. Nollmann and Strasser report on the findings of a survey that sought to establish how individualized attributions vary between classes and throughout the life course. They find that class has an important effect on the degree to which people attribute behaviors to individuals, and that such attributions also vary systematically across the life course.

In Chapter 6, **Paul Hoggett, Marj Mayo**, and **Chris Miller** use a psychosocial perspective to interpret the fragmentation of individual roles and the emergence of new dilemmas in late modernity. Their aim is to determine if it is possible for individuals to act as ethical agents in this context of contradiction and uncertainty. They use an interview study of professionals working in social care to establish both that ethical agency is possible and to identify the specific psychic resources that individuals require in order to exercise their ethical agency. These include the capacity to live with complexity, a sense of authority, and a set of firm values.

In Chapter 7, **Sasha Roseneil** combines a psychosocial perspective with queer theory to explore experiences of individualization among those groups who might be said to be the "most individualized" because they live outside of heteronormative relationships. She engages with critiques of the individualization thesis that have emerged from feminist studies and family sociology, in which individualization is often presented as a middle-class experience and as a phenomenon that ignores the power imbalances that undermine women's self-development. Roseneil finds these critical assessments of the individualization thesis too pessimistic and she documents, through a qualitative interview study, the ways in which late modern individuals develop practices of self care that serve to "suture" the emotional wounds inflicted by the fragmentation of biographies and relationships.

In Chapter 8, **Harry Ferguson** applies research in social work and child protection to the question of what individualization can mean for those families that are in need of significant interventions from state social services. He argues that life planning and other individualization strategies are not a bourgeois luxury, but rather play a central role in programs and interventions designed to extract individuals from abusive situations, although such interventions may not be welcomed by all those who are affected.

Janine Brodie draws upon a number of theoretical paradigms in Chapter 9, including political economy, gender studies, and critical policy studies, in order to interpret recent appeals to the "social" within policy discourses in Canada and other Anglo democracies, as exemplified by the current focus on ideas such as social cohesion, social exclusion/inclusion, and social capital. While these "New Social 'isms'" are often proposed as alternatives to neoliberal individualism, Brodie illustrates how such discourses have been co-opted by and re-embedded within neoliberal policy agendas.

Chapters 10 and 11 explore the relevance of Foucault's later work on governmentality and the care of the self for studies of individualization.

Paul Henman uses governmentality to show how contemporary governance strategies encourage particular forms of individual choice and freedom that are consistent with larger neoliberal policy agendas. He points out that risk-based targeting has become a major individualizing technology in the public and private sectors, leading to new forms and patterns of stratification and subjection. **Michelle Brady** draws upon Foucault's writings on governmentality and the care of the self to explore the possibility that contemporary "regimes of the self" allow spaces for creative interpretation and resistance to dominant discourses. While many commentators have criticized individualized capacity-building programs for disciplining and normalizing their subjects, Brady interprets Foucault's later work as suggesting that the promotion of capacities can be separated from relationships of domination. Her research into two policy initiatives for single mothers in Australia points to some limited spaces and supports for individuals to undertake care of the self.

Acknowledgements: I would like to thank Michelle Brady, Matt James, and Melinda Mills for their comments on an earlier draft of this chapter.

This page intentionally left blank

Chapter 2

Three Models of Individualized Biography

Cosmo Howard

Introduction

The individualization theorists assert that identity has become a central preoccupation of human experience and one of the most important "variables" that humans may affect in order to live as individuals. For Zygmunt Bauman, Ulrich Beck, Elisabeth Beck-Gernsheim, and Anthony Giddens, the breakdown of stable and coherent roles and status positions in late modernity has forced individuals to become actively involved in defining who they are and shaping their relationships with others. Contemporary individuals reflexively build and modify their biographies and identities in order to adapt to shifting institutional demands and cope with ever-present tensions in their lives. This shared emphasis on personal choice, self-identity, and reflexive biography has led several commentators to group the works of the different individualization theorists together, using umbrella terms such as the "individualization thesis" and the "reflexive modernization paradigm" (Budgeon 2003; Lash 1993).

In contrast, this chapter systematically explores the differences between the positions of Bauman, Beck and Beck-Gernsheim, and Giddens. My analysis suggests that these theorists propose distinct models of self-identity and individualized biography, and that these differences have important implications for the discursive field of individualization. Giddens's account of self-identity and biography stresses the need for individuals to maintain a coherent biographical "trajectory" in order to cope with the uncertainties of late modernity. Bauman rejects this linear conception of individualization and argues that individuals eschew continuity in favor of the freedom to dispose of worn-out self-narratives. Beck and Beck-Gernsheim offer a compromise between these two extremes by suggesting that late-modern

individuals engage in biographical "experimentation" in order to develop new personal strategies that ameliorate the tensions and contradictions of contemporary life. I suggest that each of these models has different implications for policy and governance. While aspects of each model conflict with the neoliberal perspective, these theories of biography are nevertheless vulnerable to being co-opted by and integrated into dominant discourses of individualization. In each case, more work needs to be done to clarify the points of departure with neoliberalism.

This chapter begins with an account of the individualization theorists' shared interest in self-identity and reflexive biography. It then considers, in turn, the models proposed by Giddens, Bauman, and Beck and Beck-Gernsheim, comparing each and highlighting their political implications, with a particular focus on how each perspective should be positioned in relation to neoliberalism.

The Significance of Identity and Biography

According to the individualization theorists, the growing significance of personal identity and individualized biography is a consequence of modernization. As Bauman argues, the question of identity did not arise in premodern times, when people lived in ways that were physically rooted and socially embedded, such that there was no option of being different. Neighborhoods and communities were primary and stable locations of activities and experiences. The content and meaning of behavior was also heavily prescribed by institutions such as the Church (Bauman 2004). While the transition from traditional to modern society involved a process of disembedding individuals from local communities, it is necessary to distinguish between the consequences of the "early," "first," or "heavy" modernity, and "late," "liquid," or "second" modernity (Bauman 2000, 2004; Beck and Beck-Gernsheim 2002; Beck, Giddens and Lash 1994; Giddens 1991, 1994b). In sociological usage, these terms are not normally intended to refer to specific dates; rather, they are meant to encapsulate broad historical transformations in the character of Western (and to some extent non-Western) societies. Bauman, Beck, and Giddens follow this custom (Elliott 2002). Within the sociological literature, "modernity" or the modern era is typically said to have begun in the eighteenth century, during The Enlightenment (Pedersen 2000, 414). The modern period is associated with the demise of traditional and communal bonds and the emergence of mass societies, along with the rise of industrial capitalism and the functional division of labor, an increasing prevalence of instrumental rationality, and a growing emphasis on democracy, human equality, and self-determination

(Beck and Beck-Gernsheim 2002; Giddens 1991). The individualization theorists (and others) argue that there have been important shifts in the character of Western societies in the years since World War II, including the changing organization of families, the move to postindustrialism and postmaterialism, the breakdown of national demarcations and identifications through the spread of globalization, and the widespread calling into question of linear narratives of human progress (Bauman 1993, 2000; Beck 1992; Beck and Beck-Gernsheim 2002; Giddens 1991, 1994b). While some interpret these shifts in terms of the arrival of a postmodern era, the individualization theorists prefer to regard these changes as heralding a new and distinct phase of modernity (Bauman 2000; Beck and Beck-Gernsheim 2002; Elliott 2002; Giddens 1991; Pedersen 2000). Hence, within the individualization literature, the early, first, or heavy modernity conventionally refers approximately to the period from The Enlightenment until the middle of the twentieth century, while the second, late, or liquid modernity is the period since.

In contrast to premodern times, the social upheavals of the first modernity introduced identity as a task that individuals had to undertake, yet the range of available identity options was set down in a more or less exhaustive and prescriptive functional division of roles in society. Hence, adopting a particular identity meant choosing and adhering to a specific set of behaviors, attitudes, and orientations, from a limited and inflexible list of alternatives. Drawing on Weber, Beck and Beck-Gernsheim (2002, 34) note that early modernity extracted humans from locality and custom but then re-embedded them within new prescriptive identity sets and social statuses (see also Bauman 2004). Thus, in both traditional and early-modern societies, clear norms prescribed acceptable kinds of behavior for individuals. In early modernity, the "who am I?" question rarely arose, and when it did, the answer was relatively straightforward, for most people.

The arrival of the second modernity involves several developments that undermine this position of certainty with respect to personal identities (Bauman 2000; Beck 1997; Giddens 1991). At the level of the functional division of society, specialization becomes so complex and fragmented that one can no longer speak of neat "role sets" that individuals may assume (Bauman 2004; Beck and Willms 2004), nor of clear "rites of passage" in which individuals transition predictably and smoothly into new roles throughout their lives (Giddens 1991). Instead, institutions and relationships increasingly engage persons selectively, or absorb only parts of individuals' lives; further, they do this in contradictory and temporary ways (Giddens 1991).

Institutions also expose individuals to alternative "lifestyles": for instance, modern mass media draw attention to multiple life options and thus reinforce the "pluralization of life worlds" (Giddens 1991; see also Bauman 2004). The welfare state also represents a critical institution in the elevation of self-identity as an individual preoccupation and social concern. Despite the common assumption that welfare fosters social solidarity, Beck and Beck-Gernsheim (2002, 89–90) note that it also allows people to break away from personal dependencies and to pursue new individualized biographies. These trends are inextricably linked to the acceleration in the pace and scope of globalization in recent decades, and the tremendous range of cultural, economic, and political changes, opportunities, and risks that this brings (Giddens 1991). Importantly, while late-modern institutions present many different identity options, none of these alternatives come complete and premade, ready for straightforward adoption and emulation by individuals. In this context, the problem of personal identity becomes more difficult to solve and also more salient.

According to the individualization theorists, the contemporary preoccupation with identity is part of a personal and social struggle to cope with the disembedding effects of late modernity, in which certainties have been replaced by choice, fluidity, and fragmentation. For Giddens, self-identity reflects the rise of individual "reflexivity," that is, the increasing tendency of individuals to search within themselves for the source of meaning and fulfillment, and to work on themselves and their bodies. However, self-identity in his view relies fundamentally on trust in others, including a belief that others will accept and affirm one's own identity. Hence the rise of self-identity is closely tied with the rise in relationships that are "pure" or driven solely by the goals and priorities of the individual parties, unencumbered by external criteria. Giddens argues that the absence of clear rites of passage in late modernity means that life transitions become "identity crises" or "fateful moments" (1991, 112, 148) in which the relative stability of an established self-identity is disrupted. Various institutions, most notably psychological therapy, have stepped in to assist with these transitions, though their effect is not usually to affirm particular choices, but rather to encourage and support individuals to overcome the anxiety of transitions and to piece together new lifestyles and self-images (Giddens 1991). Giddens accepts that the production of a coherent self-identity is a difficult challenge, but he does think it is possible at some level to integrate and stabilize lifestyles, and he draws a clear distinction between normal, functioning self-identities and "abnormal" cases (this point is expanded in the next section).

Bauman, Beck, and Beck-Gernsheim are less sanguine in their discussion of the problem of identity. For them, self-identity is a struggle that never succeeds and that produces considerable ambivalence and pain. Both Bauman and Beck echo Elias's metaphor of the defective jigsaw puzzle, in which individuals attempt to put the pieces of their personal identity together, yet the closer they come to completion, the more they realize that pieces are missing (Bauman 2004; Beck and Willms 2004; Elias 1939). For Beck and Beck-Gernsheim, the fragmentation and segmentation of late-modern life means that the formation of self-identity always demands a degree of "do-it-yourself" ingenuity, along with unavoidable fear and uncertainty about the outcome of such efforts (2002, 24).

Bauman (2004) offers an even gloomier view of identity, in which self-deception plays an important role. For him, self-identity is the elusive goal of a futile but endless search for security and solidity in a world that is bereft of predictable structures and norms. However, although late-modern individuals can never obtain a coherent and complete identity, they must nevertheless keep believing that they can in order to continue functioning. Bauman suggests that identity is an attempt to create a substitute for community, and is invented at the point when community collapses (2004). In this sense, although self-identity appears as something that is individualized, it is actually an attempt to achieve belonging and to rescue a sense of community. Yet, identity as belonging is problematic for individuals, because it risks holding them hostage to particular ways of being and forecloses their choices. As a result, individuals are highly averse to establishing and formalizing their identities, knowing that while they have to undertake this effort as a "socially necessary convention" (Vecchi in Bauman 2004, 7) it will also mean that they give up options and tie themselves down in an age that demands flexibility and rapid change (Bauman 2004). Thus, Bauman portrays the search for self-identity in terms of considerable ambivalence, contradiction, and dissatisfaction.

It is impossible to consider the role of self-identity in the individualization thesis without also addressing the importance of biography. Giddens connects self-identity with biographical storytelling, suggesting that "a person's identity is not to be found in behavior, nor, important though this is, the reactions of others, but in the capacity to keep a particular narrative going" (1991). Similarly, Beck and Beck-Gernsheim (2002, 25) suggest that a "rough pragmatic indicator" of the degree of individualization is "the presence of elements of an individualistic and active narrative form in people's own biographies." For Giddens, biographical narratives play a critical role in ontologically securing the individual in the context of rapid social transformation. The continuity and coherence implied by the narrative

form imparts stability and security to the individual, and in this respect, the content of the narrative is less important than the presence of the narrative form (1991). Giddens also sees autobiography as a central technology of psychotherapy. Therapists often encourage their clients to keep autobiographical journals through which individuals are expected to engage in a self-scrutinizing "dialogue with time" (1991, 72). In this sense, these autobiographies are intimately tied up with the reflexive project of life planning.

Bauman offers a different explanation for the contemporary social and political significance of individualized biographical narratives. Drawing on Atkinson and Silverman's work on the "interview society" (Atkinson and Silverman 1997), he observes how modernity has democratized and generalized the notion that individual persons are distinctive locations of subjective experience with life stories worth publicizing. Thus, the social expectation that all individuals can produce and should publicize biographical narratives is firmly established, and individuals construct and tell biographical stories largely because they feel a social duty to make their private troubles public (Bauman 2000, 2004). One of the consequences of this social trend is that public discourse is increasingly dominated by private stories that crowd out discussions of collective issues.

Thus, in the works of the individualization theorists, self-stories play a central part in the construction, maintenance, expression, and reform of individual identities. In the sections that follow, I explore in greater detail the differences between and implications of these theories of self-identity and biography.

Anthony Giddens and the *Trajectoral Biography*

According to Anthony Giddens, "self-identity for [modern individuals] forms a *trajectory*" (1994, 14; emphasis original). In his model, the late-modern self develops through deliberate personal attempts to maintain a sense of direction and progress over time. Individuals can achieve a measure of continuity by engaging in reflexive "life planning" whereby they reflect upon their own history, feelings, aspirations, and potentials, and consider alternative lifestyle choices that may be more or less consistent with their own ambitions and goals. Individuals then construct an explicit program of actions that are intended to facilitate their fulfillment of the plan. It is important to recognize that this form of individualized life planning does not necessarily or normally reflect a narcissistic desire on the part of individuals to impose their own wills upon others, or to rigidly and unswervingly pursue the linear fashioning of their own identities and biographies

with total disregard for the needs of other individuals. On the contrary, as intimate and personal relationships have become more "pure," in the sense that they are less and less maintained for reasons external to the relationship itself, individuals increasingly incorporate others into their life trajectories and regard thriving intimate relationships as an expression and foundation of their own identities. In Giddens's model, individuals typically revisit their plans over time, making adjustments to reflect their experiences and interactions with abstract systems and other individuals. However, these modifications generally do not undermine the sense of biographical continuity and trajectory that life planning generates.

In Giddens's account, the trajectoral biography is facilitated and supported by key abstract systems of late modernity (for a discussion of Giddens's concept of abstract systems, see Chapter 1 of this volume; see also Giddens 1991). Psychotherapy is a pivotal abstract system that offers important technologies to help individuals create and maintain an integrated sense of self over time. The promotion of life planning in psychotherapy helps individuals to "colonize the future" through a set of techniques that permits a systematic consideration of alternative lifestyle options. I have already outlined Giddens's ideas about the use of autobiography as a technique for promoting the coherence of self-identity and linking the past to the future. Giddens suggests that abstract systems such as medical institutions and welfare bureaucracies also facilitate and shape the trajectoral biography through the "sequestration of experience," that is, by shutting out difficult existential and moral problems and questions from daily life that might reduce faith and trust in personal relationships and social processes and thereby undermine the surface on which the planned biography is constructed (Giddens 1991; see also Chapter 1 of this volume).

Interestingly, while many have argued that the rationalization and sequestration of modern life produce fragmentation and disorientation, Giddens suggests that such practices can actually facilitate individualized planning by moving unsettling and unresolved issues, which are beyond the control of the individual, to the background, since these practices act "to 'pick out' the lifespan as a distinct and enclosed trajectory from other surrounding events" (Giddens 1991, 146). The key point here is that the trajectoral biography depends on interactions with institutions and others, since "the self establishes a trajectory which can only become coherent through the reflexive use of the broader social environment" (Giddens 1991, 148).

While Giddens is careful to avoid the claim that his model of the trajectoral biography matches exactly with contemporary experience, he does

convey a sense that this kind of self-identity is a normal and typical mode of individuality in late modernity. A clear illustration of the fact that Giddens regards the trajectoral biography as a norm can be found in his portrayal of those individuals who deviate from the trajectoral model. He invokes R. D. Laing's idea of the "ontologically insecure individual" to describe those who do not maintain a sense of biographical continuity. According to Giddens's account of Laing, the ontologically insecure individual sees life in terms of "[d]iscontinuity in temporal experience" and interprets time "as a series of discrete moments, each of which severs prior experiences from subsequent ones in such a way that no continuous 'narrative' can be sustained" (Giddens 1991, 53; see also Yeatman, Chapter 3 of this volume). Such persons are "obsessively preoccupied with apprehension of possible risks to [their] existence" and, as such, are "paralysed in terms of practical action" (Giddens 1991, 53).

Other deviations from the norm occur when the reflexive planning and self-control implied in the trajectoral biography become excessive and dysfunctional, as is the case, according to Giddens, in sufferers of anorexia nervosa. This disorder reflects a "pathology of reflexive self-control" in which some women try to reconcile the prevailing social discourses of individualism and gender equality with their continued oppression by exercising an extreme form of reflexivity over their bodies (Giddens 1991, 105). In anorexia, the attempt to exercise control over one's future, to set a trajectory of change and improvement, becomes compulsive and self-destructive. Furthermore, while Giddens recognizes that modern life creates several "dilemmas," he argues that these lead to disjointed biographies only in exceptional cases (Giddens 1991). Hence, in Giddens's analysis, the normality of trajectoral biography is reinforced by casting as pathological and dysfunctional those individuals whose subjective experiences do not conform to his linear model of self-development.

The trajectoral model of biography carries with it several additional connotations that are often implied but not always transparent in Giddens's writing. "Trajectory" commonly means the path of an object launched or propelled through space (Oxford English Dictionary 2006). In this interpretation, something possessing a trajectory follows a clear direction, with only slight lateral deviation in space and over time. A further implication is that once launched, the object or projectile has little control over its own speed or direction, and is more or less committed to a specific course. In addition, the term "trajectory" often implies a curved ballistic path, like that followed by an artillery shell, in which the launched object rises, reaches a plateau, then gradually falls under the effects of gravity, as

its momentum declines. These common interpretations of the term have several important implications for Giddens's theory of biography.

For instance, one can align this trajectory metaphor with a number of influential academic and political perspectives on the individual, including life-course methods and neoliberalism. In life-course methods, researchers study the way in which the paths of individual biographies are shaped by specific events, as well as their interaction with "life-course regimes," or particular institutional arrangements that give structure to individual lives (Marshall and Mueller 2003; Sackmann and Wingens 2003; see also Mills, Chapter 4 of this volume). While it is difficult to generalize about the life-course approach, the field does exhibit some dominant tendencies that resonate closely with Giddens's work. In particular, mainstream life-course research draws on a tripartite model of biography that suggests that individuals typically progress through three important stages in their lives: preparation for work, breadwinning, and retirement (Krüger 2003; Marshall and Mueller 2003). This tripartite classification of the life course connects with the ballistic model of biography, in which individuals mature in physical and psychological terms while they are preparing for work, consolidate their abilities and identities during the phase of employment, and experience financial and functional decline in retirement. As Krüger (2003, 35–36) notes, the dominance of this model in life-course studies reflects a focus on the male-centered "attainment logic of life" in which occupational ascendancy and career progression are the primary issues and objectives.

This trajectoral approach in life-course studies evinces an analytical disinterest in other life courses, such as those associated with women and motherhood, that do not resemble the linear and trajectoral work-centered logic of the tripartite model (Krüger 2003). Indeed, the dominance of the trajectoral model within life-course research is such that, even when attempts are made to incorporate nonlinear life courses, they are usually defined with reference to the trajectoral norm. For example, Sackmann and Wingens (2003, 98) describe the life-course sequences of those who leave paid work to care for children and perform household work as moving from the labor force to a "state of nonemployment." The dominance of this trajectoral life-course model also has important policy implications. As Marshall and Mueller (2003) note, social policies are typically designed on the assumption that linear and progressive life courses are a norm, meaning that those who depart from the career-focused convention are unusual and have special needs. This is strikingly similar to Giddens's assumption that nonlinear biographies are exceptional and problematic.

Giddens claims that his interpretation of contemporary self-identity provides an alternative to dominant neoliberal discourses (Giddens 1998,

2000). His "Third Way" rejects the neoliberal notion that state institutions must withdraw from individual lives in order to enlarge the scope of personal freedom. According to Giddens (1998), an effective and relevant contemporary model of governance must recognize that processes of individualization have to a large extent emancipated individuals from traditional and collective constraints, and furthermore that risk is pervasive in modern life. Giddens observes considerable differences in the abilities of individuals to act positively in shaping their own biographies and managing risks. He is particularly concerned about the "socially excluded" (Giddens 1998, 102–11): such individuals fail to conform with the dominant model of biography because their lives do not assume a positive trajectory. Instead, their biographies are circular and repetitive, since they are stuck in cycles of poverty (Giddens 1998, 109). The Third Way seeks to break these destructive cycles, so that deprived individuals can become reflexive subjects whose lives take on meaningful and rewarding trajectories. Giddens argues that the state must intervene and provide support for those excluded from social networks and lacking the skills of biographical self-management by providing them with skills to help them manage risks in their own lives. In this way, Giddens's notion of the trajectoral biography is central to his Third Way policy reform agenda.

While Giddens presents the Third Way in opposition to neoliberalism, his trajectoral model of biography has several affinities with dominant discourses of individualization. For Giddens, reflexive biographical choice is effectively equated with rational choice, since most individuals are assumed to consciously and deliberately weigh alternative options and select lifestyles based upon their own preferences and desires. An excellent example is Giddens's suggestion that contemporary relationships are guided exclusively by the internal wills of the parties involved, and are unencumbered by external or structural constraints (1991, 89). A number of critics have argued that Giddens's model of the pure relationship gives insufficient attention to those factors that prevent individuals from deliberately choosing particular lifestyles and achieving biographical continuity. For instance, Jamieson (1999) points to the persistence of gendered power imbalances within intimate relationships, which continue to limit the biographical freedom of women. As with neoliberalism, Giddens's (1991) idealized model of the pure relationship also suspends consideration of the ways in which the demands of maternity and parenting frequently require individuals to interrupt and adapt their self-trajectories, and also involve relationships of authority and dependency (Giddens acknowledges many of these conceptual challenges and empirical complications in Giddens 1992; see Brodie, Chapter 9 of this volume).

Furthermore, many of Giddens's proposed social policy interventions have been adopted and adapted to suit neoliberal agendas. For example, Third Way-style capacity building and life-planning programs have been used in several jurisdictions to compel recipients of state assistance to improve their own labor-market prospects in the name of reducing welfare dependency and improving economic competitiveness (Clarke 2004b; Rose 1999; see Brady, Chapter 11 of this volume; Brodie, Chapter 9 of this volume; Henman, Chapter 10 of this volume). These programs often fail to open up space for authentic biographical exploration, but instead force individuals to adopt particular identities and make specific lifestyle choices (Brady, Chapter 11 of this volume; Henman, Chapter 10 of this volume).

Finally, a number of critics have noted that Giddens places considerable faith in the ability of late-modern individuals to overcome the anxieties and dilemmas of contemporary life and to establish and pursue their own coherent life-course trajectories (Lash 1993; Roseneil, Chapter 7 of this volume). Although Giddens draws upon psychoanalytical language and theory, and although he accepts that modern individuals function through a process of psychic and institutional repression (the sequestration of experience), nevertheless, his model is largely rationalist with respect to the possibilities for individuals to systematically and objectively choose between the options provided to them through the abstract systems of late modernity (Bendle 2002; Groarke 2002). As a result of these analytical absences and silences, Giddens performs his own sequestration of experience by excluding from his analysis problems and experiences that do not accord with the rational life trajectories envisaged in the neoliberal model of the self.

Zygmunt Bauman and the *Disposable Biography*

If Giddens's model of contemporary biography reflects an excessive focus on the continuity of the self, then Zygmunt Bauman's theories of self-identity represent the opposite extreme. Whereas Giddens believes it is necessary and possible for contemporary individuals to create and maintain a linear coherence of lifestyle, Bauman suggests that late-modern life is bereft of certainties and that individuals are compelled to embrace biographical discontinuity. In his view, it is increasingly difficult to settle one's self-identity because the accelerating pace and widening scope of cultural, economic, political, and social change forces individuals continuously to dispose of existing identities and replace them with fresh biographical narratives. Globalization penalizes inflexibility and compels individuals to adapt to the transformations wrought by economic restructuring. In this

context, all arrangements and relationships become fluid, impermanent, and unpredictable, such that, even at the level of intimate and personal associations, continuity cannot be taken for granted, and commitments are only sustained "until further notice" (Bauman 2003, 10). The changing nature of personal life, and the new demands of governance and political economy, favor those who can move quickly and are able rapidly to adapt to changes and exploit emerging opportunities, unencumbered by long-term commitments to persons and places. According to Bauman, inhabiting a liquid-modern world is like living in a labyrinth, with no clear paths or directions, many options, and little ability to look forward or backward in time and space, since one's footprints are always disappearing (Bauman 2000).

While Bauman's individuals face the need continuously to move and change, all do not have equal facilities and resources at their disposal for undertaking biographical reinvention (Bauman 2000, 2004; see also Chapter 1 of this volume). Bauman's analysis suggests that those with the power and resources to regularly adapt their identities will do so. He draws on Richard Sennett's account of Bill Gates, who, at first glance, might be said to embody and express a trajectoral biography comprised of a spectacular accumulation of accomplishments and attainments. Yet, in spite of all that Gates has achieved, he allegedly dislikes "permanence," is not emotionally committed to or invested in his past accomplishments, and prefers a "network of opportunities" from which he can choose to develop new affiliations and experiences (Bauman 2000, 124). In this context, the nomad, once regarded as primitive, becomes the coveted model of individuality, while those tied to time and place are disadvantaged by their biographical fixity. For Bauman, the key mechanism of power in liquid modernity is the ability to "escape" from bonds and commitments to one's self and others, and the consequence of this is that individuals, institutions, and organizations increasingly shrink from long-term involvements and set out to keep their options open (2000).

Bauman's model of disposable biography is closely related to his observation that the transition from "solid" to "liquid" modernity involves a shift from production to consumption as the primary source of individual identity (Bauman 2000). In a society of producers, as existed in the heavy or solid modernity, individuals see their primary roles and tasks in terms of the production of valuable things. Individual actions are necessarily regulated through the imposition of discipline and routine, while personal advancement depends upon the acquisition, mastery, and augmentation of specialist skills over time. Individual development in the context of production and work follows the logics of career and promotion, a sense of *accumulation* of achievements, advancing toward a goal or position. How-

ever, in the consumer society of liquid modernity, these producer-oriented values are increasingly irrelevant and counterproductive. Instead of building their biographies, individuals now purchase ready-made components of self-identity, choosing from a range of options. Not surprisingly, industries have sprung up to commodify and profit from the distribution of biographical components; chat shows on commercial television networks, such as *Oprah*, which supply viewers with examples of biographies, are an excellent example (Bauman 2000). Critically, unlike producers, consuming individuals do not attempt to invest in and work on what already exists, but rather continuously refresh their stock of identity goods. Biographical improvement in liquid modernity thus occurs through *updating*, a central component of which is the disposal of existing self-narratives, or the willingness to discard old self-identities (Bauman 2003, 21, 49).

Bauman's portrait of self-identity in liquid modernity displays several important weaknesses, as well as a number of similarities with neoliberal perspectives on individualization. His account coheres with neoliberalism in its implication that structures of inequality and domination do not have lasting impacts or long-term effects on the fates of individuals, since the fluid conditions of liquid modernity do not permit institutions to endure. While Bauman accepts that there is a "global power pyramid" in which some individuals enjoy the freedom to move and adapt to changing conditions while others are fixed to their existing biographies and identities, he neglects other important enduring forms of inequality. As with Giddens, he avoids consideration of gender inequities in contemporary relationships, preferring to focus on how fluidity promotes insecurity for all parties (see Bauman 2003). Furthermore, Bauman's stress on liquidity does not take into account contexts of care and social reproduction in which individuals cannot easily disband relationships if they are unhappy with them. Bauman's portrait of late-modern life implies that implies that empowering individuals involves enhancing their capacities to escape from institutions, relationships, and structures and in this sense it resonates with the neoliberal notion that personal freedom involves the ability to "exit" from arrangements at will. Yet, if institutions and relationships do persist over time, then greater attention must be given to the kinds of identity and biography that are privileged within them, and how they might be reformed and improved so that the individuals can exercise "voice" within existing structures (Hirschman 1970; Yeatman 1997).

Bauman claims that there has been a general deterioration in the quality and quantity of collective dialogue about public issues in recent decades, and he attributes this in part to the rise of identity politics (Bauman 2000, 2004). Whereas many commentators interpret the emergence

of identity politics in the 1960s and 1970s in terms of the opening up of personal life to public scrutiny and political contestation, Bauman suggests that such movements encouraged individuals to turn away from the public sphere and to focus inwardly on their private tribulations. He argues that contemporary identity movements on the "cultural left" tend to be preoccupied with issues of personal identity at the expense of pressing public concerns such as job insecurity, poverty, and social inequality (Bauman 2004, 36). Thus, Bauman suggests that we are witnessing

> the renunciation of the duty which intellectuals who were social critics once believed they owed to the rest of their contemporaries, particularly those who were less privileged and happy than themselves. With that duty no longer acknowledged, their descendents may now focus on their own tender, touchy and sore spots, struggling to raise the respect and adulation they enjoy to the level of the economic heights they have already gained. They are, stubbornly, self-concerned and self-referential. . . . The war for social justice has therefore been shortchanged for a plethora of battles for recognition. (Bauman 2004, 37)

As a result of these and other recent developments, Bauman suggests that it is increasingly difficult to mobilize individuals around collective causes, and that the public sphere has gradually been colonized by individuals who feel compelled to divulge personal experiences and private issues, to the extent that discussion of public concerns has been crowded out by self-stories (Bauman 2000). However, Bauman's equation of identity politics with a privileged postmaterial preoccupation fails to see the ways in which personal autonomy and self-determination are intimately tied up with physical and material needs, especially in cases in which individuals suffer from prolonged abuse or systemic discrimination. Hence, battles for the recognition of identities at the individual and community levels cannot be neatly separated from struggles over material questions (James 2006; Ferguson, Chapter 8 of this volume). In addition, Bauman's claims about the steady demise of the public realm arguably overemphasize the extent to which public issues and collective political movements have been sidelined by contemporary individualization processes. One detects in Bauman's writing a considerable degree of resignation toward the inexorable triumph of neoliberal individualism over the public sphere. In contrast, Clarke (2004b) describes the stubborn persistence of the public sphere in the face of neoliberal attempts to dissolve it, and highlights the ongoing importance of conflict and contestation within the public realm.

In summary, Bauman offers a stark and compelling portrait of the fluidity of identities and institutions in late modernity, and captures some

important characteristics of power and inequality in the contemporary period. However, his analysis exaggerates the demise of the public sphere and excludes important dimensions of individualization, such as the persistence of gender inequalities and the implications of liquid modernity for care and social reproduction. In contrast, these inequalities are central to Ulrich Beck's and Elisabeth Beck-Gernsheim's perspectives on self-identity and individualized biography.

Ulrich Beck, Elisabeth Beck-Gernsheim, and the *Experimental Biography*

A central preoccupation of individuals in late modern life, according to Beck and Beck-Gernsheim (2002), is the challenge of finding "biographical solutions" to problems encountered in daily living. The institutions of late modernity demand that persons take responsibility for their own fates, compelling them to make themselves the focus of their efforts and attentions (Beck and Beck-Gernsheim 2002). However, many of life's problems remain structural, meaning that they are beyond the immediate control of individuals; indeed, Beck and Beck-Gernsheim argue that the range of factors outside of individuals' direct influence is increasing, on balance (Beck and Beck-Gernsheim 2002). One of the most important examples of this contradiction between individualized responsibility and structural determination is the need for women to reconcile their expectations for a "life of their own" with enduring inequities in the distribution of household work and caring obligations (Beck and Beck-Gernsheim 2002, 54–84). This contradiction is exacerbated by the failure of contemporary institutions to provide adequate supports for women's independence, such as organized child care and income support for single mothers (Beck and Beck-Gernsheim 2002).

Beck and Beck Gernsheim (2002) claim that it is not possible for individuals to find complete biographical solutions to structural problems, and in the absence of collective or public efforts to overcome these difficulties, individuals are forced to search for the best means of creatively coping with the contradictions and tensions they encounter in their own biographies. Beck and Beck-Gernsheim argue that this context demands that individuals adopt an experimental attitude toward their lives, that they create and test a range of biographical prototypes in order to find models that will offer comfort and satisfaction in a world of contradiction and uncertainty. Importantly, individuals cannot devise biographical responses on their own, but rather depend fundamentally on institutions for support and guidance. In this account, the welfare state plays a critical role in facilitat-

ing biographical experimentation. I have already shown that Beck and Beck-Gernsheim give the welfare state substantial credit for the rise of individualization, since, by allowing people to break with existing dependencies and escape unwanted relationships and affiliations, it empowered individuals to develop and act upon their own biographical agendas. Like Giddens, Beck (Beck and Willms 2004, 82–83) regards "basic security" as a fundamental prerequisite of modern individualization, and he sees the welfare state as a key component in this framework of ontological certainty.

Beck and Beck-Gernsheim's notion of the experimental biography differs from Giddens's linear model of self-identity because it assumes a degree of contradiction and risk that precludes neat biographical trajectories. While institutions offer a mixture of supports that individuals can take up in their search for individualized coping strategies, these supports do not overcome the dilemmas and uncertainties of late-modern life. Thus, individual biographical experiments are always at risk of failing, and self-identities face the constant threat of "breakdown" (Beck and Beck-Gernsheim 2002, 3). Furthermore, in contrast to Giddens's arguments about the sequestration of experience, Beck and Beck-Gernsheim suggest that late-modern institutions do not shut out or overcome difficult moral questions, but rather introduce new dilemmas and compel individuals to deal with paradoxes on a continuing basis (Beck and Beck-Gernsheim 2002). For example, prenatal screening technologies force expectant parents who interact with modern medical institutions to confront profound ethical and decisional dilemmas that did not exist in earlier eras. Beck and Beck-Gernsheim's approach also diverges from Bauman's portrait of the disposable biography because the former explicitly acknowledges the persistence of institutional arrangements and structural inequalities. Furthermore, Beck and Beck-Gernsheim differ from Bauman in their focus on the need for individuals to invest time and energy in creating and maintaining viable biographical coping strategies, implying that people do not simply consume and discard premade identity components.

Beck (Beck and Willms 2004, 83) argues that in order to facilitate biographical experimentation, it is necessary to institute a system of guaranteed basic incomes for all citizens. Although Beck believes that the postwar welfare state enabled new levels of independence for many individuals, he also argues that this system reinforced a number of important traditional dependencies and inequalities. Social supports in many countries were (and in many cases are still) tied to participation in the labor market, and recent welfare reforms have tightened the nexus between paid work and support, removing assistance from those who seek alternative lifestyles or who

undertake activities, such as caring, that do not involve direct engagement in the labor market (Beck and Willms 2004). By contrast, the model proposed by Beck would do away with these employment conditions by extending a minimum income or "basic wage" to all citizens. Such a system would ameliorate many of the pressures and tensions of late-modern life, and should allow individuals the freedom to test biographical alternatives without the fear of falling into poverty if their experiments fail (Beck and Willms 2004).

While Beck and Giddens agree that governments must work to ensure that individuals enjoy a measure of basic security, Beck's proposal contrasts with Giddens's aforementioned Third Way (Giddens 1998), since Giddens does not accept that the promotion of ontological security should extend to providing universal and unconditional financial supports. This point highlights an important weakness in Beck's proposal for a universal minimum income. Giddens's conditional approach to basic security reflects the prevailing emphasis in contemporary income-support systems on removing unconditional welfare rights, on the basis that entitlements foster a culture of dependency that is ultimately harmful for individuals. This shift away from positive entitlements is also underpinned by a neoliberal agenda of reducing spending on social programs. Many jurisdictions have cut benefits and introduced new "workfare" interventions that compel recipients of state support to seek and undertake employment as a condition of receiving assistance (Peck 2001; Brady, Chapter 11 of this volume; Brodie, Chapter 9 of this volume; Henman, Chapter 10 of this volume). Beck does not indicate how, in this policy and political context, a universal minimum income that is generous enough to facilitate genuine independence and experimentation could generate sufficient political support to overcome the contemporary preoccupation with welfare retrenchment.

Beck and Beck-Gernsheim (2002, 24) and Beck (in Beck and Willms 2004, 78) insist that their preferred model of "social-experimental" individualization is deliberately antithetical to neoliberal "atomization." While Beck's advocacy of a basic income system is inconsistent with neoliberal emphases on self-sufficiency and welfare retrenchment, in other respects, the model is decidedly "liberal" in its assumptions and implications. Beck's basic wage rests on the liberal premise that individuals are inherently capable of acting as autonomous and creative agents so long as external constraints do not impede their freedom. From this perspective, dependency on others for basic material needs undermines individual autonomy and potentially restricts the ability of individuals to undertake their own biographical experiments. A basic wage means that individuals are no longer forced to stay in relationships that do not permit them to realize their life goals

or develop distinctive self-identities. This implies that individualization is primarily a process of emancipation of inherently capable individuals from bonds of familial and material dependency.

The emancipatory model does not address social contexts in which individual "exit" is impossible, such as parent-child relationships. Furthermore, the basic wage does little, on its own, to meet the biographical needs of those who lack certain important capacities, such as persons with intellectual or psychiatric disabilities (cf. Yeatman 1997). This raises a more general question about how late-modern institutions should intervene in individuals' lives to promote and support the development of distinctive self-identities and unique biographies. While Beck and Beck-Gernsheim admit that such interventions are inevitable and necessary, they do not elaborate on the specific principles that should guide the design of policies and programs in the context of "institutionalized individualism" (Beck and Beck-Gernsheim 2002). Finally, the basic wage raises the old and fundamental problem of determining who is to be entitled to and excluded from such a "universal" payment (Yeatman 1994). For instance, should children receive the grant, or a fixed share of it, to support their own autonomy and biographical experimentation?

In Beck and Beck-Gernsheim's account, state support for social experimentation is presented as being substantially at odds with neoliberal atomism. Yet neoliberals have also embraced the language of state-sponsored experimentation and modified it to fit their own agendas. Brodie's chapter in this volume (Chapter 9) explores how neoliberal policy initiatives appeal to the logic of experimentation in place of notions of linear and universal development and progressive expansion found in earlier social programs (see also Howard 2006; Larner and Walters 2000). Particularly popular is the idea that individuals and communities should be supported to find solutions to their own problems and build their reserves of "social capital." The language of experimentation serves in these cases to justify the differential and at times selective distribution of supports, the rejection of universalism and restriction of coverage to specific subpopulations, and the imposition of limits on the duration and funding of new programs. In this sense, policies that purport to facilitate biographical experimentation may end up promoting residualism and selectivity in government programs, an outcome that is inconsistent with Beck's (2004) emphasis on basic security and universality.

While it is not fair to suggest that Beck and Beck-Gernsheim's model directly justifies or promotes such outcomes, these observations do illustrate the way in which neoliberal reforms can co-opt the language of individual and institutional experimentation. This is especially the case in the

recent "socialized" variants of neoliberalism that have found favor in many jurisdictions (Clarke 2004b; Brodie, Chapter 9 of this volume). If they wish to provide a workable alternative to neoliberal atomism, proponents of social-experimental individualism must come up with specific institutional principles to guide the provision of supports and interventions into individual lives. Otherwise, there is little to stop governments from hitching government-sponsored biographical experimentation to neoliberal agendas.

Conclusion

This chapter has acknowledged that the individualization theorists share many important assumptions and observations. They agree that identity and biography have become significant problems that individuals must manage. Each attempts to highlight the inadequacies of the neoliberal account of individualization and seeks to offer meaningful alternatives to currently dominant discourses on individualization. Yet there are fundamental differences between their perspectives that revolve around several poles, including the degree to which biographical continuity is feasible and the persistence of structural inequalities in the present period. Given their differences, it could be said to make more sense to speak of a cluster of *individualization theses* rather than to assume the existence of a single coherent thesis. Finally, while these authors claim to oppose neoliberalism, this discussion has shown how the proposed models of biography are vulnerable to co-option and incorporation within neoliberal agendas and programs. This is not so much a criticism of the models as it is a testament to the ingenious adaptability of neoliberalism as a mode of governance and its ability to enlist subordinate discourses for its own cause. This suggests that further efforts are needed to articulate alternatives to dominant discourses of individualization, a challenge that many of the contributors in this volume have embraced.

Acknowledgements: I would like to thank Matt James and Michelle Brady for their comments on an earlier draft of this chapter.

This page intentionally left blank

Chapter 3

Varieties of Individualism

Anna Yeatman

Introduction

I am someone who has participated in and thought about late twentieth-century social movements that have used the rhetoric of self-determination and participatory democracy. I have been attracted to the rhetoric of participation and inclusion. In particular, I have been intrigued by the rethinking of political and ethical life that has been implicit in recent democratic movements. These are movements that, for one reason or another, have championed the idea that each human being is a subject who is entitled to participate in the decisions that govern his or her life, an idea that readily fans out into a broader proposition that all relationships between human subjects should be open to the voice of each, and thereby become subject to negotiation (in contemporary political language to dialogue and deliberation). This is a vision of "power over" ceding place to "power with" in the conduct of relationships (this is the language used by the principal and teachers in a primary school I studied that is committed to including the children or students in the governance of the school at the levels of both the classroom and the whole school).[1] That is to say, those with authority are expected to use it to invite all who are party to the relationship to become fully fledged participants in the relationship. To be a participant is to be present as someone whose *voice* and, as appropriate, *choice* are to count in the conduct of the relationship. It is also to be present as someone who can hold those who make decisions on behalf of the group to account for how those decisions impact the differently positioned members of this group.

The social movements I have in mind are the feminist movements of the second and third waves, the disability movements, gay and lesbian movements and their elaboration into a wider queer politics, and service user/consumer movements of various kinds, including the one that also

draws on the gay rights movement—the people living with HIV-AIDS movement. There are other instances, but these are some of the more prominent ones, and they belong to a wider universe of ongoing experimentation in participatory democratic practices of negotiated relationships, dialogue, and deliberation in all kinds of contexts (nonprofit service organizations, government agencies in their relationship to service-user constituencies, community engagement and/or development, community housing, public policy, peace-building, conflict resolution, employer-employee work relationships, and so on).

These movements for social change espouse a collectivist political imaginary. Like most collectivists, they have imagined that in so doing, they must reject individualism. For they have understood individualism as a noncollaborative way of relating to one's fellows, as self- rather than other-regarding. Curiously, these movements have continued to espouse an antinomy of self and society, when in fact they advocate an individualistic type of collectivism. In arguing that each human being is a subject whose experience should count in the design and conduct of human relationships, these movements are conferring the status of individual on each human being. They are taking for granted that the social condition of human life means that humans live in different kinds of relationships to each other. The issue concerns whether these relationships are open to the participation of social actors considered as individuals. The political imaginary of these social movements should be understood in the first instance as a status argument: *Each human being is to count as a participant in the relationships in which he or she finds him or herself, because each human being is to be accorded the status of an individual understood as a distinct and unique center of subjective experience.*

On rare occasions, these social movements have understood that they are advocating an individualistic collectivism. One such occasion is the "Port Huron Statement" that became the manifesto of the Students for a Democratic Society (SDS) in 1962 (included in Jacobs and Landau 1967). Here we find affirmation of a socially engaged individualism that is distinguished from both egoism and isolation. Like all political rhetoric, the statement is a creature of its time: It uses the collective noun "men" to denote human beings in a way that would not be countenanced several years later when the impact of the newly mobilized Women's Liberation Movement on left politics had made itself felt.

The section I have in mind begins with the proposition that "men have unrealized potential for self-cultivation, self-direction, self-understanding, and creativity" (Jacobs and Landau 1967, 159). It continues,

> It is this potential that we regard as crucial and to which we appeal, not to the human potentiality for violence, unreason, and submission to authority. The goal of man and society should be human interdependence: a concern not with image of popularity but with finding a meaning in life that is personally authentic; a quality of mind not compulsively driven by a sense of powerlessness, nor one which unthinkingly adopts status values, nor one which represses all threats to its habits, but one which has full, spontaneous access to present and past experiences, one which easily unites the fragmented parts of personal history, one which openly faces problems which are troubling and unresolved; one with an intuitive awareness of possibilities, an active sense of curiosity, and ability and willingness to learn. (Jacobs and Landau 1967, 159)

The authors of this manifesto clarify that "the individualism we affirm" is one that is neither "egoism," nor "self-elimination." Rather, it means "a generosity of a kind that imprints one's unique individual qualities in the relation to other men, and to all human activity" (Jacobs and Landau 1967, 160). Here, the intention as one of advocating a type of collectivism that is open to the participation of individuals as unique centers of subjective experience is clear. One may note, too, these authors' interest in validating the importance of subjective experience in social life. For them, it is of consequence that the individual be able to enjoy "a quality of mind" in which he is able to discern what feels "authentic" for him, and to go on to engage only in action that is congruent with this sense of personal authenticity. Were this to be possible, the subject would experience a sense of self that informs all of his relationships, and in which, in turn, the variety of relational experience (across the different contexts of action—work, family and personal life, political action, and so on) informs his sense of self. Thus, this would be a subject who is able to think of his subjective experience and personal history in an integrated, as distinct from "fragmented," way.

The Port Huron Statement takes for granted that human beings exist together in different kinds of interdependence. The authors are educated in the idea of "the social system" championed by the sociologists of the mid-twentieth century who built on the idea of society as a system of interdependencies offered by earlier thinkers like Adam Smith, Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, Karl Marx, and Émile Durkheim. There are two fundamental issues for the authors of this manifesto. The first is how these relationships of interdependence are governed: do they invite the human beings who are involved in them to present to each other as individuals whose subjective experience is to count, or do they discount, even negate, the subjective experience of these human beings? "As a social system we

seek the establishment of a democracy of individual participation, governed by two central aims: that the individual share in those social decisions determining the quality and direction of his life; that society be organized to encourage independence in men and provide the media for their common participation" (Jacobs and Landau 1967). And the second is how a collectivism that draws on the creative agency of the individuality of those involved in these relationships can be developed and articulated where politics is "seen positively, as the art of collectively creating an acceptable pattern of social relations" (Jacobs and Landau 1967, 160).

There is something compelling in this productive harnessing of terms: pattern *with* creativity, collectivism *with* individuality, interdependence *with* individual autonomy. What has happened to overcome the old way of thinking about these terms as opposites, and instead to see a positive and reciprocally constitutive relationship between them? In what follows, I argue that until the participatory turn of individualism, the individualism that prevailed was patrimonial in nature. A patrimonial individualism is one that constructs the individual on the model of a subject whose status as an independent individual reflects his status as the governor of an independent domestic unit. This kind of individualism makes the capacities to govern others and to govern oneself co-constitutive; they are acquired only through the process of education of the will. Individual autonomy in this framework is identified with the independent assertion of the educated and thus rational will as the basis for decision making both with regard to the individual's self and his dependents (Yeatman 1994, 2000a, 2000b).

Patrimonial individualism cannot be denaturalized and appear as the historically specific social formation that it is until there is a historical challenge to the terms of individualism that it represents—one in which the independence of the household or family head is so constructed that his status as an independent individual covers that of those who come under the jurisdiction of his will, these other subjects being his wife (see Pateman 1988), children, and servants. Until the elaboration of a "democracy of individual participation"—the language of the Port Huron Statement again (Jacobs and Landau 1967)—where all human beings are included as individual participants within their relationships, the only individualism on offer was of a patrimonial cast. In the patrimonial type of individualism, individuality is conflated with an individualized dominium (the patriarchal household). The government of the will is a *jurisdictional individualism*, one that marks what belongs to one individual as distinct from another. It discounts relational interdependencies between individuals. In offering an individualism that structures and mediates relationships,

the participatory democratic social movements are rejecting this older jurisdictional individualism.

The participatory democratic challenge to patrimonial individualism carves out a trajectory for a post-patrimonial kind of individualism. In so doing, it incites a reaction from those for whom the only legitimate individualism is the patrimonial kind. There are two varieties of such a reaction. One is straightforwardly nostalgic: what I call neopatrimonial individualism; the other is a little more complicated, one that I will call a postpatrimonial individualism of the will. Before I proceed, let me offer an explanatory note on individualism.

Individualism

The cast of my argument suggests that individualism is a way of thinking about and organizing social life so that it is open to the presence of human social actors as individuals. Whatever it means exactly to enjoy the status of being present as an individual in one's social relations, the essential thing is that the social actor is accorded the standing of one who is legitimately a center of initiative in these relationships. Thus in my understanding, individualism does not denote a way of being that is antagonistic to social relationships. Rather, to borrow Émile Durkheim's (1893) way of thinking about this issue, it denotes a type of social organization in which space has opened up for the expression of individual differences. Durkheim (1893) contrasted two forms of group-based social organization: mechanical solidarity, in which the members of the group are asked to subordinate and maybe sacrifice their distinct sense of being (their sense of self, however embryonic) for the good of the group and to their ascribed place within the group; and organic solidarity, in which group life is so structured that it opens up a space for the legitimate articulation of individual differences, and where, accordingly, power has to work with individual differences rather than to suppress them.

Durkheim (1898) argued that individualism becomes egoistic and antisocial when those who inhabit an individualistic society are unable to understand that their freedom is societal in nature, and thus denotes a universal condition that those who belong to this kind of society share. They do not understand that their freedom to be and to act as "an individual" is a status entitlement that derives from the value their society places on individuality and from the republican state as the institutional order that specifies and secures the standing of social actors as individuals. He suggests that individuals mistake the nature of their individuality when they misread their situation: instead of understanding individuality in terms of

social differentiation (a relationship of articulation of differentiated units), they see their difference from one another as a relationship that separates rather than binds, thus freeing them to seek a solipsistic rather than socially connected way of being.

Durkheim's explanation for antisocial currents of individualism goes in the right direction of seeing this ever-present possibility as immanent within an individualistic social formation. This is congruent with earlier republican thinkers such as Thomas Hobbes, John Locke, Jean-Jacques Rousseau, and Hegel. They consider that if individuals can think well, they will discover how their freedom to enjoy the status of an individual derives from law, the law of nature, and the positive institution of the law of nature in the public authority of the state. In so doing, they are reckoning with what it means to be an individual in a universal sense. Individualism denotes an ethical bond between persons (Yeatman 2007). At one and the same time, there is an ever-present possibility in an individualistic social setting that one or more individuals will refuse to understand that their freedom depends on their acceptance of a universal ethic of coexistence—as Hegel (1991) puts it, acceptance of the command to be a person who can respect others as persons. In giving primacy to their own sense of being over that of others, they pursue an egoistic path of imposing their will on that of others, whether this is through seductive persuasion, fraud, or force.

Post-Freudian psychoanalytic thinkers complicate this story. They suggest that a dynamic and dialectical interplay between how others treat one and how one's internal life is organized can lead individuals to adopt self- and other-destructive psychic defenses. These defenses are thoroughly narcissistic in that they privilege their own sense of what they want and need in order to survive at the expense of respecting others as distinct selves (see Hanna Segal's 1988 introduction to the work of Melanie Klein). Individualism is not rejected here. Rather, there is the suggestion that if individuals are to become constructively rather than destructively narcissistic, they need to learn that their sense of self will be more secure if it is positively attached to the presence of other selves. Instead of hating his or her dependence on others because it undermines the fantasy of a self-sufficient self, the individual needs to learn that he or she can develop a more robust and integrated sense of self if he or she gives up this fantasy in the context of achieving relationships with others that facilitate and nourish his or her sense of self.

I can see no sense, then, in continuing the tendency to split off individualism from what is valued about social or collective life, not, of course, unless the intention is to subscribe to a nonindividualized collectivism as will be true of many followers of conservative and socialist traditions.

Individualism is the way of thinking about and practicing collective life that makes sense if one values what it is to be an individual, a social being who is accorded standing as a distinct center of initiative in social life.

Each distinct type of social formation has its own phenomenology, a point on which Durkheim insisted, and it follows, as Durkheim also argued, that each type of social formation will have immanent within it both positive and destructive (what Durkheim called respectively "normal" and "pathological") possibilities of existence (see Durkheim 1893, Book III). To this, Durkheim added a third possibility—that which is associated with the painful challenges of transition from one type of social order to another, painful because those whose subject formation belongs to the older type do not know how to conduct themselves in relation to the demands of the emergent one. This is the phenomenon he called *anomie*.

In casting my own vote in the individualistic direction, I do not want to discredit patrimonial social organization. It has its own integrity even while it is unable to positively respond to contemporary participatory democratic standards of relevance. It is also very under-studied because, as Julia Adams (2005) suggests, patrimonial bases of social organization tend to be naturalized in social science, not least by Max Weber, who is the only classical sociologist who offers a conception of patrimonial authority (Adams's critical account of this conception is possible only in today's "postpatrimonial" context).

Patrimonial Individualism

According to Weber (1968, chap. 12), a society that is ruled by custom or tradition is also a society that is subject to patrimonial domination. I interpret Weber to be proposing that the rule of the father personalizes the group, and, thus, the authority of the father is borrowed from that of the group (this is the group of mechanical solidarity). Thus the more powerful the group, the more powerful the patrimonial head of the group. Patrimonial authority articulates the authority of the group over its members. For this reason, it is traditionalist in substance, for the power of the group over its members can be upheld only if norms are represented as enjoying the status of ethical givens. While the patrimonial head can command personal obedience, his exercise of discretion is restrained by the expectation that he upholds and conforms to the authority of tradition. Weber, thus, proposes that "the two basic elements of patriarchal authority . . . are piety toward tradition and towards the master" (1968, 1008).

Individualism and patrimonial authority should not mix, for it is the ethical force of individualism to call into question the authority of tradition.

When the subject is free to think and will for itself, it is able to open up a space between itself and what seems to have been given to it. In this space, the subject can explore possibilities of being both for itself and its world; it enters thereby into an open-ended and creative relationship to being.[2] It is inevitable, however, that a new principle for social organization first has to find an adaptive compromise with the old. The compromise that individualism makes with the pre-existent patrimonial type of social organization (see Harris 1998, chap. 1) is that it takes on a patrimonial cast: this is the individualism of the self-sufficient will.

The self-sufficiency of the will is borrowed from that of the patrimonial unit of which it is the directive force. The individualism of the will marks out the autonomous jurisdiction of separate patrimonial units. This is an individual whose autonomous capacity to make decisions is embedded within a patrimonial ethic of obligation to those who, within the jurisdictional ambit of their will, are dependent on him. In being expected to act autonomously, the individual is expected to both will and think for himself. This capacity for self-aware and reasoned government both of his conduct and of that of his dependents has to be cultivated or educated in him. Both the nature and process of this education mix patrimonialism with an individualistic rationalism. His education is modeled on what it is that a father (either as a familial or as a professional "parent") is thought to owe his dependents by way of the education of their wills, and thus in the course of his education, he acquires a sense of deep personal indebtedness to those who have been generous and creative as fathers-educators of him. In this type of subject formation, while the individual is expected to assert his will in the form of rationally accountable decisions, it is inevitable that a good deal of his action is driven by a paternalistic customary set of practices for which he cannot account.

Let me attempt now to suggest the nature of this type of individualism that is expressed as the self-sufficient will. It has three core characteristics that, taken together, indicate the kind of subjectivity that is involved here. Firstly, to assert oneself as an individual, one has to be able to engage in autonomous decision making in which the hallmark of such action is that one is able to explicitly articulate what it is that one wills (thus the emphasis on choice or "preference" in this classical individualistic schema). Secondly, one has to have achieved an education in rational decision making (thus in knowing what counts as relevant information and how to think about it) sufficient to deem one responsible for one's decisions. Thirdly, as an autonomous (and rational) decision maker, the individual is accorded responsibility over the jurisdiction of his own action, and so far as his own action involves the government of others, over their action.

In this conception of individuality, there is a severely straitened view of subjectivity. It concerns only the consciously aware aspects of individual subjective life—those that can be represented as decisions for the government of the individual's conduct and that of his dependents. All that cannot be reconciled with the self-sufficient and sovereign force of the will perforcedly has to come under its government. This field of phenomena includes all that goes on within the individual's psychic-somatic being that he cannot reconcile with the sovereignty of his (rational) will. In order to secure his sense of self as will, he splits off the non-rational aspects of his being and projects them onto those who are constituted within the field of the (rational) will's dependents—his wife and children (within the domestic sphere of authority of the will), his clients (within the professional sphere of authority of the will), and his dependent subjects (within the broader governmental sphere of authority of the will).

Not only then are women, children, and all subjects who cannot instantiate the self-sufficiency of the will (those who are positioned as "the poor" within the state, and the colonized within the imperial reach of the state) positioned as exemplifying that which must be made subject to the jurisdiction of the (rational) will, but the individual who instantiates the freedom to will is also constructed as *homo duplex* (Durkheim 1914). In the subject formation of *homo duplex*, the individual can accept and thus know only his subjective life as a rational will, while simultaneously he attempts to use his capacity for rational self-direction to bring all other aspects of his being under this regime. His embodied aspects of being—what Hegel, Freud, and others call his "drives"—can be brought under the jurisdiction of his will only so far as they are mediated and sublimated by the will's civilizing and rational force (see Yeatman forthcoming).[3]

The hierarchical structuring of patrimonial individualism, then, is expressed not just as the rational rule of the patrimonial will over its dependents, but also as a hierarchical regime within the self in which one agency within the self subjects and tyrannizes the rest (see Yeatman forthcoming). The individualism of the will is a jurisdictional individualism because it is expressed as the government both of the self and of the self's dependent others.

Patrimonial individualism has its own integrity: it is an exacting regime especially for those who, as household heads, are expected to practice an advanced degree of self-mastery as well as a rule over their dependents, one that is oriented to the self-preservation and welfare of each of these as individuals. Historically, those who have risen to these demands quite rightly have achieved an honorable life. However, patrimonial individualism comes at a high cost. Not only does it require the patrimonial individual to

harness his "body" (his aliveness) to his will in such a way that splits off those aspects of his being that cannot be subject to will, but it requires him also to hold at a disdainful, even contemptuous distance human subjects whose immersion in "body" is such that they cannot achieve the disciplines of the will (see Valverde 1998 for an exploration of these). The possibilities of an integrated conception of subjective experience and of understanding the individual as an integrated unit of subjective experience simply cannot be entertained.

Postpatrimonial Individualism

Postpatrimonial individualism offers a conception of individuality understood in terms of what it is to be a unique center of subjective experience. Here it is not the will but rather the self as a whole person that becomes the subject of individualism. The idea of the self denotes an integrated conception of the individual as an embodied subject whose agency is articulated somatically as well as psychically, and unconsciously as well as consciously (see Yeatman forthcoming). I associate postpatrimonial individualism with a historical assemblage of different kinds of generative challenge to the historical phenomenology of patrimonial individualism: these include feminism, psychoanalysis (especially of the post-Kleinian varieties), and the intersections of poststructuralism with postcolonialism. In different ways, these currents challenge the rationalist voluntarism and hierarchical splitting of subjective life that are associated with the idea of the individual as will.

This challenge can be understood as one of opening up the question, what does it mean to respect and facilitate the individuality of those whose subject positions do not permit them to exemplify the self-sufficiency of the sovereign rational will? The idea of the differentiation of the individual as a center of subjective experience has to be disentangled from the idea of the differentiation of the individual as will. These are quite different ideas of individuality. With the idea of individual understood as a distinct center of subjective experience, the individual has to develop a sense of self that permits him or her to know what belongs to his or her subjective experience as distinct from that of the other subject. Only on this basis is he or she able to welcome and value the existence of the other subject as an individual, and, in this way, to both invite and facilitate the other's presence as a unique subject. With the idea of individual understood as will, the individual has to achieve a discipline of self-mastery that enables him to establish a private jurisdiction for the exercise of his will. He is able to differentiate between himself and other subjects only to the extent of

recognizing other sovereign individuals like himself each with his own private jurisdiction. His ability to differentiate between himself and the selves of those who come under his protection as a sovereign will is poor. As their protector, his conception of their welfare is oriented not by his listening to their individuality as distinct centers of subjective experience, but rather by the determination of his rational will. He imposes his own norm on them, rather than listening to and thus facilitating how they find patterns of self-organization that are functional for them from within their own experience (for the idea of self-organization, see Sander 2002).

The individual's subjective experience is not separate from him or her being alive as the embodied self that he or she is (for an elaboration of this discussion see Yeatman forthcoming). His or her aliveness as a self implicates the dynamic and creative energy of his or her capacities to think, feel, sense, and move, and these capacities are not separate from, but are rather integrated with, each other. Thus, how he or she expresses and communicates his or her sense of self implicates *all* aspects of his or her agency, not just the speaking aspects, but also how he or she comports him or herself as a center of animation. When the idea of agency extends to encompass all aspects of the individual subject's being, then conscious intention assumes a much smaller place in this idea than is the case when agency is conflated with assertion of the will. An individual's habitual ways of organizing her facial expression and posture, can be considered as expressions of her subjective experience, and in this way, as communication of how she understands herself as a subject in the world. In this way habitual modes of conduct acquire the quality of agency because (a) they are expressive of the internal world of a subject, and (b) it is possible for the subject to become aware of these habitual modes of conduct, thus recognizing them as his or her own, and opening them, and him or herself up to alternative ways of being. The conception of the individual as an embodied subject or self is the basis of the contemporary notion that the individual should be regarded as "a whole person."

Each of us is alive in our own way (Feldenkrais 1990; Sander 2002). This is no less true of the individual creatures of all species as it is of human individuals. With a human individual, there is the additional quality that enters into being alive as an individual unit of life. This is the freedom to think about who one is and may want to be or to become so that it is possible to bring together being alive and a sense of exploration of options for how we want to be alive. For the human being as subject, there is an integral connection between freedom and a sense of being alive as the unique person that one is: Donald Winnicott (1967) calls this "creative living." If one does not feel alive in the process of exploring the creative possibilities

of freedom, then freedom cannot serve the articulation and development of subjective experience. Freedom without the joy of animation, tautologous though it is to say it, is a deadening rather than an enlivening experience.

How does a subject who has a sense of what it means to engage in creative living come into being? What kind of society has to be operative to open up space for such a subject? How does this society need to be thought about and organized so that it facilitates the development and self-education of such a subject? How does this society facilitate and support an intersubjective ethos of interaction and communication between subjects who enjoy the status of individual? What is the conception of right that has to be developed and institutionalized in order to provide a living constitution for the subject as a person who is capable of interacting with others as persons?

A Postpatrimonial Individualism of the Will

This is a time, then, when the patrimonial topology of the individual has lost both legitimacy and credibility, but when the patrimonial-individualistic ideal of freedom as the self-sufficient will retains its grip. The emergence of a postpatrimonial individualism threatens the self-sufficient will and the world that has been built in order to reflect its particular kind of freedom. There is a major political conflict between these two conceptions.

The stakes, I think, are high. The ethical depletion of patrimonial individualism has eaten away at the foundations of the institutional order that this type of individualism built. At the same time, those who are exploring the freedom of subjective experience at this point have got no further than opening up the questions of what kind of internal world a subject needs to develop if she is to achieve integrity as a self, and what kind of intersubjective practice subjects need to learn if they are to provide facilitation and support for presenting to each other as selves. The question of what kind of institutional design and shape needs to inform a world that makes the cultivation and recognition of subjective experience possible is still largely implicit within postpatrimonial explorations of subjective experience (for further discussion see Yeatman forthcoming).

Between a discredited patrimonial individualism and the still unnamed ethical order of postpatrimonial individualism is the problem of a transitional void (what Durkheim called *anomie)*. It is in this moment of dynamic possibilities and contradictions of social transformation that the different currents of reaction and response circle around one another.

These include the following: (a) nostalgic *neopatrimonial* attempts to retrieve the abandoned ethic of patrimonial individualism (as in contemporary Christian revivalism associated with a hypernormativity proclaimed in the "values" discourse of the Blair government in the UK, the Howard government in Australia, and the Bush government in the United States); (b) postpatrimonial explorations in participatory democratic modes of relationship; and (c) what I have called a postpatrimonial individualism of the will. This last current is the one that is articulated as a "new ethic of self-conduct" in terms of the voluntarism of the will.[4] This time, the idea of the will is articulated in equal opportunity mode; anyone, on a nondiscriminatory basis, can get to present as an individual *understood as* self-sufficient will. Thus, the postpatrimonial voluntarism of the will is expressed as a *hyper-voluntarism*.

This is a more complex domain than is conveyed in the ready use of the term *neoliberalism*, especially by those who reject it. In a modern universe shaped by the impact of feminism and postcolonialism, it is no longer legitimate to sustain the argument that women and colonized peoples lack the subjective capacity for the self-discipline that makes it possible to achieve a self-sufficient individuality. Patrimonial individualism beats a hasty retreat and adopts the line of least resistance. Instead of allowing the idea of self-sufficient individuality to be called into question, it bombastically extends this ideal to everyone, so far as they can be counted as an adult human subject whose cognitive capacity is not impaired.

There is a fundamental dishonesty built into this human rights type of voluntarism: it professes a universal conception of the individual when the very terms of this individuality make it impossible for it to be universal. The terms of patrimonial individual self-sufficiency are recast as an open ethic of market-oriented individual self-sufficiency. Where in patrimonial individualism, household headship established the private jurisdiction of the will, here, the achievement of private capital assets marks out the private jurisdiction of the individual's will. The individual is self-sufficient if his or her capital assets enable him or her to privately attend to his or her wants and well-being (and those of his or her children). There is no obligation for this individual to have children; indeed, the entire set of possibilities contained in the patrimonial (heteronormative) family are now conjured as choices that may or may not be made.

The idea of a postpatrimonial self-sufficient will cannot be instantiated by many subjects. These include those whose subject formation is such that they reject it as violating the integrity of their subjective experience. Infants and children remain excluded, and the specious extension of the freedom of the sovereign will to young people represents a distinctive kind of adult

abandonment of responsibility for the continuing care and education of young people. Women who want to engage in parenting and other kinds of domestic care relationships in such a way that they are not available for the kind of economic activity that makes it possible for them to achieve a self-sufficient private jurisdiction of action are unable to achieve the terms of this universally extended individuality. And all subjects who, for temporary or lengthy periods, are unable to achieve economic self-sufficiency via market-based engagement as a privately oriented will are excluded by this conception of individualism.

Because the postpatrimonial individualism of the will cannot reconcile its variety of universalism with paternalism, its general thrust is to jettison paternalism and the ethic of service and care caught up with it. While the patrimonial individual could find an honorable pattern for his life where his civil achievements were harnessed to the care and protection of others, now civil achievement is harnessed to an empty performance ethic. Individuals harness their being—and are encouraged to do so by the corporate entities in which they are employed—to an infinite process of "search for excellence." Ethical emptiness echoes and confirms the emptiness of performance for its own sake. This self is one condemned to know that its extraordinarily developed capacity for self-discipline has no substantive basis independent of its own freedom to choose. Subjects who understand themselves in these terms are likely to be filled with longing for a substance that can fill their soul at a time when it is impossible for this longing to be fulfilled. This makes for a distinctive kind of narcissistic self-preoccupation and unworldliness.

Concluding Remarks

I have attempted to achieve three things here. Firstly, I wanted to challenge the animus against "individualism" offered by those who are committed to some version of participatory democracy. Whether they know it or not, proponents of participation and inclusion are championing what I have called a postpatrimonial individualism. Secondly, I am arguing that there is more than one kind of individualism, and that we need to make a distinction between patrimonial currents of individualism that center on a jurisdictional idea of the will and postpatrimonial currents of individualism that center on the idea of the individual as a whole person or self. Finally, I am proposing that the politics of the present are in part, at least, driven by confusion, contradiction, and disagreement regarding the question of individualism. Whether an individualism of the self-sufficient will is to

prevail or a more inclusive individualism can be established as the mode of subjective being is in question.

Notes

1. This is a case study that is still unpublished, and that will appear in a still unfinished book tentatively titled *Relational Contracting and the Democratization of Everyday Relationships* that does not yet have a publisher.
2. Hegel's (1991, 35; emphasis original) way of making this point is as follows: "The basis of right is the *realm of spirit* in general and its precise location and point of departure is the will; the will is *free*, so that freedom constitutes its substance and destiny and the system of right is the realm of actualized freedom, the world of spirit produced from within itself as a second nature."
3. On this, consider this statement of Hegel (1991, 86) from *Elements of the Philosophy of Right*: "The human being, in his immediate existence in himself, is a natural entity, external to his concept; it is only through the development of his own body and spirit, essentially by means of his self-consciousness comprehending itself as free, that he takes possession of himself and becomes his own property, as distinct from that of others." And (Hegel 1991, 83), "The training (*Ausbildung*) of my organic body in various skills, like the education of my spirit, is likewise a more or less complete penetration and taking possession thereof."
4. The citation refers to Nikolas Rose's (1999) conception of freedom that in many respects captures the nature of this postpatrimonial individualism of the will. My disagreement with his critique does not lie here, but rather in his generalizing this particular conception of the individual subject so as to occlude the possibility of alternative ones. I think in addition that he sees too much of a seamless continuity between the patrimonial and postpatrimonial individualisms of the will. As I am indicating, they designate a different historical-political phenomenology of the idea of the individual *qua* will, and should not be lumped together.

This page intentionally left blank

Chapter 4

Individualization and the Life Course: Toward a Theoretical Model and Empirical Evidence

Melinda Mills

Introduction

Individualization has emerged as a central theoretical construct to characterize recent transformations within society and the life course. Although it drives an increasing amount of research, there are considerably divergent definitions, operationalizations, and interpretations of this popular construct. It has been used as both an explanatory factor driving social change and as an outcome at the individual level. Applications range from studies of large macrolevel societal changes (see Pollack and Pickel 1999) and social class inequality (see Kohler 2005), to the psychological level of self-actualization and identity formation (Côté and Levine 2002). In spite of the fact that individualization is increasingly included systematically in the field of life-course studies, there has been little progress toward a shared understanding of the concept. This ambiguity may lie in the "intentionally ambivalent" definition provided by contemporary individualization theories (see Beck and Beck-Gernsheim 2002), the polymorphous nature of individualization itself, or in the inherent ambiguity this theory offers vis-à-vis the relationship of the social structure to institutions and the individual (Zinn 2002).

The aim of this chapter is twofold. A primary goal is to draw upon both classic and contemporary social theory to provide a coherent definition and theoretical model that specifies the individualization process in relation to

the life course. A secondary goal is to examine empirical evidence that supports or refutes the multiple claims of the individualization thesis. Following a brief introduction to life-course research, various facets of individualization theory are explored. The root of individualization is specified as the cyclical process of detraditionalization or dissolution of collective structures. This leads to the development of the following three archetypal life-course outcomes and categorizations of individualization: destandardized (strategic) individualization, default (conformist) individualization, and fragile (anomic) individualization. A selection of empirical research that has explored and tested these models of individualization is presented in relation to each category. The chapter concludes with a critical discussion and reflection.

Life-Course Research

Life-course research examines the interrelation between individuals and their institutional context over the life-span. It focuses on how social processes, such as the family, education, employment, and health domains of individuals' lives, are structured over the individual's life-span (Elder 1974). A life course is the culmination of multiple life events. Life events refer to significant incidents such as migration, entering or exiting the labor force, entering or leaving a relationship, or becoming a parent. Together, these life events make up life-course domains or careers (e.g., employment or relationship careers) that are interdependent or interact with one other. The combination of events that occur over individual life-course careers in turn produces unique individual life-course trajectories (see Chapter 2 of this volume).

The life-course perspective has been referred to as an "organizing principle" or framework (Heinz and Krüger 2001). This approach often serves as a heuristic model (i.e., rules and techniques that aid understanding under complex circumstances with incomplete information) to position or understand how the dynamic biographies of individuals differ or evolve over time across various societies. The study of the life course often centers on several aspects. Some focus on the subjective meaning given to life events via the qualitative study of biographies, such as the meaning attributed to being unemployed or divorced. Others study the quantitative frequency of life events, such as how often individuals enter unemployment or marriage and the absolute levels within a society (i.e., the number of unemployed). A common area of research is the study of the timing and duration of each life stage, which relates to studies of phases such as the postponement of parenthood. Others focus on the sequencing or order of

events, and the interaction or related causality between life events (e.g., the link between pregnancy and marriage). This relates to research on status dependence, which focuses on the consequence of earlier life events for the entire trajectory (e.g., the impact of temporary labor-market contracts on employment trajectory or the impact of multiple relationships on partnership trajectory).

To understand the structural and cultural breadth of life-course research and the macro (societal) and micro (individual) levels of analysis, it is useful to refer to Marlis Buchmann's (1989) original schema (see Table 4.1). Life-course researchers often adopt a multilevel theoretical model that acknowledges that individuals actively shape their own life courses based on a unique and meaningful sequence of decisions, which is embedded within individual and network characteristics (including the family and the employer) and historical, cultural, social, and other institutional constraints (Mayer 1986). The life course is therefore not a predictable circuit of life stages, such as the life cycle. Rather, the current life-course position of individuals is a reflection of cumulative past events and an anticipation of their future life trajectory (Mills 2000).

The core of many life-course studies is the examination of how life courses are affected by larger macrolevel societal changes (e.g., globalization, economic depressions, and individualization) and how institutions (e.g., welfare regimes and education systems) play a filtering role in the way these large changes impact individual opportunities, constraints, and decision making (Elder and Liker 1982; Mayer 1986, 2001, 2004). Although institutions and the macrostructural and macrocultural aspects of the life course are important, most researchers do not advocate a deterministic model of individual action. Rather, country-specific institutions and cultural norms generate effective decision "heuristics" that are not thoughtlessly repeated (as in the "homo sociologicus"),[1] but are used as problem-solving tools. The structural and cultural context provides a set of

Table 4.1. The breadth and level of analysis in life-course research

Breadth of analysis	*Level of analysis*	
	Macro	Micro
Structural	Institutionalization of life course	Life course as frequency, duration, sequencing, interaction, and status dependence of life events
Cultural	Collective visions and ideologies of the biography (norms and values)	Individual visions and strategies

Source: Adapted by the author from Buchmann (1989).

resources, constraints, and "habits" or "frames" that serve as national-, cultural-, or class-specific ways to interpret decision situations and produce a selective alertness to information (Esser 1991).[2] It is what Émile Durkheim (1893) referred to as the "collective conscience," which is a common and external social force consisting of ideas, values, norms, and beliefs, that is institutionalized in the social structure and internalized by individuals within that culture. Individuals make life-course decisions at the micro- or individual level by developing various strategies or risk calculations within their own cultural domain of opportunities and constraints.

Individualization of the Life Course: Theoretical Foundations

The majority of contemporary authors who study individualization often draw exclusively from the more recent work of Ulrich Beck (1992), Beck and Elisabeth Beck-Gernsheim (2002), Anthony Giddens (1991), and Zygmunt Bauman (2000, 2003). Yet, over a century ago, classic social theorists such as Durkheim, Max Weber, and Georg Simmel grappled with this topic, which demonstrates not only the enduring relevance and cyclical nature of individualization throughout history, but also the lengthy account of confusion and manifold characterizations of this construct.[3] Weber (1976, 222n22) argues that the expression "individualism" is in itself a heterogeneous term. More recently, Axel Honneth (2004, 464) reminds us that "from the start a precarious ambivalence has pervaded the concept of individualization." Friedman (1990) charts a marked shift in the meaning of "individualism" over the last two centuries, from its origins in the public spheres of economics and politics in the nineteenth century to its contemporary focus on private lifestyles and self-expression.

Prominent contemporary authors such as Beck and Beck-Gernsheim (2002) characterize individualization as "intentionally ambivalent," contending that it is nonlinear, open-ended, and highly undecided. They situate it as both a structural characteristic and something to be understood at an individual level, where it is internalized and destroys all standard social foundations. It is perhaps this intentionally ambivalent definition, coupled with individualization situated as both a driving force or independent variable at the macro (societal) level as well as an outcome or dependent variable at the micro (individual) level, that has resulted in the multiple claims and couched confusion surrounding its use in contemporary research. This section draws from both classic and contemporary individualization literature to build a coherent definition and a new theoretical model of the process of individualization in relation to the life course. This theoretical model blends and adapts the classic life-course approach of Elder and Liker

(1982) with individualization literature to portray a model of how the underlying mechanisms of the individualization process lead to three archetypal life-course outcomes and categories of individualization (see Figure 4.1).

Detraditionalization and Institutional Change

In broad terms, individualization refers to the structural transformation of social institutions and change in the relationship of an individual to society. Although not always explicit, a majority of the literature alludes to *detraditionalization*, or the freedom from traditional ties and affiliations and the dissolution of collective structures as the root of individualization. The implicit assumption is that the detachment from traditional ideas, values, norms, beliefs, and ideologies generates greater individual autonomy and freedom of choice for individuals to shape their lives. The waning of tradition is a recurrent topic over centuries of sociology, which leads researchers to the observation that individualization is in fact nothing new, but rather a *cyclical* phenomenon that assumes diverse forms. This is in line with Beck's (1992) specification of the three moments of individualization, which include liberation (freedom from institutional structures), destabilization (loss of traditional certainties), and reintegration (control and new forms of social integration).

A shift from reliance on tradition denotes a *transformation of standard institutional structures*. The underlying assumption is that fate and destiny played a much stronger role in premodern times (Giddens 1991). The concept of fate was connected with "fortuna," reflected by the idea of a predestined life path often charted by religious cosmologies or the behavior of older generations. In the era of individualization, by contrast, fate and destiny lose their formal hold to secularized or individual human control within natural and social worlds. There is a general, and perhaps only subjective, perception that individuals are now in control of their destinies.

Here the process of individualization denotes a shift in the responsibility of risk from the social structure (e.g., the welfare state or the employer) to the individual, often characterized as the "individualization of risk" (see Mills 2004). A common theme in the literature is the intensification of uncertainty and risk, or the growth of the "risk society" due to the demise of tradition (Beck 1992; Giddens 1991). Risk in the premodern world involved natural hazards and threats, human violence from armies, local warlords, robbers, or a risk of falling from religious grace. By contrast, risk in the modern world emanates from reflexivity, human violence from industrialized wars, environmental degradation, and, more specifically related to the life course—the threat of personal meaninglessness with a

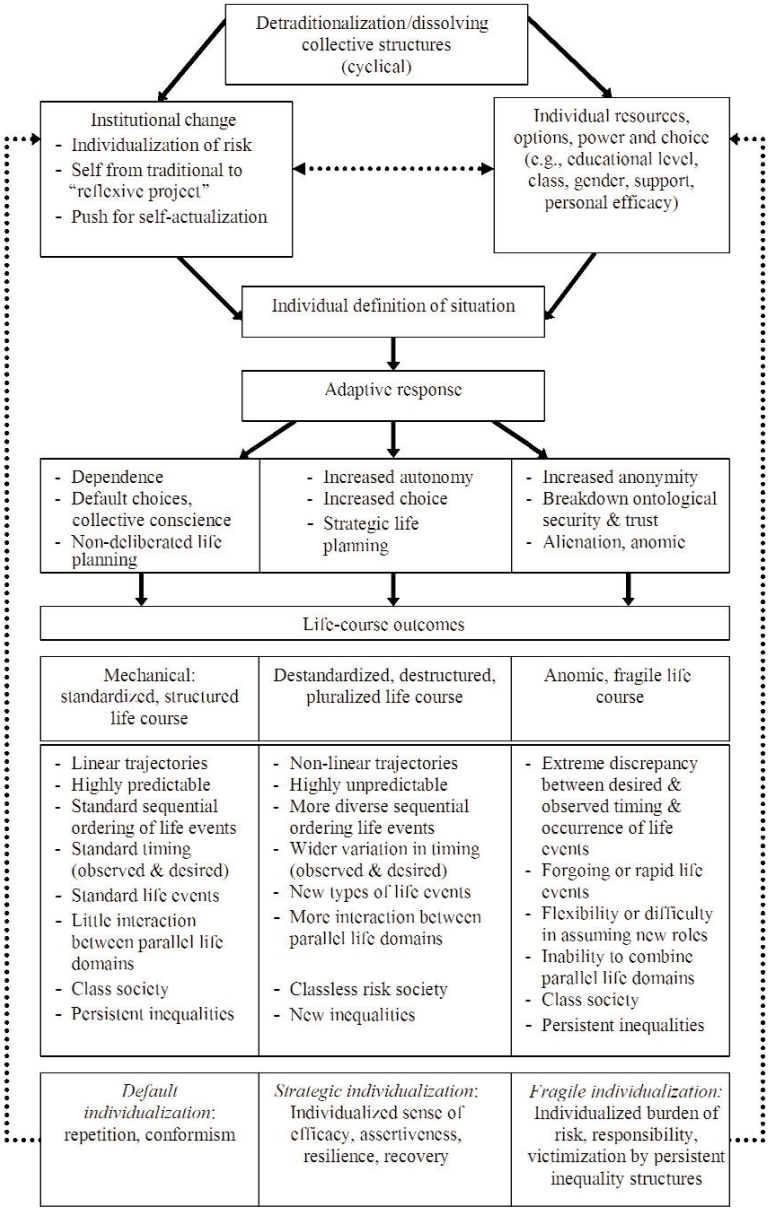


Figure 4.1 A theoretical model of the individualization process: macro-level change, individual adaptations and life-course outcomes

higher emphasis on self-identity, self-actualization, individualism, and personal responsibility.

The emergence of the risk society and shift to a highly individualized model of the person implies that individuals are necessitated to develop "reflexive" or "do-it-yourself" biographies (Beck 1994, 12). In this view, individuals are continuously confronted with a plurality of uncertain life-course options and are forced to develop a "calculative attitude" to potential actions (Giddens 1991). Or, as Giddens summarizes (1994b, 75), "We have no choice but to choose how to be and how to act." The desires and choices of individuals increasingly produce distinct institutions (Frank and Meyer 2002) where "individuals must produce, stage, and cobble together their biographies themselves" (Beck 1994, 13).

Three Forms of Individualization

Contemporary theories of individualization echo Durkheim's (1983, 1897) writings on individualism, which examine the process and impact of individual detachment from traditional ties and the enablement of greater autonomy and freedom of choice. In *The Division of Labor in Society* (1893) and *Suicide: A Study in Sociology* (1897), Durkheim focuses on the causes and effects of weakening group ties on the individual. The division of labor and specialization of roles in more complex, nontraditional societies was expected to result in organic solidarity, with individuals exhibiting less similarity in values, beliefs, norms, and, ultimately, behavior. Drawing from classic and contemporary theorists, I propose the categorization of the detraditionalization and loosening of the institutional rules and values into three archetypal forms of individualization, which in turn produce three types of life courses, namely: 1) destandardized (strategic), 2) default (conformist), and 3) fragile (anomic). I contend that these three forms are archetypes of ideal categories and thus are not purely mutually exclusive types. The theoretical discussion is then connected to a growing body of empirical research that has tested and explored the claims of the multiple sides of individualization.

Destandardized (Strategic) Individualization

The most proclaimed form of individualization in the existing literature (see Giddens 1991) draws from Durkheim's concept of functional differentiation, which he uses to characterize the growth in the number of possibilities for individuals to shape their own lives. The general prediction is that increased choice and autonomy result in manifold life-course choices and thus the *pluralization, destandardization, or destructuration of the life course*. The individualization thesis professes that individuals must develop

adaptive responses by cultivating a calculative attitude of risk assessment or profiling and a future-oriented calculation of the past and present. The detraditionalized life trajectory therefore involves the calculation of risk and exercising the fundamental component of choice. The assumption is that individuals examine risk, then create and adopt a lifestyle, rather than having it handed down by tradition or former generations. In a world of manifold options, strategic life planning becomes a way to reflexively organize future courses of action. During strategic life planning, the self becomes a "reflexive project" (Giddens 1991). Individuals are continuously forced to organize the future and reconstruct their own biographies in light of rapidly changing information and experiences. The "self" is reflexively molded in order to establish a coherent biography as individuals are forced to interpret a diversity of experiences hurled at them on an a daily basis.

This voluntaristic categorization of individualization places individual resources, power, agency, and choice centrally in life-course formation. This approach is consistent with the work of Simmel (1900), who focused on increased autonomy, but also on the "creation of authenticity," or the striving of individuals to articulate self-actualization (see also Honneth 2004). It is also reminiscent of Abraham Maslow's (1943) classic theory of the hierarchy of needs, which contends that once individuals meet the basic needs of physiology (biological needs), safety, love, belonging, and status (esteem), they strive further in the hierarchy to satisfy the highest need of self-actualization. Yet, in order to reach the upper echelons of self-actualization, the individuals must first possess the appropriate resources, options, and power to exercise their agency, such as educational level, class, problem-solving skills, support network, or personal efficacy (see Elder and Liker 1982). These characterizations of the reflexive biography and growth of choice, therefore, present the current scope of human choice as both unlimited and positive.

This theme dominates both theoretical and empirical life-course research, but in two different forms. The first form is the increasingly common use of individualization theory to "operationalize" or represent the most individualized group within a society. In other words, there is often an attempt to rank different groups in terms of their "degree of individualization" in order to isolate the most individualized one. The most individualized group is generally thought to be singles or those who are not living with a partner (see Roseneil and Budgeon 2004). The argument holds that these individuals have effectively decoupled themselves from the social control of tradition, and are thus able to develop a strategic, self-actualized, and reflexive biography of choice.

But is this truly the case? There are numerous examples in which individuals who are not single have a substantially higher realization of self-actualization than singles through more clear-cut forms of purposive strategic action. The prime example is the male-breadwinner in traditional and early modern societies (Mills, Blossfeld, and Bernardi 2006). Although the male-breadwinner preserves "tradition," via often strategic and reflexive decision making, he realizes a high degree of self-actualization in the work, family, and other spheres of his life, as well. In this sense, he is the only person to whom individuality is afforded within these societies, and he holds this position in a much more voluntary, strategic manner than an individual who is "single." There is undoubtedly variation within this group (e.g., male unskilled manual laborers versus professionals), but it is a "negative case" that brings into question the operationalization and ranking of certain groups as the most individualized. It is unlikely that all singles who live alone without a partner are engaging in this behavior for purely strategic and self-actualized reasons. Involuntary singlehood may also be related to feelings of being disconnected and the rise of fragile individualization, discussed in the next section. This is reflected in Bauman's (2003) discussion on the fragility of human bonds, in which singles can be viewed as victims of a unilateral decision on the part of their ex-partners to dissolve the relationship.

The use of this theme in empirical research materializes the countless studies that examine changes in the type, timing, and sequencing of life events over time to serve as tangible, objective evidence of individualization. As Honneth (2004, 464) notes, "there seems to be no disputing the idea that the individualization of a life-history does describe an easily observed and hence objectively occurring process." As described in Figure 4.1, the empirical evidence for the rise of the destandardized life course is readily available via the examination of the growth of nonlinear and highly unpredictable life-course trajectories, more diversity in the sequencing of life events, wider variation in the observed and desired timing of life events, the introduction of new types of life events, more interaction between parallel life domains (e.g., multiple simultaneous individual roles of student, parent, partner, and employee), and the receding relevance of standard inequality structures such as class.

A wide body of empirical evidence has been gathered to test the destandardization strand of the individualization thesis, relating it to the "destandarization of the life course" (Buchmann 1989; Kohli 1986; Mayer and Blossfeld 1990), "differentiation of life course" (Berger, Steinmuller, and Sopp 1993), "differentiation of lifepaths" (Lesthaeghe 1995), "variation"

(Dykstra 2003), "complexity" (Mills 2004) or "destandardization or individualization of the life cycle" (Elchardus and Smits 2006; Kohler 2005).

The majority of these generally quantitative findings clearly refute the claim that individualization has resulted in a destandardized or increasingly pluralized life course. This ranges from early studies that show a lack of diversified biographies (Berger, Steinmuller, and Sopp 1993; Mayer and Blossfeld 1990) to recent examinations that strongly argue against any evidence of destandardized, destructured, or individualized life paths (Billari 2001; Huinink and Wagner 1998; Mayer 1991). Mark Elchardus and Wendy Smits (2006), for example, find only modest changes in the life courses of individuals in Belgium, which appear to replicate a standard sequential order and strict timing of life-course transitions. Their lack of evidence leads them to ponder over the relevance of individualization theory itself as follows: "The thesis of the destructuration or individualization of the life cycle seems in fact so far removed from reality that one can but raise the question of why it is so popular and so readily believed" (Elchardus and Smits 2006, 322).

However, a small number of studies have found mixed evidence. Using multivariate and optimal matching analyses on the life trajectories of individuals in Switzerland, Eric Widmer et al. (2003) find that, although the majority of male trajectories are highly standardized, women experience a variety of trajectories. This raises questions about the gendered nature of the individualization process and life-course trajectories, which have been explored in detail by qualitative researchers such as Helga Krüger (2003). Using a qualitative approach, others have provided some evidence of the development of strategic or reflexive behavior, such as Michaela Pfadenhauer's (2006) study of professionals' individualized and pluralized strategies for overcoming crises, an aspect that will be returned to in the final discussion.

Default (Conformist) Individualization

The antithesis of destandardized strategic forms of individualization is *default or conformist individualization*. This categorization arises from the large body of empirical evidence that finds the persistence of a standardized, structured life course. Durkheim (1912) argues that a high level of social and moral integration characterized traditional cultures, with most of this behavior governed by social norms often in the form of religion. This internalized "collective conscience," referred to earlier, governed agency and afforded little sense of individuation or awareness of alternative options. In its extreme, it takes the form of what Durkheim (1893) brands mechanical solidarity. A modest division of labor and the predominance of overwhelming institutions that prescribe the norms and beliefs

of a society represent this type of solidarity, which delivers virtually identical homogeneous human experiences (Durkheim 1912).

Although there is support for Durkheim's prediction that religion no longer serves as a binding force of social cohesion (see Lesthaeghe 1995), other cohesive factors have arguably filled this vacuum. As the growing amount of evidence against the destandardization of the life course attests, it is necessary also to create room for the persistence of mechanical behavior in modern society, albeit inspired from a different source than tradition.

Here one can draw inspiration from alternative sources such as Veblen's (1904) work on the mechanical standardization of consumable goods. Veblen argues that modern consumers have certain "staple" requirements and specifications, with the idiosyncrasies or "local color" of individual consumers subjugated to standard gauges. In this sense, the opportunity for true individualization is absconded by modern standardized consumption to create a dependent, nondeliberating individual engaging in what Côté (2000) terms "default individualization" or Schroer (2000) has called "conformist individualization." As Côté and Schwartz (2002, 574) assert, "People without the appropriate capacities and preparation can pursue a life course without exerting much mental effort by simply selecting a number of 'default options' now available in the restructured consumer-corporate society and mass culture of late-modernity."

Yet it is still an empirical question as to whether this group is truly comprised of only those who lack "appropriate capacities," such as those that possess lower human and social capital, or whether it is a more widespread phenomenon. As Markus Schroer (2000) argues, conformist individualization differs from the purely conformist group of the traditional period to comprise a "middle-ground" conceptualization of individualization that consists of a group of individuals that are emancipated from tradition, but who still ironically follow the parallel trend of conformism. One can therefore conclude that there are additional contradictory predictions from individualization. It may not only result in greater divergence or pluralization of the life course via the push for choice and manufacturing of individualized biographies, but also persistent convergence in the form of individuals who follow a life path that is different from previous generations, yet largely conforms to patterns held by a majority of their contemporary peers. In other words, life-course behavior that is initially innovative and nontraditional (e.g., cohabitation, children outside of marriage, and working mothers) eventually diffuses across individuals until it reaches a certain threshold level. Once behavior reaches this threshold (that is, a high proportion of individuals engage in this behavior), it

becomes an accepted behavior that in essence replaces and creates a "new tradition" by usurping previous "traditional" forms of behavior.

Fragile (Anomic) Individualization

Based on Durkheim, most contemporary individualization theorists have argued that the "evacuation" of tradition from everyday decision-making processes results in a supposed weakening of communal or social control (see Giddens 1991). Out of this weakening of tradition emerges the obscurity and unpredictability of the consequences of outcomes of their decision-making behavior, which results in heightened uncertainty and risk as the individual is forced to make strategic and calculative decisions about life events. With such a strong focus on individual choice and responsibility, detraditionalization also brings a vacuum of norms, beliefs, and values regarding decision-making alternatives. This spurs the growth of *fragile or anomic individualization*, explored in Durkheim's (1897) work on anomic suicide. The weakening of social bonds and values leaves individuals without any coherent or directive moral guidance. In its extreme form, this results in anomic suicide, where the individual fails to receive adequate regulation and guidance from the group.[4] Although institutional change has the potential to liberate the individual from tradition and result in increased autonomy, choice, and agency, it also has the potential to shift the risk and burden of personal options and behavior to the responsibility of the individual. Therefore, a century before modern individualization theorists, Durkheim pondered the problem of how the fall of tradition leaves the individual to find personal solutions in an atmosphere of increased options and weakening of normative rules to aid in decision making.

Out of this weakening of tradition emerges obscurity and unpredictability of the consequences of outcomes, or what has been characterized in contemporary literature as the "risk society" (Beck 1992). This volatility results in heightened uncertainty and risk as the individual is forced to make strategic and calculative decisions about life events. Individuals are characterized by rising uncertainty about potential behavioral alternatives, behavioral outcomes, and the amount of information that is essential to collect for a particular decision (Mills and Blossfeld 2005). It is an environment where "living and acting in uncertainty becomes a kind of basic experience" (Beck 1994, 12). As Andy Furlong and Fred Cartmel (1997, 2) argue, "People come to regard the social world as unpredictable and filled with risks which can only be negotiated on an individual level." Life-course choices are progressively blurred with the problem of not only which alternative to choose (e.g., have a career or start a family), but when to choose it. Individuals must furthermore make decisions that involve the estimation of perceptions about other actors in the future (e.g., a partner

or an employer). The costly and time-consuming task of collecting information to make a decision becomes vague, with the accelerated speed of change, deluge of information, and inability to set an information threshold or limit to stop the search. As a result, as Beck and Bauman would argue, individuals may develop fragile identities that are constantly open to reinterpretation, experience a discrepancy from their desires and actual life courses, withdraw or forgo life events, or struggle to assume particular or multiple roles.

The other side of risk is trust, which entails commitment to another individual, group, system, or employer, or the binding of oneself to a long-term decision. Trust is a means of coping with risk. The collapse and rising obscurity of social relations prompts a breakdown in "ontological security," which is what individuals base their knowledge, trust, and security of their existence on (Giddens 1991). In an environment where risk is shifted to the individual, trust in a partner, employer, or the welfare state becomes increasingly tenuous. This fundamental breakdown in ontological security and trust may result in the postponement of life events, choosing life-course options that are more "flexible" and less binding across future time (e.g., nonmarital cohabitation, fixed-term employment) (Mills and Blossfeld 2005). Or, it may mean multiple transitions between different life-course statuses due to uncertainty or inability to cope (e.g., divorce or higher job mobility).

Simmel (1900) took issue with the notion that individual freedom from the ties of tradition implies growing individualization. Simmel witnessed a growing anonymity of social relationships and cracks in the bonds of group affiliations. Although freedom from group affiliation and more anonymity leads to a growth in the diversity of possible choices, he upholds that these trends do not necessarily grant individuals freedom to make these choices. This is counterintuitive and thus a central paradox of individualization, which is the fact that a stronger concentration on oneself has the potential to lead to anonymity and a lack of group ties, which in turn can potentially throw individuals into increasing loneliness, isolation, or indifference. This theme of increased alienation, mobility, inability to form new ties, and egocentrism has recently gained more attention in contemporary sociological research, including through the influential "social capital" paradigm (see Putnam 2000).

The darker side of freedom and choice may be that it brings higher anxiety, feelings of individual responsibility, and even depression. The life course becomes an increasingly experimental process that is the responsibility of the individual. When she fails, she can no longer call upon or even blame her family, friends, and the (welfare) state. The growth in leisure

time in many Western societies, coupled with the focus on self-actualization, provides individuals with more time to ponder their existence and life choices as opposed to just "getting on with it." For example, Ehrenberg (1998) draws attention to the remarkable growth of depression and medications prescribed to counter this in France. He links this growth to individualization by arguing that individuals are simply psychologically overburdened by the demand to be themselves and constantly engaging in self-actualization and introspection.

Beyond Class?

A related controversy generated by the individualization thesis is whether the increased focus on the individual results in entirely new inequality structures and a *classless society*, or only serves to intensify existing inequality structures. In 1983, Beck posed the challenging question of whether Western society had moved "beyond status and class." He asked whether new social conditions, individualization, and diversification brought standard hierarchical models of social class into question. Beck (1992, 2002) continues to argue that individualization generates "new inequalities and new insecurities." Furthermore, he argues, "[i]nsecurity prevails in nearly all positions of society" (2000, 4) to the extent that we have entered a "post-class society." He states, "For the majority of people, even in the apparently prosperous middle layers, their basic existence and lifeworld will be marked by endemic insecurity" (2000, 3). Beck (2002) even challenges the standard sociological construct of class, referring to it as a "zombie category" or empty expression that can no longer function as an important predictor. The demise of social class as a useful predictive category and the equality of insecurity across social groups are revolutionary predictions that overturn previous stratification and social inequality research. For this reason, this claim has also been repeatedly tested in empirical literature.

Just as the luxury of exercising choice or focusing on self-actualization varies according to individual characteristics, fragile identities and risk burdens appear to accumulate within certain social groups. The distribution of choice and freedom and the ability to engage in a reflexive biography is uneven and unequal (see Mythen 2005). In a study of young mothers, for example, Elisabeth McDermott and Hilary Graham (2005) demonstrated that the practices and ability to display reflexivity and individualism are deeply embedded in and structured by social inequalities. The ability, resources, or power to make decisions varies per individual, which means that risk often accumulates at the bottom or among less advantaged groups such as young mothers.

Although the rise of a classless society has gained some empirical support (see Leisering and Liebfried 1999), the majority of empirical evidence rejects this assertion. Most studies demonstrate the persistence of social class in structuring the opportunities and constraints contained within the life courses of individuals (Breen 1997; Erikson and Goldthorpe 1992a). For instance, Hans Bertram and Clemens Dannenbeck (1990) found that the classic indicators of social inequality (that is, educational level, professional status, household income, and regional disparities) remained valid predictors in Germany. Perhaps one of the most conclusive empirical studies to have examined the "beyond class" hypothesis of the individualization thesis is the recent work by the German sociologist Ulrich Kohler (2005). Using empirical data from twenty-eight countries, Kohler tested whether there was an increasing inconsistency of vertical social positions and a decreasing impact of social class on the everyday lives of individuals. Evidence showed that there was no single linear process of individualization, but rather both structuralization and destructuralization.

Gerd Nollmann and Hermann Strasser (2002) provide an alternative voice in this debate by turning the argument away from the weakness in individualization theory to the claim that individualization has exposed a gap in social-class research. They maintain that individualization does not in fact stand for the end of social inequality, but rather should be used as an interpretative scheme, demanding a return to Weber's focus on the interpretive understanding of social action. This means attention to the context of specific motives of action and a comparison of interpretive schemes of occupational classes versus the interpretive schemes of informal groups and individual self-reflection. Regardless of the position that one takes, it appears that individualization may not only bring a higher potential for fragile life courses, but that this potential for fragility is also channeled more directly and intensely to marginalized social groups. It also appears that Western societies are not yet "beyond status and class," with life chances still strongly embedded in the social structure that in turn remains a relevant predictor for an individual's position.

Discussion

This chapter drew upon classic and contemporary social theory to build and illustrate a conceptual model that specifies the mechanisms that describe the individualization process in relation to the life course. Detraditionalization was specified as the root of contemporary individualization. Individuals are viewed as defining their own life situations and then developing three types of adaptive responses that are mediated by both an

institutional context and individual resources. Some individuals are expected to engage in default nondeliberated choices to live a more mechanical and standardized life course in the form of "default individualization." Via "strategic individualization," others are viewed as strategically grasping their increased autonomy and opportunity for choice to experience a highly destandardized and pluralized life course. A third group experiences individualization as increased anonymity and alienation, resulting in "fragile individualization" which materializes in the form of discrepant, flexible, and challenging life paths.

Following the presentation of this theoretical model, empirical evidence was examined to assess the validity of these multiple claims of individualization. Although the destandardized, pluralized, and detraditionalized life course appears to dominate individualization theory, when this expectation is put to the empirical test, the majority of individuals in fact opt for "default" standard life courses. The operationalization and ranking of certain social groups, such as singles, as a symbol of the most individualized group within the literature was also brought into question. It is questionable whether the majority of members in this group are strategically and reflexively engaging in self-actualization or filling this role for involuntary reasons. The individualization of risk and responsibility does not only offer more choice and autonomy, but also has the potential to produce anomic, fragile life courses. Other research raises questions about the gendered nature of the individualization process and life-course trajectories in general. Finally, a large body of research finds no evidence of a post-class society, which is a central prediction within individualization theory.

This review of the individualization literature and attempt to produce a common, coherent definition for the empirical study of the life course brought several striking observations. First, the ambivalence and intentional imprecision of individualization has a substantial impact on the use and predictive ability of this theory. The individualization thesis is used to study a tremendous assortment of different subject matters and is operationalized in surprisingly different ways. It appears to serve as a "catch-all" theory that can be flexibly employed to fit research needs. (This, however, says more about researchers' use, or rather, misuse of the theory than the theory itself.) It may be that individualization has an evasive definition that reflects the very ambiguity and polymorphous nature of the individualization process itself (Mythen 2005). On the other hand, it raises the issue that individualization is virtually impossible to either falsify or prove. How can a theory be situated as both a driving force or independent variable at the macro (societal) level and simultaneously operate as an outcome or dependent variable at the micro (individual) level? The lack of a coherent

definition or understanding of the underlying process has led to such diverse interpretations that it is challenging to even compare the results of studies that employ this theory.

A second point one must ponder is if the empirical research that examines individualization is a methodological artifact or a sociological reality. A review of the literature revealed a remarkable distinction (and likely high correlation) in the methodology used in the studies that either support or refute the individualization thesis. There was generally overwhelming support for individualization from qualitative studies and patent falsification from studies employing quantitative methods. This likely relates to several factors.

First, the multilevel nature of individualization means that certain categorizations of this construct demand particular empirical approaches. Studies of the destandardization of the life course are naturally amenable to large sample sizes and quantitative methods. The examination of self-actualization or reflexivity is clearly more related to qualitative or psychological approaches. Yet, why qualitative studies find more support and quantitative studies yield little from the theory remains at the heart of this question.

This may be related to an additional argument, that individualization theory either resists empirical examination altogether or is only capable of being studied via more complex qualitative approaches that allow for greater depth. Yet, this raises the venerable predicament of reliability (representability) and the inability of qualitative research to embody larger indicators or trends of individualization. As Elchardus and Smits (2006, 322) argue, "Qualitative research is also sensitive to the discourses of justification used by the respondents. Contemporary discourses are likely to emphasize individual choice, rather than institutional or cultural constraints." Yet, it is naïve to argue that these studies are not tapping at least some sort of representation of the modern condition of individualization. Conversely, it would be equally naïve to assert that quantitative studies truly uncover all aspects of the destandardization of the life course. Although providing supposedly "objective" measures, quantitative studies are not unified with manifold operationalizations of the "objective" individualized or destandardized life course. There are numerous (quantifiable) examples of new and diversified life-course options that partially support the destandardization claim. These include, for example, unmarried cohabitation as a replacement for or stepping stone to marriage, the birth of children to parents outside of a marital union, single parents, involuntary childlessness, gay and lesbian marriages, or higher intergenerational occupational mobility.

Another inadvertent finding that arose from this study was the existence of clear cultural differences in both the approach to studying individualization and in the empirical findings. The overrepresentation of German research is no surprise, considering the long tradition of research on this topic and the origin of key contemporary individualization researchers. Beck's work, for instance, was published much earlier in the German language and only later translated into English. Others have also observed differences in the interpretation of individualization between German and American sociology. This is undoubtedly attributed not only to differences in scientific cultures, but also broader societal, cultural, and institutional differences. The German debate focuses more on the destandardization of the life course, the role of the welfare state in relation to the individual, and the reproduction of social inequality. In contrast, the American and Anglo-Saxon literatures often focus on the loss of security and the detrimental impact of individualism on the community and social cohesion (Wohlrab-Sahr 2003). This contrast in focus and findings is likely reflective of real contextual differences in these societies. For example, in Germany, the welfare state and influence of class, education, and credentials take on a different meaning due to the highly standardized, stratified, and differentiated educational and employment systems. Whereas, in noncredentialist societies that have nonstandardized or more liberal systems such as the United States and the United Kingdom, class, credentials, and the welfare state take on an arguably less central importance.

This review also raised a general question as to whether there is an overemphasis on the positive potential of choice in the individualization literature. There is a danger of fetishizing reflexive agency and the freedom of choice at the expense of acknowledging the resilience of historical, cultural, and socioeconomic institutions that impact choice and shape individuals' lives. This may be the root of seemingly contradictory predictions and findings that stem from individualization, which show not only divergence but also greater convergence of the life course.

Notes

1. "Homo sociologicus" refers to Ralf Dahrendorf's (1958) parody of sociological models that limit the social forces that shape individual tastes and social values.
2. For instance, consider the example of partnerships. A young person in Spain entering into a partnership has not only a restricted amount of choices that lead to the choice of the relationship taking the form of a marriage (rather than a nonmarital, cohabiting, consensual union), but this also reflects cultural traditions that frame her or his decision in a very specific way. Rules and norms that stigmatize certain behavior also limit the individual's ability to see a nonmarital

union as a viable partnership option. In Sweden, however, the opposite would be the case, with relatively few choosing marriage over nonmarital cohabitation.

3. Although the work of Durkheim, Simmel, Beck, and Giddens is the primary focus of this chapter, many other theorists have grappled with this topic beyond those mentioned here, including Michel Foucault, Talcott Parsons, Niklas Luhmann, Norbert Elias, and Zygmunt Bauman.
4. Since Protestantism offers greater individual freedom than the comparatively higher level of common beliefs and practices shared by Catholics, Durkheim predicted higher rates of suicide among Protestants.

This page intentionally left blank

Chapter 5

Individualization as an Interpretive Scheme of Inequality: Why Class and Inequality Persist

Gerd Nollmann and Hermann Strasser

Introduction: Individualization and the Alleged Death of Class

In the 1980s and 1990s, commentators widely debated a possible *death of class* (Marshall, Pakulski, Waters, and Sørensen 2000). Scholars have stressed that contemporary societies appear to be highly individualized, so that the class concept has lost most of its significance. The connection between social origins and occupational destinations is said to have been loosened so that it is no longer appropriate to conceive of modern life as characterized by collective class fates. Scholars depict a new modernity that has replaced the old, industrial class society (Beck and Beck-Gernsheim 2002). In what follows, we will not try to list the many claims and counterclaims that have been presented in these sometimes furious debates. Rather, we believe that the "death of class" debate highlights the necessity to establish more systematically the assumptions that contemporary class research makes. Only then will the precise causal assumptions of both individualization theorists and class researchers be clear. In what follows, we want to elaborate conceptually on these assumptions and develop a framework that shows that there is some truth in both the class and individualization theories, since, to some degree, class researchers and individualization theorists make causal statements that, according to Max Weber, need to be combined instead of being considered as irreconcilable (Nollmann and Strasser forthcoming).

Hence, we will begin with some less controversial statements about individualization. We will then take a closer look at the theoretical foundations of the controversy about the impact of individualization on class and show how contemporary notions of individualization and class might be reconciled in both theory and empirical research. In order to illustrate our points, we will present results of an exploratory survey on contexts and domains of class-specific causal attributions in the life course. Finally, we will discuss results and conclude that the raging debate between individualization and class theorists may not have produced a definite outcome, but it has nevertheless contributed to more epistemological reflection in the social sciences.

Debates about Individualization

The historical process of individualization can be divided into several stages. The historical foundations of individualization lie in the process of enlightenment in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Instead of exploring the natural order of the world, philosophers began to stress the importance of individual action and the possibility of change in society. As such, this train of thought is usually referred to as "individualism" (Lukes 1973). In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, a second stage of individualization began with the formation of civil society and an increasing division and industrialization of labor as described by Georg Simmel. Simmel (1897), in his essay *Roses: A Social Hypothesis*, tells a fictitious story of a "terrible" form of inequality. All people have their own piece of land and can live from it. However, some of them grow roses. For a while, this difference is accepted like the natural distribution of beauty and ugliness. But slowly, the anger grows. Agitators say that all humans have a natural right to roses. With allusions to the famous writings of Jean-Jacques Rousseau, Friedrich Nietzsche, and Karl Marx, Simmel shows how envy is generated. A revolutionary party is created that sees itself in opposition to the owners of roses who try legally to assure their rose monopoly. However, in the name of justice, the revolutionary party manages to equalize the rose property so that everybody—at least for a while—is happy. Unfortunately, new differences become visible. Some roses are bigger and more beautiful than others. Again, anger grows about the unequal distribution of such differences and another revolutionary situation emerges. As in a fairy tale, the story can go on, and on, and on.

Simmel's sociological fairy tale makes clear what is really interesting about the study of social inequality: it is not only the change and continuity of the absolute distribution of goods, but also the change and continuity of

people's *interpretations* of differences that have significant consequences in modern society. This position matches Weber's insistence on the *meaningful* character of modern human conduct that needs to be studied in combination with "structural" distributions. Also, Simmel's rose hypothesis stresses that further attempts to promote equality will lead to a higher consciousness of remaining inequalities. As humans are sensitive to differences, social inequality represents a useful instrument for political leaders aiming at popularity through the promotion and introduction of redistributive programs. Nevertheless, as Simmel points out, revolutionary attempts at more equality will not be successful and do not necessarily lead directly to more happiness.

Simmel's early study takes into account only two typical interpretations of differences. At first, people interpret the unequal distribution of roses as natural and traditional; that is, external to their own and others' behavior. In the following stage, the distribution is interpreted as unjust. Here, there is an expression of an assumed common will that sees the distribution as unwanted, prompting calls for change. In this way, Simmel shows how people develop a more "individualized" view of inequality. He implies that the latter attribution will become more frequent in modern society.

The age of individualization generally enacts more utilitarianism of economic relationships, weakening of social bonds, and the decline of large families and of local communities. At the same time, scholars stress the self-determination of the individual. Autobiographies become more common. The concept of romantic love advances to a dominant norm of intimate relationships and the relation to God is personalized, especially in "protestant individualism" (Weber 1905b). More recently, scholars have emphasized a second process of individualization that, since the 1960s, has modified traditional understandings of the self. According to Anthony Giddens (1991) and Ulrich Beck (1992), contemporary societies generate a new radicalization and universalization of the individualization process. Old concepts like status and class tend to become obsolete. There is a growing social pressure toward reflexive lifestyles and higher education. With pluralized lifestyles and individualized life courses, meaning and identity need to be found individually.

Looking at this short history of individualism, we would not overstate the case by attributing a relatively high degree of consensus across the behavioral sciences about some of the following meanings of individualization:

1. First, there is agreement that individualization refers to a process in modernity that makes people attribute the reasons for behavior more often to themselves than to external factors. People believe they make

their own decisions instead of perceiving their life course as natural fate or as determined from outside.

2. Second, scholars generally agree that such beliefs may not accurately reflect the social forces that social scientists observe from outside. Even if people consider themselves as more or less independent decision makers, there is no doubt that their behavior is subject to external restrictions. For example, inequalities in the distribution of income and wealth have steadily risen in many countries since 1970 (Alderson and Nielsen 2002).
3. Third, there is also clear evidence that different degrees of individualization must be imputed to people. Not everybody attributes the reasons for outcomes and behavior equally often to internal factors, and individuals may combine a high degree of internal attribution in some parts of their lives with external attributions in other life situations. External attributions to nature, fate, God, luck, or the state are still widely used (Iyengar 1991; Kluegel and Smith 1986). Our thesis is therefore that it does not make sense to present class society (in which class members might attribute their life courses to a common class fate) and individualized society (in which people tend to see themselves as the source of destiny) as opposing concepts. Rather, both concepts denote ideal-typical interpretations, and elements of each will be present in varying degrees in most modern social formations. The extent of such attributions must be worked out empirically.
4. Fourth, explanations in behavioral sciences must combine seemingly contradictory causal assessments because only then the outcomes of human behavior will be understandable. Especially those with higher education may consider themselves self-determined, individualized decision makers in control of their life courses. They describe their behaviors in terms of choosing partners, deciding on the occupation and careers that best fit their own desires and capabilities, voting according to their political beliefs, and pursuing personal happiness. And yet, social-scientific observers note that the influences of social origin, educational degree, institutions, resource distribution, occupational groups, and structural constraints are still more or less present.
5. Fifth, there are some hints that the influence of social origins and class might have diminished to some extent in recent decades in some cases (Erikson and Goldthorpe 1992b). Such a decrease is, of course, a further indicator of progressive individualization. But let us stress that the individualization of social structures, on the one hand, and the continuing effect of class- or tradition-bound social structures, on the other hand, do not constitute alternatives, such that we could select one side as the exclusive truth. Rather, it is a question of degree. We do not come from the class society of the nineteenth century, in which socioeconomic strata penetrated all areas of life; nor have we moved into a completely individualized society in the twenty-first century. Max Weber wanted social scientists to be aware that they deal with ideal types that need empirical

specifications of degree (1905a, 90). Individualized society and class society are two such ideal types.

6. In all societies, there have always been "individuals." This is not a specific feature of modernity. Being an "individual" simply means that, in practical communication, it is to some extent common to attribute the causes of behavior to an individualized person, as in the following phrase: "You have done this, hence you are responsible for that." The far-reaching change associated with modernity is the extent to which people usually address persons as causes of behavior and thereby "individualize" them. Note that this process is inherently social and interactive from the beginning. Also, it is important not to equate "the individual" with the corporeal substance of a person. Rather, "the individual" represents a linguistic operation of attributing causes of behavior—no more, no less than this symbolic and linguistic process.

We will now take a closer look at the theoretical basis of this consensus. With Weber, we will argue that a combination of insights from class and individualization theories should be at the heart of social-science explanations.

Some Controversies

The abyss between theories of individualization and class seems to be deep. Individualization theorists argue that individuals no longer consider themselves as class members with a common fate and destination. At the same time, empirical studies show a more or less unchanged effect of class membership on education and life chances (Shavit and Blossfeld 1993; Shavit and Müller 1998). These two points of view do not necessarily indicate irreconcilable assumptions. Rather, they refer to two different objects of sociological research. Individualization theorists refer to the causal assumptions people seem to show more often in their attitudes and behavior, whereas class researchers refer to causal knowledge that scientific observers can see from the outside (Shavit and Blossfeld 1993; Shavit and Müller 1998).

Social scientists, beginning with Max Weber, have always stressed that the causal assumptions people make in practice are often wrong, or at least one-sided. They also emphasize that even if they are "wrong," they would be a good predictor of behavioral outcomes because they help researchers *understand* the intended and unintended consequences of action. Like Simmel, Weber was concerned with the problem of social order in the age of individualism, but in a different way. As he did his dissertation and habilitation thesis in law, he started off with a completely different view on social life. The breakdown of social order is not his starting point; rather, it

is the simple observation that human conduct shows certain regularities that can be documented. If sociologists want to explain such regularities and their consequences, they need a complex theory about human behavior that Weber (1905a) developed gradually in his scattered methodological writings, later known as *The Methodology of the Social Sciences*. Weber's mature social theory, expounded in *Economy and Society* (1968) and *Some Categories of Interpretive Sociology* (1981), calls for a combination of the following three elements:

1. "objective" regularities ("devoid of meaning"), that is, all kinds of regularities, including unknown influences on human behavior as indicated in public statistics, for example, by distributions of income, education, resources, and health;
2. the meaning of human behavior that is, as is known today, the subjectively believed reason for one's behavior and the way people usually internally or externally attribute behavior, especially as internally set goals ("I want to") and values ("because it means so much to me"), but also emotions and traditions ("we always did it this way");
3. the selection of a typical social relationship or *type of situation* the explanation refers to (in contrast to the unclear term "society" that Weber refused to use). This element refers to such questions as: Which audience is listening? How many people are present? Is the situation formal or informal? What is the time horizon of the situation? What is the problem to be dealt with? Do people typically act in a consensual or conflictual manner in such situations?

Weber (1981) sees the fulfillment of all three requirements as crucial to deriving valid statements on the consequences of human behavior. Even though all three elements may be closely connected in practical research, they need, however, separate efforts of empirical proof. In Weber's time, such data were not available, as there was no social research as exists today. Weber wants us to be more concerned with local, that is, microscopic ideas (Weber 1981). For example, Marx neglected requirements two and three by focusing on objective regularities of surplus-value distribution and exploitation, and by simply maintaining that the typical motives of workers were "false." For Marx, it seemed that behavior in nineteenth-century society looked as if it could be understood from such distributions by themselves. The use of language unavoidably results, as Weber stresses, in statements about regularities of behavior *and* meaningful, that is, attributional, ideas. Even simple sentences imply far-reaching assumptions about behavior that are difficult to prove empirically (Weber 1981, 160–66).

In his methodological writings, Weber prefers to illustrate the *selective* function of causal statements. To use a contemporary example, some have

claimed that, in contrast to upper-class students, lower-class students do not believe as strongly in effort (Becker 2003). From Weber's view of causality, such a statement suggests that there is both an "objective" influence on behavior (for example, the social class of the student's parents) and a selective meaning of behavior (for example, limited belief in the causal significance of one's efforts). Furthermore, Weber wants sociologists to locate specific social relationships in which such statements actually and typically apply (Weber 1981).

Modern society is differentiated into many types of situations. Depending on where people display specific kinds of conduct, these have different consequences. Weber was well aware that the rules that guide conduct vary considerably from one situation to the next. A science that was to elaborate upon the consequences of meaningful behavior would have to pay attention to such situational differences as the example in the previous paragraph demonstrates: even lower-class students may agree to try harder in the classroom because effort attributions are highly institutionalized within school, while in the afternoon at home—the next type of situation—this attribution may well lose its plausibility if the lower-class family and peers do not impose equal pressure for more effort. The consequence of such different behavior in and out of the classroom may well be that lower-class students are not as successful in education because they cannot get rid of their social origin and unintentionally continue the structural disadvantages intergenerationally. In the end, their attitude and behavior at home may be causally decisive for the outcome in their life course—despite all efforts on the part of teachers and the state. This is a consequence of unequal attributions of behavior. This inequality of explanatory practices needs to be measured.

Weber's writings on meaningful behavior postulate the distinction between objective ("devoid of meaning") and subjective ("meaningful") regularities both theoretically and empirically, and combine them, as both regularities become causally effective in the end. Subjective understanding refers to typical situations in which people show differential expectations about the assumed causes of their behavior. In contrast, by elaborating objective causes, researchers may detect forces (especially resource distributions, class positions, and educational levels) whose societal effects may overlap considerably although they may be in explicit contrast to socially visible attributions. For example, people may think of themselves (and say this in surveys) more than ever before as being self-determined, individualized decision makers of their life courses. And yet, social-scientific observers see that the influences of unequal origins, class positions, educational degrees, access to institutions, and resource distributions (which are

often very difficult to change through individual behavior) have not vanished. Therefore, sociological explanations must combine seemingly contradictory elements.

However, this paradox of the self-presentation of modern behavior is not new. Weber has a solution for the analysis of such a social formation by distinguishing between the *material* and the *ideal* aspects of human behavior. This distinction is indispensable because both dimensions have their own evolution in modern society. Material welfare has risen incredibly, and, at the same time, the causal ideas that people have with regard to their practical behavior have changed even more dramatically. More than ever before, people conceive of their behavior as self-determined and individualized so that, "subjectively" speaking, the world will increasingly appear to be ordered from inside rather than from outside, as is the case through tradition, God, nature, or the collective fate of class. The elective affinity between religious ideas and capitalist materialism, discussed in *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* (Weber 1930), is just one example of the type of analysis Weber had in mind.

Today, many more examples could follow. "Understanding" therefore means doing research on selective causal ideas that people show in their behavior. "Explaining" refers to the detection of the structural regularities that accompany such behavior. Both views combined reflect the entire situation appropriately under causal auspices. This two-part model of an explanation will be convincing only as long as it is complemented by a statement on the meaning of behavior as the major source of social change in modern times. Therefore, Weber wants social scientists to analyze human behavior by means of *both* the observer's and the participant's concepts of causality.

Evidence for the argument that people have causal ideas about situations and behave accordingly has usually derived from the tradition of attribution research established by Fritz Heider's (1958) analysis of everyday concepts of causality. While attribution research has flourished since Heider's time, from a sociological point of view, it is amazing how little attention sociologists have given to Weber's (1905a) discussion of causality. Weber insists that human behavior can be explained causally to a greater degree than natural phenomena because behavior can be "understood." He therefore stresses that causality is not an objectively given feature of the external world but rather a practical tool of language that is used in behavior. Individuals understand both the historical and contemporary world by selectively attributing certain causes and effects to it. The emphasis is on selection from a horizon of different possibilities that makes these views meaningful in a phenomenological sense.[1]

Weber's contribution to theories of class and individualization is crucial for understanding that the clash of their representatives does not indicate incommensurability, but rather the necessity to collect more valid data about both objective regularities that indicate outcomes and antecedents of behavior and subjective regularities of human behavior itself. This would help researchers to understand how social structures—just as theorists of individualization argue—become individualized instead of being swept away. Debates about individualization show the necessity to make more intelligible the relationship between human behavior and social structures. Social research of the twentieth century, especially in sociology, has elaborated much more upon the structures of society in terms of class typologies, social status, educational degrees, and income and gender inequality than it has measured the meaning of individualized human behavior that actually constitutes both continuities and changes of such distributions (cf. Beck and Beck-Gernsheim 2002).

This is not to deny that individualization theorists are right in pointing to the loss of overlapping societal consensus in modernity. It is well established in social thought that modern society is highly differentiated and therefore structurally disintegrated (Luhmann 1977). This is not a new story. Rather, it is necessary to make more specific statements about continuity and change in domain-specific developments. This is also the reason why the discussion about the death of class took off from the wrong starting point. Weber's real contribution to class theory is overlooked if one focuses on his brief elaborations on class, status, and party instead of recognizing his way of causally analyzing human behavior. Therefore, John H. Goldthorpe's (2000) and Aage Sørensen's (2000) detachments from Weberian thought do not take into account his theory of causality. According to Weber's explanatory concept, success and failure of the class concept not only depend on which elements are used as part of the definition of class, as discussed by Sørensen (2000), Goldthorpe (2000), and Erik Wright (2000). Class research must also pay attention to the following elements: What specific behavior is chosen by the researcher? Which consequences does it have? What is typical about the situation? Weber considers social relationships an adequate object of analysis because modern society is irreversibly torn on the level of *behavior* and not on the level of *causal influences* that a scientific observer can detect and that the participants are often not aware of.

We will now demonstrate our view empirically by presenting the results of an exploratory survey on context-specific causal attributions in life courses.

A Survey of Individualization

Attitude and attribution research has shown how sensitive humans are to context-specific clues that guide causal assumptions. Modern society and the courses that lives take in it are differentiated into many types of situations: work organizations, work meetings, market interactions, informal gossip, public presentations, educational instruction, situations in which educational and career decisions are made, public protest, watching mass-media news, family activities, and leisure-time contexts. In fact, recent research has focused on the *split consciousness* of modern man, who sometimes believes in individualistic explanations for inequality and sometimes prefers structurally accounting for it—depending on the context and issue dealt with (Kluegel and Smith 1986). In order to know more about how social structures are being individualized today, researchers need more data on actual human behavior in different types of situations and on issues dealt with at different stages of the life course. Global and unspecified attitude measures commonly used in panel studies will not show in what way people develop individualized life courses.

There are, of course, some relevant hypotheses about class and individualization. Members of lower classes are said to be less open toward achievement goals or are more likely to take a fatalistic position, perceiving better education as a risk rather than an opportunity (Becker 2003; Gambetta 1987). In view of their limited economic and social capital, they are believed to be "over-adaptive" and to sell their labor for less than its value (cf. Goldthorpe 2000, 241ff). Assumptions concerning achievement and effort are not the sole product of individuals' wills, but rather underlie the class-specific attribution of causes that people expect from each other. Hence, students from different social classes differ in the extent to which they believe they can influence the grading of teachers by their individual efforts, and employees see the reasons for their successful or failed promotions in differing degrees according to their class position. The higher their position, the stronger seem to be their internal attributions. Only those who authentically believe that they can influence their life course mobilize appropriate efforts and develop normative claims for higher positions (Dunifon and Duncan 1998).[2]

In contrast, external attributions toward constant characteristics perceived as uncontrollable suppose a fatalistic perception of one's life course. Persons from lower classes speak in a less abstracting way so that, to them, it seems that the social world is simply the way it is. Consequently, external attributions of behavior will happen more frequently, and the possible impact of one's own behavior will not be recognized properly. In contrast,

the more elaborate one's linguistic skills are, the more it will appear possible and sensible to influence one's life course by personal efforts (Bernstein 1971).

Goldthorpe's more recent efforts in class theory and the theory of social action have approached such a view, yet without any methodological combination of class and attribution concepts. Goldthorpe (2000, 172–78) conceptualizes class-specific educational preferences as internal or external "subjective beliefs" about desired and undesired outcomes without noting that his entire concept of the differentiation of employment contracts and the logic of work situations has the same attributional foundations.

According to Goldthorpe (2000, 214), the labor contract is restricted. It provides money for simple efforts and their outcomes, which are not difficult to monitor. This spot contract implies simple causal chains, both objectively and subjectively. The degree to which a worker sees the causes of occupational outcomes in his or her own behavior is relatively low. The worker certainly knows that the work is done by herself. However, she does not attribute general outcomes of the work organization to her own person as much as higher positions can and will, for many reasons. The central difference between labor contracts and the service relationship is, as Goldthorpe (2000, 217) notes, the degree of diffuseness, that is, the assumed causal relationship between employees' behavior and its assumed effect on organizational outcomes, or, its believed contribution to goal attainment. The larger the work organization, the more indirect the relation between organizational goal attainment and the subjective causal beliefs of one's own contribution will be. The higher the vagueness, the more likely it is that other criteria will apply. This is true for managerial, administrative, official, professional, and proprietary presentations, which usually stress the importance of efforts, motivation, abilities, and internal factors in general. The higher the position, the more individual work attributions will stress internal factors for structural reasons. This is because the class structure of organizational hierarchies provides diverging world views in terms of the assumed causal processes at work.

The conclusion to be drawn from this structural variance of work behavior is that subjective work roles objectively influence subjective explanatory styles. It would seem obvious to assume that such behavioral variance is not confined to organizational borders but rather diffuses into other life domains as well. Most importantly, it will be passed on as a primary explanatory *habitus* in social origins and will later, even after expanded education, be reproduced in life courses by adapting to objective positional structures. This theory assumes that the relation between work,

class, and society is not a question of all or nothing, but rather one of empirical gradation to be uncovered using attributional scales.

It is not this thesis that is new, as Bernstein (1971) has already shown, but rather the prospects of linguistic and survey measurement that appear novel and promising. If researchers assume that behavioral variance of classes varies itself at different stages of life courses, and that such variance has important consequences for stratification outcomes, then they must increase the specificity of survey questions about actual behavior. It should be clear that survey items like "In the long run, hard work usually brings a better life" or "Hard work doesn't generally bring success, it's more a matter of luck and connections" (used, for example, in the World Value Surveys) should be a starting point, leading to additional items that try to retrieve the variance of class-specific conduct and its change between cohorts in greater detail.

From here, the connection to stratification research is obvious. The career concept of "high potential" clearly demonstrates the meaning of a causal attribution to someone who *is believed* to have the power "to move something" on his or her own. This attribution of causes and effects arguably exaggerates personal effects in order to justify unequal careers (Rosenbaum 1984, 268–70).

In order to contribute to a better connection of individualized beliefs and social structures in social research, we have conducted an exploratory survey (n = 262). We tested class-specific causal attributions in different types of situations, problems, stages of the life course, and possible audiences of the situation.

Keeping Weber's emphasis on the context-bound meaning of behavior in mind and with Niklas Luhmann (1990), we assumed that it is crucial to distinguish between the time dimension, the social dimension, and the substantive dimension of human behavior. The time dimension of life courses encompasses different stages, that is, the stages of social origin, education, the transition to work, and early and later work experiences. The social dimension refers to the audience that is listening: the family, peer groups, classmates inside and outside of the classroom, front and back stages at work, and the public realm. The substantive dimension refers to the topics and problems dealt with in some specific context, for example, requests for more effort in work meetings, one's own and other colleagues' promotions, pay inequality, grades, marriage and divorce, collective bargaining, and strikes.

We framed our questions specifically enough for respondents to match personal experiences with survey items and retrieve their actual causal experiences validly and reliably.

The following examples present two item blocks:

Example 1:

When your teacher requested you to make more efforts in class, how did you react?

1. agreed because I wanted to have good chances later in life;
2. did not take them seriously because I knew I could not do any better;
3. did not take them seriously because greater efforts in school do not help in the future; or
4. I was not challenged that way by my teacher because I mostly had good grades.

(agree strongly, agree, disagree, disagree strongly)

Example 2:

Now we refer to a typical situation in a work meeting: your superior requests more efforts to meet the budget objectives. How do you react?

1. say there is no incentive for me to do more;
2. agree because I participated in the budget talks;
3. say that I already do as much as I can and that competition is tough; or
4. agree because I am obliged to follow official goals.

This way, we designed a questionnaire with twenty-five item blocks and then asked the respondents to provide the usual demographic data that contain information about social origins and class membership. Class membership and educational level were defined according to standard procedures in comparative social research and in household panels. Categories were taken from the so-called Erikson-Goldthorpe-Portocarero (EGP) class scheme, which, in the last twenty years, has become a standard measure for determining the class position of workers (Erikson and Goldthorpe 1992b; Goldthorpe 2000). Figure 5.1 presents a summary of the results.

All items were scaled from one to four. Higher values usually mean stronger agreement with the internal, "individualized" beliefs of respondents. We have summarized class membership of our respondents into low, middle, and high. The x-axis represents the life course. From left to right, we have placed item blocks that are intended to reflect the time dimension of the life course. By doing so, the reader can form an imaginary "individualization curve" of the life course.

"Origin" refers to questions that aimed at personal experiences in the family at early stages of the life course. "Education" refers to memories of situations in schools and tertiary education. "Occupation (early stage)"

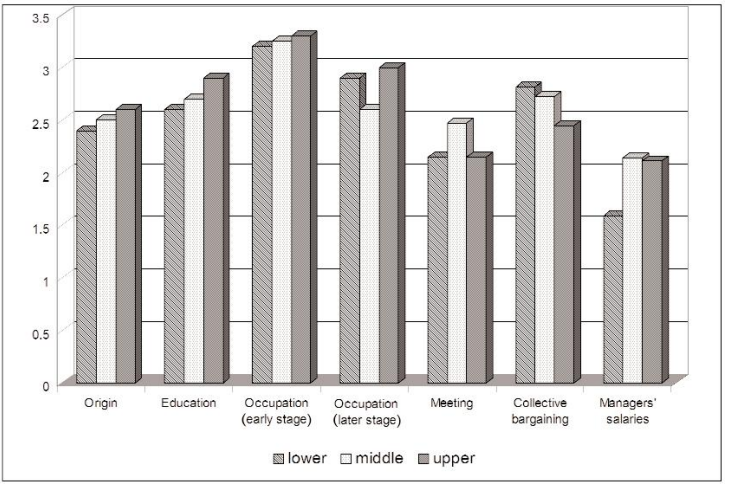


Figure 5.1 Individualized beliefs in the life course

means the first years of work after education, while "Occupation (later stage)" refers to situations after 10–20 years of work. The bar labeled "Meeting" represents items that asked about how effort attributions in work meetings were accepted or rejected. "Collective bargaining" refers to items that asked interviewees how they perceived the justice of collective bargaining results in relation to individual efforts. "Managers' salaries" asked whether such salaries were justified by individual efforts. Differences of mean values were statistically significant (at least) at the 5 percent level for "Origin," "Education," and "Occupation (early stage)," whereas they were not for the rest.

The following two major results should be mentioned:

1. At all stages of the life course and for all topics dealt with, there is a class-specific degree to which respondents agree with individualized, internal attributions of crucial life events. Hence, we can conclude that individualization is not a uniform feature of modern life. Rather, there are structural differences in the extent to which people see themselves as individualized decision makers at work.
2. This evidence tentatively suggests that the individualization curve begins at relatively low levels in early stages of the life course. During education and early stages of the occupational career, it reaches its maximum. Later, that is, after ten to twenty years of occupational experience, the actual belief in the self as the decisive determinant of the life course decreases and structural explanations of occupational outcomes become more

common again. Nevertheless, class-specific degrees of subjective attribution remain present.

From such a perspective, it is easy to see how individualized beliefs and the constraints of class structure actually cooperate in bringing about a society that appears as highly individualized on the front stage, whereas the back stage still looks much like a class society with fairly strict processes of intergenerational mobility. The seeming contradiction between individualized self-presentations and class-structural constraints is dissolved in the life course, as, step by step, people learn about their personal limits. Since individual beliefs become more and more common, especially with higher education, the life course will produce many disappointing experiences. But it also provides a lot of time to get used to one's place in the class structure. As Bourdieu (1984, 1990) has stressed many times, people must sooner or later adapt to their professional fate and attribute it properly so that tensions will be minimized. Believing in individualism is such an effective strategy for both successful and unsuccessful candidates. Those who do not advance to higher positions can reduce cognitive dissonance by assuming that others have displayed superior efforts.

Discussion: Individualization and Society

Discussions about the "failure of class action" (Crompton 1993, 89–91), the alleged "death of class," and individualization (Beck 1992) have thus far failed to take full account of Weber's complex theory of causality, so contemporary perspectives and limitations of the class concept have often been misjudged. In fact, the proponents of these discussions seem not to be aware of the twofold nature of causal statements so that they treat such facts as incompatible instead of combining them in explanations.

The transformed class concept is therefore related to typical activities of occupational groups; it does not aim directly at collective actors, but rather at the typical behavior of individual actors. This transformed concept helps classify work relations, measure their structural influence on other contexts, and uncover the continuity of life courses in a differentiated society. Looking at the results generated by this approach, one cannot assume the death of class. In which way, to what extent, and with what kind of consequences classes may cause public protest and collective bargaining cannot be inferred from class alone. Social researchers must not confuse individual actors with collective actors such as work councils, unions, employer associations, and political parties. If one leaves the setting of the work organization and looks at human behavior outside of work, the direct

behavioral reference of the class concept is no longer applicable, and the class concept is reduced to an interesting effect *devoid of meaning* but in need of meaningful explication. Researchers need to elaborate on actual subjective attributions in each context, just as Weber (1981) claims. They might find that human behavior is more or less individualized *within* social structures. However, this is not to deny the influence of class on other contexts, but rather to emphasize it.

However, according to Weber (1981), this causal power has a different status as far as sociological explanations are concerned. As a causal "extension" from the field of occupational groups, class offers causal regularities but not the required interpretations of conduct that would make explanations intuitively plausible. This results in a contradictory appearance of society in which the life-world evidence of class seems to have decreased due to increasing wealth and more individualized occupational behavior while, at the same time, as research convincingly demonstrates, classes have a strong influence on behavior. Material welfare has risen incredibly, and yet, the causal ideas that people have with regard to their practical behavior have changed even more. More than ever before, people conceive of their own and others' behavior as self-determined and individualized, so that the world increasingly looks like it is ordered from inside (that is, by "choice" or "decision") as opposed to from outside (that is, by tradition, God, nature, or collective fate). It would be too easy to stress an opposition of the individualization concept, on the one hand, and the concept of class inequality, on the other.

From what we have said so far, it should by now be clear that it would be a complete mistake to identify the progressive individualization of behavior with the step-by-step dissolution of social structures, let alone the death of the social. The process of individualization is—just as Norbert Elias, Zygmunt Bauman, Ulrich Beck, and Anthony Giddens stress—inherently social and interactive from the beginning. Individualization denotes an attribution of behavioral reasons that people expect from each other objectively in interaction. This does not at all entail a loss of social order and consensus, as the example of women with higher education demonstrates: they increasingly believe that having a baby is not a matter of fate and nature but rather an explicit decision they have made with their partner. The more women agree on such an internal attribution, the more it will be possible to observe a new "individualized" consensus along with communities constituted by such individualized beliefs. Again, individualization does not preclude the eventual establishment of social communities built on individualized consensus, as it is the process of change, not the outcome of change, that brings about most conflicts.

This is, finally, also to say that neither sociology nor political science is or should be interested in the individual as such. Rather, the social sciences are interested in the social regularities of practical behavior, that is, in the way that behavior is attributed in interpretive schemes and what structural consequences such interpretive regularities have.

Notes

1. For an early discussion of this practical understanding of causality in Weber's methodological writings, see Goldenweiser (1938). Turner and Factor (1994) present a discussion on the legal origins of Weber's concept of causality.
2. Causality, of course, goes in both directions: it is not just internal beliefs (subjectively) that produce more successful careers (structure), but successful careers also produce more assumptions about efforts being the origin of that success. Bourdieu (1984) and Luhmann (1990) have stressed this duality of agency and structure.

This page intentionally left blank

Chapter 6

Individualization and Ethical Agency

Paul Hoggett, Marj Mayo, and Chris Miller

Late Modernity and Dilemmatic Space

According to Ulrich Beck, Zygmunt Bauman, and others, the accelerated pace of modernity pushes all societies and their citizens toward intensified forms of destructive innovation and adaptation. Humans are forced into a world of increasing social complexity in which the stable anchors of tradition are loosened. The taken-for-granted loyalties of the past are challenged, and with this, the challenge of finding satisfactory values that can act as a guide in private and public life becomes evermore daunting. This new and complex world poses a challenge to individuals' moral and ethical capacities that were previously held more firmly within the embrace of unquestioned and simple loyalties to one's group. Today, increasingly, individuals belong to many different groups. Alongside the belongingness to class and nation, people become aware of new group affiliations based upon the largely ascribed but also partly chosen affinities of gender, ethnicity, sexuality, place, and culture. Moreover, changes in the social relations of production and consumption generate a range of new occupational and lifestyle identities. Today's citizen belongs to multiple groups, and in the course of a week, her many different identities become salient according to the social relations she engages in. These identities pull individuals this way and that, sometimes, as Bauman (1993) puts it, "one praising what the other condemns." Tradition sheltered people from responsibility. They did not have to think too much. Humans acted in certain ways because "people like us" did that kind of thing. In contrast, to cite Bauman again, modernity condemns people to freedom, condemns individuals to having to think.

The different groups to which individuals feel they belong refer to the different aspects of their social identity. Group loyalties, and the commitments that accompany them, are often in tension. Part of the "project of the self" becomes the negotiation of such tensions that find expression in the dilemmas of everyday life. According to Bonnie Honig (1996), individuals today live in "dilemmatic space" in which there is no longer any obvious right thing to do. We feel torn between conflicting "pulls," so that we often think to ourselves, "well on the one hand . . . but then on the other." Even if it is clear what one *must* do, one can still feel torn because a residual feeling remains that perhaps it is not the thing one *should* be doing. In such situations, moral philosophers such as Bernard Williams (1973, 1981) suggest that all one can do is "act for the best." But in acting for the best, individuals are still beset by anxiety because they may feel that the course of action they have rejected could turn out to have been the right one after all. Whatever humans do involves risk and the possibility of failure, particularly failure to live up to personal values and standards. And after the course of action has been concluded, individuals typically experience lingering feelings of doubt, regret, and sometimes guilt.

In this chapter, we ask, how can individuals develop and sustain the capacity for ethical agency in late-modern society? In seeking an answer, we will draw upon recent research we have conducted on the dilemmas facing development workers and the personal and social resources they draw upon in negotiating them. In making sense of this research, we will draw upon "object-relational" traditions in psychoanalysis, particularly the work of Melanie Klein. We will argue that such theories provide an analysis of the nature of the psychical capacities that are necessary to respond constructively to the increasingly plural and complex nature of the social world.

Ethical Capacities

The negotiation of dilemmatic space constitutes a challenge to our ethical capacities. In an extended examination of the idea of "capacity," Robert French (1999) notes the etymology of this word, its derivation from the Latin *capac*, meaning "able to take in" or "able to hold much." For those living under conditions of contemporary modernity, the question is, how much of the complexity of everyday life is it possible to take in, or how much of this reality can be faced? The question is both a political and a personal one because the dilemmas provoked by living in a complex world generate and connect to internal conflicts within individuals.

The following example is drawn from our current research on the ethical dilemmas facing youth and community workers in the UK.[1] To some extent, our sample is probably unrepresentative of the public service population as a whole. For virtually all of the participants in the research, a strong sense of values has brought them into the work that they now undertake. But public service work confronts individuals with a range of dilemmas that are particularly acute, especially for those whose role puts them in that contested space between government and civil society. In this sense, we feel that our sample exemplifies the complexities of contemporary society; the challenges that they face exemplify elements of common experience, but for them, it occurs in a particularly vivid way.

> The example of Eunice is illustrative. Eunice, who is white, created and leads a project for children and families which is now highly embedded in the multi-cultural neighborhood where she lives. As a consequence the project is immersed in the local social networks of the surrounding area. Local black people not only use the services of the project, they are its volunteers and management committee members and some have become members of staff. One such member of staff, someone with whom Eunice identifies strongly because of what he has managed to survive and come through in his own life, crosses the line in terms of what is acceptable professional behavior. Although Eunice confronts him with the issue, he refuses to acknowledge that he has made a serious mistake. The worker in question has a strong reputation in the local community and is well liked by many members of staff and service users. After a great deal of agonizing Eunice decides to instigate disciplinary procedures against him.

The project operates on the boundaries between state and civil society, and Eunice is therefore subject to the demands both of the formal and impersonal rules and procedures of government, and to the informal, person-to-person relations of civil society.

This contradiction is exacerbated by the British Labor government's social and urban regeneration policies that, on the one hand, stress the importance of local involvement and local job creation, and, on the other, give expression to an increasingly "risk conscious" and "risk averse" culture (Cooper and Lousada 2005), particularly where young people are involved (Ferguson 2004). As a social welfare professional, Eunice identifies with professional standards and ethics that claim to be universal in applicability. However, she also suspects the gendered and racialized nature of these standards and that her colleague's behavior was not necessarily unacceptable within his own community. It is very rare, indeed almost unprecedented, for a white woman to lead a community project in this district, and

she runs the risk of being ostracized by the local black community for disciplining this popular local activist.

Eunice is caught between the conflicting claims of bureaucracy and civil society, universalism and multiculturalism, class and race, and so on. In telling us that she agonized over what to do, Eunice describes the "emotion work" involved in negotiating these kinds of ethical dilemmas (Hogget 2005).

Our research suggests that there are a variety of ways of traversing dilemmatic space. As Eunice does, individuals can accept mixed and contradictory feelings, contain ambivalence but act for the best, recognizing that even if the risk of catastrophe can be averted, the outcome will inevitably be messy and painful. Recently, reflecting on the complexity of the coordination problem now facing the task of governance, Jessop (2003) has gone further and argued that there is not just a risk of failure, but also that "failure" is inherent to the work of government. Given this situation, he advocates the stance of the "romantic ironist" who "accepts incompleteness and failure as essential features of social life but continues to act as if completeness and success were possible." Whether one faces the world as Eunice does or as Jessop advocates, what is clear is that such stances require a considerable capacity to contain loss and disappointment. As Susan Mendus notes, the impossibility of harmonious reconciliation means that the moral agent is not exempt from the authority of the claim she chooses to reject, and therefore such situations are characterized by "pluralism, plus conflict, plus loss" (2000, 117).

But what happens to individuals who cannot bear the frustrations and disappointments that inevitably attend the lives of those committed to providing public services? Our current research suggests that it can quickly lead to demoralization. Either the individual internalizes a sense of failure so that she becomes depressed and despairing, or she projects these feelings onto those seen as responsible for these frustrations—the state, the public, the community, and so on. If Eunice had internalized this sense of failure, she would have ended up feeling bad; if she had projected it onto others, she would probably have begun to feel that "the community" had failed her. In our experience, public officials often experience loss and disappointment in terms of personal failure, particularly in a political environment in which bureaucrats and welfare workers are easy scapegoats for public problems. It is as if they internalize the flaws and failings of society, thereby taking responsibility for what is irresolvable in the wider world.

Returning to French's reflections on human capacities, he notes how the concept has quietly become a consistent preoccupation of those groupings within psychoanalysis that have been influenced by the work of Melanie

Klein, Donald Winnicott, and Wilfred Bion. Klein describes two contrasting ways of apprehending the world that, like the two responses sketched in the previous passage, differ in the degree of complexity they can hold. From what she calls the "paranoid schizoid" position, reality is dealt with by splitting, fragmenting, compartmentalizing, and other means of simplification, each of which requires a separating of good and bad, virtue and vice, purity and contamination, and so on (Klein 1952). In the example of Eunice, we can see how both forms of demoralization (self-blame and other-blame) express this position. In contrast, Klein (1952) describes another state of mind she refers to as the "depressive position" in which, as with Eunice, the possibility that things may be more "mixed up" (including one's own feelings and motives) can be entertained. Klein uses the word "depressive" not because the person in this state of mind is depressed, but rather as a way of acknowledging the sadness and remorse that accompanies recognition of the complexity of life and of one's own and others' failings.

As Sidney Hook puts it, "Faced by problems, nothing is better than thoughtful action, but our best actions may not be enough. We cannot escape risk because even an informed choice may be an unlucky one" (1974, 59). As Freud always insisted, facing reality requires a tough mindedness. Instead of an idealization of one's self and one's group, in the depressive position there is a more realistic appreciation of the bad within the good (that is, one's or one's group's faults, weaknesses, limitations, and so on), and instead of a denigration of the other, there is a more generous appreciation of the good within the bad (including the strengths of other value systems in relation to one's own).

If, as has been argued, "dilemmatic space" poses a challenge to our ethical capacities, then Klein's notion of the depressive position seems to be a response to this challenge. It would seem that without this capacity, individuals are unable to handle the dilemmas of modern life. But if Klein's concept of the depressive position provides a clue regarding the psychical resources individuals need to contain the complexity of modern life, it may not yet give an answer to the question of how effective agency is possible.

A correlate of the depressive position is the ability to take the position of the other, including the other who stands as an opponent or antagonist to the self (Klein 1952). If Eunice lacked this capacity, she would have remained unaffected by the competing claims of class and culture represented by her black colleague, and to this extent, the multifaceted nature of the dilemma she was in would have eluded her grasp. But our current research, particularly the interviews with several other women in our sample, indicated that the ability to take the position of the other, to surrender to competing claims, can be paralyzing. It can lead to inaction and indecision,

to an agonized impotence. This was not the case with Eunice; she could combine such an openness to experience with the capacity for decisive action. There was a sense of authority about her that some others in her situation lacked. The question therefore remains, what additional internal resources are required to steer a course in the ambiguous, contested, and uncertain terrain of dilemmatic space? The question will be addressed by taking a brief diversion into some earlier debates about the consequences of modernity and its impact upon the psychical resources of the individual.

Modernity, Authority, and the Family

One can see resonances of the work of Giddens, Beck, and Bauman in the development of critical theory. In an early and somewhat overlooked essay, Jessica Benjamin (1978) reflects upon the way in which critical theory analyzes the impact of modernity upon the personality. Benjamin offers a detailed examination of the work of Max Horkheimer (1949) on the modern family. In a sense, Horkheimer historicizes Freud. For Freud, the child's internalization of the law of the father is the vehicle of tradition, and it is through this route that the moral precepts of one generation are transmitted to the next. The product of this internalization is the conscience or the superego. But, Horkheimer asks, what happens in a society in which the father and his group can no longer represent patriarchal authority? What happens when the father's position is undermined by the rationalization and bureaucratization of work and public life, when the increasing powerlessness of this and other male workers and breadwinners becomes obscured, even to themselves, and questions of ends or values become eclipsed by a preoccupation with means? In this situation, would not the internalization of authority break down, an internalization that, according to Freud, is necessary not only for the transmission of tradition but also for its contestation? For, as Benjamin notes, implicit in Freud's and Horkheimer's analysis is a set of patriarchal assumptions—schooled under the firm and watchful eye of the powerful patriarch, the brothers use the internalized strength of the father in a revolt against him.

Benjamin notes how this line of analysis passes from Freud and Horkheimer into mainstream sociology through David Reisman (1950) and Christopher Lasch (1977), who argued that in the absence of internalization, the modern personality is left with no inner core that can provide it with direction, and as a result, the contemporary citizen becomes increasingly other directed, prey to social conformity and to the influence of peers. Critical theorists had therefore argued that the advance of modernity produced a subject incapable of effective agency, someone lacking an

internal map and steering mechanism, someone therefore without the capacity to be self-authorizing. This pessimistic analysis, with its nostalgic harking back to the days when male authority as head of household was unchallenged by either flexibilized labor markets or the advancement of womens' rights, is in stark contrast to the more optimistic perspectives of Giddens and Beck.

Not surprisingly, Benjamin criticizes Horkheimer's way of linking the fate of individualization to internalization. She argues that it provides no place for the role of women and mothers in the production of subjects capable of authorship of their own lives. It confuses authorship with independence, an independence that is itself an attack upon mutuality and nurturance. Finally, it actually offers an inaccurate picture of the empirical development of the family. Particularly, she argues, as gender-role relationships become dedifferentiated in the modern family, and psychological child rearing techniques as opposed to the use of coercive paternal authority grow in relevance, there is considerable evidence to suggest that internalization becomes a *more* prominent feature of child development (1978, 52–54).

Self-Authorization: Authority in Late Modernity

Our research suggests that in order to steer a course through dilemmatic space, an individual needs to be self-authorizing. There are two meanings to this concept, meanings that Benjamin sometimes blurs. On the one hand, and this is the way in which it tends to be used by Giddens (1991), self-authorization is equivalent to being the author or producer of one's own life story. But there is a second usage of the term that we focus upon here—the sense of authority the person brings to his or her own agency. Here we are distinguishing between three forms of authority: positional authority, which is located in a hierarchical role or position; reputational authority, which is based upon the reputation an actor has within a given set of lateral social networks; and personal authority, which refers to the authority that is embodied in the self and that corresponds to trust and belief in oneself. We suggest that to traverse dilemmatic space, a person requires a sense of personal authority, one that is not just "borrowed" or unreflexively mimicked from one's elders as each generation becomes a vehicle for the transmission of the commands of the previous one. One can think of this in terms of the presence or absence of an authoritative internal voice that an individual can draw upon, but a voice that is constructed from a matrix of identifications with significant others, and not just from the father or indeed from the family. The following examples illustrate this.

Janice was brought up on a large public housing estate with a rough reputation. Unusually for people on this estate, she eventually managed to get to a university, where she was very successful. She is now a highly regarded community development worker on the same estate where she grew up.

> I think my mum and dad are inevitably one of the, they influenced me and my values come from them to a certain extent. And they're really quite different people . . . my dad was, he was an odd mixture of kind of Italian macho and very masculine, and being completely cowed by the world as well. He knew his place and he accepted his place and would never argue his place. And that was a real tragedy for me, I think, looking back on it, that he was kept firmly where he was because he believed in what he was taught he was. Whereas my mum's attitude was completely different. It's interesting, my mum was a waitress for years and years, and my dad used to come and pick her up from work. And she said you'd watch him walking through the restaurant and she said the only people who went in restaurants in those days were people in suits and people with money, you know, that was in the sixties. She said you'd watch him walk through the restaurant, she said, and he was almost physically shrinking as he was walking through, because he didn't belong. And she said you could just see the effect on him, just being with this group of people. Whereas my mum, her whole attitude was kind of the only difference between me and you is you've got more money in your pocket than I have, and that's it, there's nothing else, you know. And I've got, I kind of have that kind of bolshiness and arrogance if you want to call it arrogance, and be like my mum. But looking at kind of how long it took me to raise my head above the parapet, I think I've got a lot of my dad in there as well. So, and I do still struggle with that. . . . I often deputise for our Chief Exec, and he will say, "Go off and tell them this, this and this." And I go off, and as I'm getting there I'm thinking, "Oh god, I can't do it, you know. They know I'm a fraud, they know I'm not worth anything." I have to kind of bolster myself back up again. So there's kind of . . . it's like a kind of, it's an act of reconstruction that I have to do, just take away all that kind of stereotypes and all those expectations. (Janice interview 2004)

The fragility of Janice's sense of her own authority is revealed in the last part of this extract. To the extent that she identifies with her father, she experiences his shrinking voice as her own. But she also recognizes her mum inside her as well, a mother restless for change, with a burning sense of injustice, and with strong and at times rigid views.

Janice's father closely resembles the father in Horkheimer's angry lament, crushed by the hidden injuries of class, and yet Janice is able to draw on the strength of her mother to find anger on behalf of her father and other men like him, a group who is "just easy to blame for everything" (Janice interview 2004). In this family, along with several others in our

sample, it is the mother who represents strength, as opposed to the father's external toughness. Benjamin has argued consistently for a nonpatriarchal concept of authority, one based upon the experience of nurturance and mutual recognition (2004). While this is to be welcomed, the emphasis upon feminine nurturance could draw attention away from women's strength.

Another example from our current research indicates the important role that extrafamilial figures can play in offering sources of identification out of which a sense of inner authority can be built. Cass is a middle-aged black woman who has been an important activist in her city for many years but now works for the city's government. She spent almost the first twenty years of her life living in residential care homes, where she was subject to various kinds of abuse. She survived because of the support she received, mostly from welfare workers of various kinds, many of whom became her friends. People who helped included the cook and cleaner at the assessment center, who gave her the first opportunity to visit somebody's home, the two Chinese midwives who delivered her first child, took her home with them, and cared for her and the baby for over six months, the housing officer who helped to rehouse her, secure an injunction against a violent partner, provided her with encouragement and confidence, and pointed her in the direction of a career, and the neighbor who taught her how to cook Afro-Caribbean food and "the things [she] need[s] to know as a black woman" (Cass interview 2004). Although these were adults who occupied roles embodying little or no formal authority, for this young woman, they enabled her to retain some faith in adults and regain some trust that they are not all abusive. As Cass put it,

> All through my life it's been about surviving really and it's been about finding the skills to survive in the world . . . and I think that's the drive I've got inside me. . . . It's really the people along the way that I've met, that I've made friends with and they're like a network. They are my family. Those are the people that support me, give me advice, give me encouragement. Those are the people that have become my family and I've just been so lucky in my life that wherever I go I've always met somebody that's just been there for me . . . without them I would never have got where I am and I'd never have got through some of the things I've been through and not a lot of people can say that. (Cass interview 2004)

In the absence of an experience of nurturance or good authority in her childhood, Cass was nevertheless able to draw strength from some unlikely quarters—cooks, cleaners, midwives, housing workers, and welfare workers—whom she now refers to as "her family."

Cass's example also demonstrates the increasing importance of friendships in late-modern societies in which traditional patterns of intimacy break down. As Anthony Elliott notes, it is simply not the case that individuals equate the end of nuclear family life with the disintegration of the self (2001, 39). Not only can people internalize the support they receive from good friends, but, as Cass's example also shows, the state itself can contribute to what Richard Titmuss (1974) calls the social texture of relationships. Horkheimer, Lasch, and others speak of the bureaucratization and rationalization of life as a purely destructive force that undermines social bonds and weakens the personality, but Cass's example indicates another dimension to the state: its capacity to embody what Winnicott (1965) refers to as a "facilitating environment."

The ability of an individual to develop a secure sense of her own authority is clearly mediated by factors such as class, gender, and race. This is particularly visible in Janice's case, her father embodying the accumulated lack of respect and humiliation that are part of Richard Sennett and Jonathan Cobb's (1977) *The Hidden Injuries of Class*. To the extent that Janice identifies with this aspect of her father, she takes into herself this humiliated and disrespected figure. In this way, she comes to know her place (Hoggett et al. 2006). Janice's remarks about standing in for her chief executive also reveal that the problem of authority is not dissipated once one occupies a formal position with considerable authority; quite the contrary, Janice indicates how the sudden acquisition of positional authority can expose the role-holder's lack of personal authority. She felt that she was a fraud, and in a similar way, we have noticed how others in our sample from black or working-class backgrounds often feel "out of place" in the formal state hierarchies in which they work. This reminds us of the way in which authority, particularly positional authority, expresses the social relations of class, race, and gender, and if it can do this for professionals working within the state, how much more so can it do this for the recipients of welfare?

Values: Orientation in Moral Space

We have argued that contemporary capitalist social relations on a global scale confront the individual with unprecedented social complexity. On the one hand, social relations become increasingly pluralized, and on the other, the exercise of power, including the power of the state (Burrows and Loader 1994), becomes increasingly remote and obscured. Condemned to freedom in this dilemmatic space, the individual requires both a capacity to contain complexity and a sense of inner authority to respond to the

challenge of modern living. But he also requires strong values. Concepts of value and value pluralism have become familiar enough in political philosophy, particularly since the work of Isaiah Berlin. But even here, as Charles Taylor (1989) notes, there has been an overemphasis on the right (one's obligations and what one ought to do) and an underemphasis on the good (one's ideals and values).

But as an object of analysis and empirical investigation in politics, sociology, and psychoanalysis, values (as opposed to beliefs, discourses, and so on) remain even more neglected. Take psychoanalysis for example. Since Freud, the attention of psychoanalysis has been fixed firmly upon the role of the superego as the mediator of the moral precepts of succeeding generations, and yet, such precepts hardly constitute "values" in the way in which individuals normally think about them. In normal usage, values, particularly those that Joseph Raz (2003, 34) refers to as enabling or facilitating values such as freedom or equality, are linked to what we refer to as our ideals. And this helps us glimpse something that has almost become lost by psychoanalysis: the role of the ego ideal as opposed to the superego or conscience in the formation of the person. Although in his early writings, Freud uses both concepts, in his later writings, the ego ideal becomes effectively subsumed by the superego.

In one of the few papers to deal explicitly with the ego ideal, Charles Hanly (1984, 253) draws attention to this important difference when he argues that "Freud missed an opportunity to make a useful differentiation in the genesis and functioning of narcissism in adults . . . the term 'ego ideal' . . . marks a relative distinction within the superego between its prohibitive and its goal-setting functions." In other words, whereas the superego commands, prescribes, and prohibits, threatening (internal) punishment in order to achieve obedience (the strictures of conscience), the ego ideal functions in a very different way. As Hanly notes, there is a crucial difference between the avoidance of dishonesty because one is anxious about the guilt one would feel if one transgressed the injunction, and the pursuit of honesty because one sees it as a positive virtue, that this is the kind of person one would like to be. The ego ideal therefore represents the ethical self as something to be achieved, and the inability to achieve leads to disappointment, shame, and loss, but not necessarily to guilt.

Our current research project once more suggests the powerful role of identificatory processes in the formation of the ego ideal and the establishment of values. However, as Cass's experience tends to indicate, it may be that the identifications that foster the development of our ideals are not just concentrated in the early experiences of family life, but are also spread

across the life course, perhaps particularly in the teenage and young-adult period.

The following quote presents Don, a community worker in our sample, talking about some formative identifications in his own life. Don comes from a white, working-class background. In our interviews with him, he painted his father in rather gray colors, whereas his mother, a seamstress, was much more vivid. Referring to his own values he said,

> I think I had a sort of socialist idea of things when, erm, it's not from my dad really, he was sort of middle-of-the-road, it was from my mum was more, but my uncles really who lived up in Salford, and they were kind of heroes to me really (Don interview 2004).

One of his uncles he described thus:

> He was like a professional footballer in the '40s, he talked about the minimum wage and all those kinds of things and he was sort of into chess and he liked the Russian way of life and all this kind, quite a strict religious man . . . but you know really kind of disciplined in his life. I liked that side of things . . .
>
> . . . and I can remember once that it was when Mountbatten got blown up . . . and I was talking to him and saying wasn't it bad and he said "no, not at all," he said "it's a good thing." And I was really shocked that, you know, the fact that he was applauding a violent act and a violent act against the Royal Family and we kind of got into a discussion about that, and it's kind of, I suppose, that was a kind of catalyst then, before that I hadn't really had any views either way. (Don interview 2004)

Later in the interview, Don himself makes connections between his earlier life and his present beliefs about the voluntary and community sector.

> I like, you know, I like people to do a good day's work really, so I kind of got a bit of discipline, in that sense, 'cos of Stalinist uncles . . . I'm not kind of laid back, "oh yeh, just do what you want." (Don interview 2004)

His uncles embodied a mixture of rebelliousness, egalitarianism, and discipline that appealed to Don. He brings these values to the way in which he manages other community workers, and in particular, to the importance he attaches to evaluation, a methodology that has become particularly associated with the modernization of the UK public services under Tony Blair's New Labour government, which Don otherwise has little time for.

> I think there's a lot of poor practice around . . . there's a lot of people who are out for themselves within the, what I call "Poverty Industry" . . . you know we should try and challenge some of that, that might seem as a kind of bureaucratic approach to things . . . I think that's a good way to challenge some of the bad practice that goes on. So I've kind of got that as a sort of discipline as well as my worldview. (Don interview 2004)

It is clear from this example how important Don's uncles were as a catalyst for the development of his own ideals in his teenage years.

But there is a difference between identification and internalization. Don admits himself that for a while, he expressed his values in a quite arrogant and "bolshie" way. There was a crude and indigested quality to them, a lack of reflexivity about them. It was as if his identification with his uncles was immediate and concrete, and he became a version (parody) of them. Psychoanalysis is not always clear about the difference between identification and internalization. In a classic paper, Hans Loewald (1973, 15) argues that identification is a "way-station" to internalization. When we identify with something, we erase the difference between subject and object. In contrast, in internalization, the difference is rediscovered and the relationship between subject and object is transformed, or "the individual is enriched by the relationship he has had with the beloved object, not burdened by identification and fantasy relations with the object" (Loewald 1973, 15).

Where values are built upon unworked-through identifications, people tend to over identify with them. Such values are brittle rather than strong, and strident rather than firm. They need a moral landscape that is unambiguous, where there is no need for orientation because everything is clear. In contrast, values that are built upon internalization are fallible but crucial devices for finding one's way around moral space. They provide orientation at the shifting and uncertain intersections of class, race, gender, culture, institution, and so on. But this is still only orientation, only a sense of "this is the way one should go" as one stumbles around in the dark.

Ideals without Idealization

The question is, when does an ideal become idealized? Hanly (1984) examines this in terms of the subtle distinction between the ego ideal and the ideal ego, an idealizing mirror that has a consolatory function for the self. In the realm of human values, therefore, the greatest danger is a moral narcissism in which virtue, and specifically the virtue one believes that one embodies and upholds, becomes fetishized. The resulting moralism expresses a superior attitude in which all virtue has been gathered into

one's own side. There are traces here of the splitting characteristic of Klein's paranoid-schizoid position.

Eunice reflects on this moralism as follows when she expresses her reservations about the time when, in her university years, she was a punk involved in direct action and living in a squat in London:

> Interviewer: What kind of reservations?
>
> Eunice: Just about how very dogmatic people were and how we saw the world in extremely black and white terms, and how harshly judgmental I was and how cliquey and kind of exclusive it could be, you know, in the name of all those nice values about social justice and equality and things like that, you actually set up new categories in which to judge and exclude people . . . it became another sort of fixed identity and a way of identifying the self against others all the time. And trying to think that in some way you were superior to other people even though your political work is supposedly all about equality and, you know, freedom and things. (Eunice interview 2004)

Interestingly enough, later in the interview, Eunice adds, "you know, all those kind of values are still there, I just think I hold them differently" (Eunice interview 2004).

Returning to the dilemma she faced over the disciplining of her colleague, one can say with confidence that it was because Eunice had strong values but "held them differently" that she faced a dilemma at all. For, unless one resorts to moral narcissism (a position from which one can do no wrong), to have strong values these days means to feel the pull of the different claims corresponding to one's different identities. Eunice did what she thought was right, and in making this judgment about rights and wrongs, she acted ethically. According to Sarah Banks and Robin Williams (2005, 1012), in resolving an ethical dilemma, "a choice is made, usually after much thought and agonizing, and one alternative is judged to be less bad/unwelcome than the other. But because the choice made still involves violating some moral principle or requirement, moral agents may nevertheless feel remorse or regret at the decision made or the action taken." Following Bernard Williams, Banks refers to this as the "remainder."

Eunice clearly experienced "the remainder." Speaking of her colleague, she said, "he resigned in the end . . . but it was not a good ending, you know, it was quite a bad ending and I did try and get him to come in to have a sort of . . . and talk over, but he didn't come, so it's kind, that's kind of been left hanging" (Eunice interview 2004). And later she added, "and at the end of it I just, I would've liked to have been able to talk to him and hope to get him to see that he was misunderstanding parts of the process and that, that it was actually fair, and as per the policy but he didn't turn up to us, the

meeting that we arranged" (Eunice interview 2004). There is a clear sense of regret in these statements, a sense of things finishing in an unsatisfactory way, with hurt feelings on both sides and then an unsuccessful attempt to make it all better. This statement is immediately followed by another one that expresses the realization that things sometimes cannot be made right: "you can't always persuade them to change their minds, so sometimes you just have to accept there will be people out there who will have whatever reason to gripe about what we do or feel slighted or, and you have to let them get on with it" (Eunice interview 2004).

The discomfort Eunice feels about the way things have been left "hanging" is in addition to the discomfort she felt as she was going through the process. The former is the "remainder" and the components of it are complex. First, there is a reparative desire to make things better, to repair the situation. Linked to this, one senses that there is also anxiety about the possibility of a retaliatory attack if things are not resolved (that is, her anxiety that the black community would side with him against her). Third, there is, as she put it, her "tendency to be a bit of a control freak and wanna make sure everything is completely right all the time," yet at the same time she values "that ability to let go and accept things as they are rather than trying to fix everything" (Eunice interview 2004). Here, Eunice expresses both the desire for omnipotent control and, through Zen (something that she practiced), the acceptance of its impossibility. Finally, and this is different from the desire for reparation, there is the need to be loved, to "change his mind and have him love us and think we were great" (Eunice interview 2004).

So what can we conclude from this example? First, that one can be caught in a dilemma and yet still be clear about what it is that one has to do. Second, "resolving" a dilemma rarely refers to a single decision, but more often to a course of action that may stretch out over months (or, presumably, years). Third, in pursuing this course of action, the ethical agent is persecuted by doubts (Klein's "depressive anxiety") that relate to potential weaknesses and faults in oneself and in the chosen course of action (the bad within the good), and also to the potential value in the course of action rejected (the good within the bad). Fourth, once the action is completed, there remains a complex remainder of feelings that are clearly influenced by the personality of the actor.

This example shows how ethical action is saturated with feeling, and yet despite these powerful affects, Eunice finds a course through the painful uncertainty of it all. Eunice acts in what Klein calls the "depressive position," a position in which conflicting internal feelings can be held without splitting them and projecting them onto others, and therefore a position from which the complexity of social relations can be fully grasped. The

world is not black and white; the illusion of the moral narcissist, of always "being in the right," is rejected. The tragic dimension of social relations is apprehended, but while this depressive attitude is characterized by doubt and regret, it should not be confused with depression. Eunice remains strong; she has a belief in herself and her capacity to make good decisions in spite of her doubts. In this sense, she embodies an ordinary hopefulness, a hopefulness that, in Samuel Beckett's famous phrase, enables her to "fail better."

Toward the end of his book *The Reinvention of Politics* Ulrich Beck provides a celebration of doubt as something befitting the ethics of a radically modern identity. As he puts it,

> when it is doubtful whether one is right or in the possession of the truth, when the questions lie in that area where correctness and falsity overlap, when self-doubts chew up the arrogance, then enemies are no longer enemies, nor are they brothers with whom one dances in festivals of solidarity; instead, they are fellow or opposing doubters. (1997, 169)

And yet, Beck seems unable to appreciate that doubt alone disarms individuals. Assailed by doubt, Eunice is nevertheless able to steer a course, and she is able to do this because her values provide her with the guidance she needs, and her sense of her own authority provides her with the confidence to risk finding her way. Humans live in an increasingly plural world, and yet also one in which both state and corporate power become ever more concentrated. In such a world, the capacity for ethical agency is vital. Yes, individuals must doubt, but they must also act.

Conclusion

In his reflections on the "postmodern self," Anthony Elliott (2001) traces the different ways in which social theorists have thought about the impact of late modernity (or what some call "postmodernity") upon the self. As we have seen, one group of conservative social critics, including Lasch, believes that contemporary trends destroy intimate social relations, particularly around the family, leaving the individual with no internalized moral compass. More radical critics, such as Jean Baudrillard (1994), also hypothesize the end of interiority as the firm distinctions of the past between appearance and essence, exterior and interior, image and reality, collapse in a world of virtuality, simulation, cloning, and other biological

and digital replications. For both sets of critics, the resulting subject is a subject without depth. But whereas for Lasch, the shallowness that results is to be mourned, for many of the postmodernists, this is a liberation from past fixities, and the postmodern subject becomes a chameleon-like reinventor of the self.

We reject the views of both sets of critics. Our respondents, many of whom, like Eunice, were previously active in the new social movements (and to this extent, at the cutting edge of the new kinds of cultural developments that are the subject of this volume), impressed us with the depth of their ethical reasoning and feeling. In this chapter, we have reflected on our experience of the personal resources that enabled these individuals to work on the oscillating boundary between a constantly changing state formation and a radically plural civil society.

This leads us to suggest that if the self is to rise to the challenges posed by late modernity, there are at least three different kinds of internal resources they need to be able to draw upon. First, they will need the psychological capacity (the capacity to stay in the depressive position) to face the increasing moral complexity of everyday living. Second, they will need a sense of their own authority, without which the complexity of different views and claims that surround them will reduce them to a state of agonized indecision. Third, they will need a firm set of values, held in a non-idealized way, that can provide orientation in dilemmatic space. Post-Freudian psychoanalysis, with its emphasis upon the formative role of the strength of the mother and, more recently, of siblings and peers (J. Mitchell 2000), provides a theorization of psychological capacities, values, and internalized authority that can avoid those patriarchal assumptions embedded in lamentations about the decline of the family and traditional forms of masculinity.

While there can be little doubt that some contemporary forms of selfhood are marked by shallowness, the kind of self apprehended in psychoanalytic consulting rooms since the Second World War also reveals the emergence of new kinds of internal strengths and capacities. We have examined these in terms of Klein's concept of the depressive position. Anthony Elliott (2001, 147) asks, "Against the backdrop of globalization and the new information technologies, are we collectively seeing the emergence of new kinds of moral question that the self has not previously had to face?" We would answer, emphatically, yes. What we have tried to do in this chapter is describe some of the resources that the late-modern self brings when facing such questions.

Note

1. "Negotiating Ethical Dilemmas in Contested Communities," a project funded by the Economic and Social Research Council (ref. RES-000-23-0127). The research consisted of six interviews with each of thirty "regeneration workers" in two UK cities. What has become known as a "psychosocial approach" informs our methodology and analysis.

Chapter 7

Sutured Selves, Queer Connections: Personal Lives at the Cutting Edge of Individualization

Sasha Roseneil

Introduction

Debates about individualization and the transformation of intimacy have influenced profoundly the agenda of sociological research on personal life over the past decade. The broad sweep theorizing of Ulrich Beck (1992), Beck and Elisabeth Beck-Gernsheim (1995, 2002), and Anthony Giddens (1992) suggests that recent years have seen widespread changes in the organization of personal life, as traditional ties weaken and relationships become increasingly a matter of individual choice and negotiation. These arguments have given rise to a plethora of theoretical and polemical critiques, elaborations, and empirical investigations.

Many of those who have engaged with individualization theory from family sociology, feminist, and class-analysis perspectives reject its basic propositions; they are highly skeptical about the extent to which individualization has been accomplished, intimacy transformed, and a new regime of reflexive, choosing selfhood instituted (Duncan and Edwards 1999; Langford 1999; Jamieson 1998; Ribbens McCarthy and Edwards 2002; Ribbens McCarthy, Edwards, and Gillies 2003; Skeggs 2003; Silva and Smart 1999; Smart 2000; Smart and Neale 1999). The critics have made important interventions that have directed attention back to some of the empirical realities of personal life from which the theorists of individualization might rightly be said to have become divorced. They point, for example, to

ongoing gender inequalities in practices of care and love, and to the continuities of mutual interdependence within families, even as they break up and reform. However, it is not my intention here straightforwardly to endorse these rejections of the individualization thesis. Rather, this chapter explores what happens to understandings of social change in the realm of personal life when an empirical investigation is carried out that begins from rather different ontological and epistemological perspectives from those that have underpinned these debates thus far.

The chapter offers some reflections on a research project that sought to inquire into the potential of psychoanalytical psycho-social studies and queer theory to contribute to knowledge about contemporary personal life. These two bodies of theory have rarely been brought into dialogue with sociology. Yet both are centrally concerned with intimacy and sexuality, affect and emotion—the fundamental stuff of personal life—and give rise to critiques and refinements of individualization theory that are substantially different from those emanating from family and feminist sociology. The research I discuss here was designed to allow space for the exploration of the psychic and affective dimensions, and the unconventional, counter-heteronormative practices of personal life that both the individualization theorists and their critics have largely ignored.

Working from a psychoanalytic ontology, and with a psycho-social methodology, the research consisted of a qualitative longitudinal study of those who might be considered the "most individualized"—those who are living outside of cohabiting conjugal couple relationships. Through the notions of "sutured selves" and "queer connections," which capture key findings of the project, this chapter aims to return to sociology new perspectives on personal life under conditions of individualization. The chapter's psycho-social-analysis leads to some uncomfortable findings that point to the tensions between optimistic and pessimistic readings of social change in personal life, and that suggest a significant reworking of theories of individualization and the transformation of intimacy. But first, I shall give a brief overview of the project, its theoretical underpinnings, scope, and methodology.

The Research Project

The theoretical framework of the project was constructed around three bodies of literature: sociological theories of individualization, psychoanalytically informed psycho-social theory, and queer theory.

Individualization

The project was part of a larger research program that set out to study intimacy and care in the context of social change.[1] The particular focus of the project was on experiences, practices, and values of personal life under conditions of social change that have been captured by the notion of individualization. According to Beck (Beck 1992; Beck and Beck-Gernsheim 1995, 2002; Beck, Bonss, and Lau 2003; Beck, Giddens and Lash 1994), individualization is to be understood as a complex process of social transformation that increasingly produces people as individuals in relation to the welfare state and the market—both as subjects of entitlement and of obligation—and that is fundamentally related to the transformation of gender relations, particularly women's increased economic independence and social autonomy, and is exemplified by the decline of the male breadwinner/female homemaker model of gender relations since the 1960s.

Because I was interested in exploring the cutting edge of social change—those who might be considered to be the most individualized—I decided to study people who are furthest from the male breadwinner/female homemaker model, those who are living outside any form of cohabiting conjugal couple relationship. With the decline in the social significance of marriage and the shift toward nonmarital cohabitation, people who do not live with a partner offer an interesting "limit" case for the analysis of intimacy, care, and individualization because of the widespread assumptions that exist about the forms of economic, social, and psychic dependence and interdependence, as well as the caring obligations, that are signified by co-residence, and that are upheld by law and policy. Moreover, people who do not live with a partner are an increasingly large section of the population (Roseneil 2006a): in 1979, 19 percent of people[2] in the UK did not live with a partner, this number rising to 29 percent by 2006 (Social Trends, 2007, 15). Also, in 1971, 29 percent of households did not contain a heterosexual couple, this figure rising to 41 percent of households by 2006 (Office for National Statistics 2007, 14).

Whereas there is now a considerable body of research exploring the making, breaking, and remaking of families, which offers a commentary on sociological theorizations of individualization, there is a real paucity of research on those who are living outside conventional couple relationships—as more and more people are doing, for longer periods of their lives. The project was, therefore, designed as an exploratory study to examine the contours of the lives of this under-researched group, as well as an empirical investigation of the individualization thesis.

Psychoanalytically Informed Psycho-social Theory

It is not surprising, given the history of sociology's concern to establish its disciplinary distinction from psychology, that sociological work on intimacy and individualization is characterized by what Arlie Hochschild (2003, 7) calls "actors without psyches." With a few notable exceptions,[3] sociologists have tended to bracket off, when not explicitly refusing, the realm of the psychic. This is particularly striking in the study of intimacy, personal relationships, and family, where powerful emotions, and what Nancy Chodorow (1999) refers to as "personal meaning," are such important dimensions of experience. The dominant social constructionist ontology within sociological research on intimacy, as within the discipline as a whole, holds that both emotions and meanings are socially constructed, and, as Ian Craib, one of a small band of psychoanalytically orientated sociologists, has noted, focuses on emotional life as it is accessible via cognition (1995). It implicitly assumes the existence of a rational, unitary intimate subject, and pays little heed to the subject's internal conflicts and inner world, and how these impact upon close relationships.

In contrast, the project's psychoanalytically informed *psycho-social* ontological point of departure posited the importance of attention to both the psychic and the social dimensions of intimate life, holding them to be mutually constituted and fundamentally intertwined. It worked with an understanding of personal life as socially patterned and constructed, and therefore subject to historical and cross-cultural variation, as is axiomatic to sociological approaches, and at the same time as experienced by individuals as "internal" and particular to themselves and their own specific relationships, as having a life of its own, often beyond the control of reason (Craib 1995). In the psychoanalytic tradition, the project sought to pay attention to psychic conflict and to the contradictions, ambivalences, and emotional dimensions of personal life. I garnered inspiration from a small but growing body of psychoanalytically oriented social-scientific work that destabilizes the boundaries between sociology and psychology, and that sees the operation of the psyche as socio-historically contextualized.[4] My approach rested on an ontological perspective that conceptualizes intimate subjects as non-unitary, emotional, defended subjects, whose accounts, meanings, and selves are not transparent, and that works with a model of the psyche as fundamentally relational (S. A. Mitchell 2000; Mitchell and Aron 1999).

Queer Theory

The project's other theoretical foil was provided by queer theory.[5] One of the most important claims to be taken from this body of work, as it moves

from its origins in the humanities to inform research in sociology, is that the analysis of heteronormativity should occupy a central place in understandings of modern western social organization (Sedgwick 1991; Stein and Plummer 1996; Warner 2000). Queer theory has developed a powerful critique of both the heteronormative assumptions of mainstream theory and culture, and of the "minoritizing epistemology" (Sedgwick 1991) of much earlier scholarship on homosexuality. Through this, it has offered a lens for the analysis of the myriad ways in which non-heterosexually normative lives and practices have been marginalized, and how the distinctions between, and inequalities of value accorded to, the categories of "homosexual" and "heterosexual" have been constituted and upheld (Roseneil 2002). The hegemony of the "epistemology of the closet" (Sedgwick 1991) has, in the social sciences, tended to sideline attention to the differential experience of those whose lives and identities are understood as "homosexual" and "heterosexual." As I have argued elsewhere (Roseneil 2005), the sociology of family and intimate life has been particularly prone to render marginal the lives of those whose everyday practices, identities, and ways of thinking challenge heteronormative assumptions.

In this context, the project was designed to enable an exploration of the topic of intimacy and care from non-heteronormative standpoints. In seeking to move beyond sociology's still-dominant focus on heterosexual familial relations, and in order to foreground those who, whether self-consciously or not, transgress heteronormative expectations and regulations, the research set out to include among its subjects those who identify as lesbian, gay, and bisexual, as well as heterosexuals who are not leading conventional heterosexual lives. Taking a queer approach meant both being open to seeing differences between homosexual and heterosexual lives, and according analytical importance to these, but at the same time not treating the categories of "homosexual" and "heterosexual," and the individuals who carry these identities, as essentially different, as fixed and firmly constituted. It also meant taking seriously the literature on lesbian and gay intimacies, alongside the sociology of family and kinship, in the research design. Specifically, this gave rise to a focus on exploring the salience of friendship as a social relationship, which research suggests is of foundational and particular importance in the lives of lesbians and gay men (Altman 1982; Nardi 1992, 1999; Preston 1996; Weeks 1995; Weeks, Heaphy, and Donovan 2001; Weinstock and Rothblum 1996; Weston 1991), and which has been relatively neglected within sociology. The project, therefore, aimed to examine the extent to which practices that have been seen as characteristic of lesbian and gay communities, such as the prioritization of friendship, the movement between the categories of "friend" and "lover,"

and the importance of ex-lovers in an individual's personal community (Roseneil 2000a; Weeks, Heaphy and Donovan 2001; Weinstock and Rothblum 2004) might be becoming more common among heterosexuals who are living outside conventional heterorelations.

Methodology

So, in seeking to test the individualization thesis, the project was designed to investigate the practices and ethics of intimacy, care, and support among those who are not living with a partner. In the first phase of the research, in-depth narrative interviews, lasting between one and a half and two and a half hours, were carried out with fifty-one[6] people aged between twenty-five and sixty years old. This was followed by second interviews, also in-depth and narrative in orientation, with twenty-four of the sample approximately eighteen months to two years later, which introduced a longitudinal dimension into the research, and extended the investigation of practices of care to explicitly research the care of the self.[7] The interviewees were selected to include (as far as was possible within the three localities selected)[8] a spread of ages and occupations, and included men and women, people with and without children, white and African Caribbean people, heterosexuals, lesbians and gay men, single people and those in non-cohabiting sexual/love relationships, and those living alone and in shared housing.

The interviews were designed to give the research subjects the opportunity to talk about who and what was important to them in their personal lives, and to enable, as much as possible, their own ways of valuing their relationships to emerge. Each interview began with a "relationship mapping" exercise, in which participants were asked to write the names of everyone whom they felt was significant to them within a series of concentric circles, indicating the nature of the relationship by the use of different colored pens, and the degree of closeness felt by their proximity to the center of the circle. This map was then used as a resource during the interview, to ensure that the interviewee's most significant relationships were discussed. The interview method was influenced by Wendy Hollway and Tony Jefferson's (2000) work on the free association narrative interview, which aims to go beyond the explicit discourses within which people speak about their lives. Following their suggestion, we used a relatively small number of open-ended questions (along the lines of, "can you tell me about . . . ?"), formulated around our main points of interest, in order to give the interviewees time and space to construct their own stories within which meaning and values gradually unfold.

The following three main modes of analysis were employed with the data thus gathered: (i) a simple quantitative analysis of "who matters"

according to the relationship maps; (ii) a conventionally sociological cross-sectional thematic analysis, using a qualitative data analysis package (NVivo), which read across the data set for dominant themes and patterns; and (iii) an in-depth psycho-social-analysis of individual cases. While not claiming to offer a *psychoanalysis* of individual research subjects, the psycho-social-analysis I carried out drew on principles from clinical psychoanalysis in its concern to explore interviewees' "psychic reality," the non-rational, unarticulated, unconscious dimensions of the experiences they narrated, as well as the emotions and affects that they were able to formulate expressly in discourse. And, in contrast to the cross-sectional thematic analysis that offered a broad overview and analysis of the data, the psycho-social-analysis paid close attention to the form of the data, to each interview as a whole, and to the research subjects as individuals with their own particular psycho-biographies.[9]

Sutured Selves

Social theorists Beck (1992), Beck and Beck-Gernsheim (1995, 2002), Giddens (1992, 1991), and Axel Honneth (2004) suggest, with varying degrees of explicitness, that the intensification of processes of individualization and the transformation of intimacy of recent decades involve the emergence of a new regime of self, characterized by increased capacities for self-reflexivity.[10] This new regime, the product of a set of interrelated material, social, and cultural changes, is characterized, it is argued, by an increased capacity for autonomy, as the possibilities for individual self-discovery and self-reflection, and the time, space, and resources for experimentation with the self have expanded, and the ties of traditional collective affiliation have weakened. In an insecure, post-traditional context, this regime encourages, urges, and at times, compels individuals to become autotelic, "for the sake of their own future, to place their very selves at the centre of their own life-planning and practice" (Honneth 2004, 469). It has at its core a new ideal of personality that valorizes creativity, self-expression, and self-reflexivity, and sees life "as an affair of experimental self-realization" (Honneth 2004, 470). And at the level of the social, an "own life culture," or "self culture," emerges in which self-oriented individuals "bind or bond" "to, with and against one another" (Beck and Beck-Gernsheim 2002, 42).

There are two main strands of criticism of these ideas, one primarily addressing the argument about transformations in intimacy, and related questions of selfhood and reflexivity, and the other more specifically concerned with individualization and its purported regime of self. Located within a tradition of sociological work on gender, family, and care, and on

the negotiated obligations between family members (Finch 1989; Finch and Groves 1983; Finch and Mason 1993), one strand focuses on practices of care and interdependency, and their gender politics, in which, it is argued, there is more continuity than is recognized by the individualization theorists (Duncan and Edwards 1999; Langford 1999; Jamieson 1998; Ribbens McCarthy and Edwards 2002; Ribbens McCarthy, Edwards, and Gillies 2003; Silva and Smart 1999; Skeggs 2003; Smart 2000; Smart and Neale 1999).

For instance, Lynn Jamieson (1998) set the tone for much subsequent criticism by adducing considerable empirical evidence of the persistent nature of gender inequalities within heterosexual relationships and families, and the continuing power of dominant ideals of family, which she suggests undermine claims about radical change in the sphere of intimacy. The work of Jane Ribbens McCarthy, Ros Edwards, and Val Gillies (2003) is also highly critical of the emphasis on individual happiness, "creative and plural lifestyle possibilities," and the contingent and chosen relationships of Beck and Giddens. They draw attention to the lack of availability of such practices to those people, particularly (heterosexual) women (with children), who are embedded in day-to-day practices of familial care for others. The critics also question the salience of the drive for autonomy and creativity, emphasizing instead embeddedness within relationships. Wendy Bottero and Sarah Irwin's analysis of recent social change argues that "we are witnessing a repositioning of women and men in social space: they are still interdependent within social reproduction not individualized" (2003, 479). Jennifer Mason's discussion of narratives of residence and moving house leads her to reject individualization theory in favor of a perspective that sees "people, selves and values" as "relational, connected and embedded" in webs of relationships (2004, 166). Ute Gerhard points to the economic determinism of Beck's analysis of individualization, in which women's individualization is understood as fundamentally market driven, and as being about adaptation to the biography of the male worker. Thus, she argues, it fails to grasp "the concepts, values and social practices of women—and working mothers in particular" (2004, 6), which are oriented both toward the market and the family.

From a class analysis perspective, both Alan Warde's (2000) and Mike Savage's (2000b) engagements with individualization theory acknowledge the new cultural emphasis on the ideal of individual autonomy and projects of self, but point to the ways in which the less privileged are excluded from such practices. Beverley Skeggs's contribution to the debate is to develop a critique of the politics of individualization theory. She links the "recent emphasis on self-agency" (2003, 76) of Beck and Giddens with the "consumer market rhetoric," which developed under Thatcherism (2003,

55–57), and accuses them of normatively promoting individualism and individuality "as not only compulsory, but inevitable and universal" (2003, 61). Citing the work of Marilyn Strathern (1992), Skeggs argues that choosing is a middle-class way of operating in the world, and that the reflexive self is "a very specific class formation," as "the resources and techniques necessary to self-formation and self-telling are not equally available" (2003, 134). She suggests that individualization theorists are guilty of extrapolating from their own middle-class experience as "mobile, reflexive individuals" (2003, 53) and of ignoring ongoing class inequalities. In a similar vein, Valerie Hey (2005) foregrounds gender and class in her critique of masculinist assumptions of individualization theory, and suggests that working-class women do not have the same sense of entitlement to a self as the assumed subject of individualization theory.

The critics' impatience with the universalizing tendencies of the theorists of the transformation of intimacy and of individualization is well-founded. Valerie Hey is undoubtedly right to argue that "the coordinates of living in the frames of individualization are materially different for men and women, and substantially inflected through the factors of place, class, sexuality, ethnicity and age" (2005, 858). Research is needed to explore all these factors, and the theorists do not offer much by way of substantive empirical evidence for their claims.

But, I would suggest, allowing the work of the critics to be seen as fatally undermining the individualization and transformation of intimacy theses would be a mistake. To extrapolate from Jamieson's and Ribbens McCarthy, Edwards, and Gillies's work to dismiss these theses would implicitly privilege the experiences of those enmeshed in hetero-relational practices of care. The danger, from a queer-theory perspective, is that the continuities within a particular heteronormative version of the social become the basis for rejecting a theory of social change that actually demands research that looks beyond "business as usual" in heterosexual relationships and families, given the radical shifts in living arrangements and personal relationships to which the notion of individualization points. And, from a psycho-social perspective, the problem with the arguments of Warde, Savage, Skeggs, and Hey is that they might be read as implying that individuality, interiority, and the realm of the psychic are the sole preserve of the middle classes, that only the privileged have the time and inclination to engage in practices of self-discovery and self-reflection or to address psychic needs.

Working from a psychoanalytic ontology and employing a psycho-social methodology, my research allowed space for the exploration of the psychic dimensions of contemporary personal life. The open-ended,

narrative nature of the interview questions, and the focus on experiences of receiving as well as giving care, elicited a large number of stories from interviewees across all three localities, and from a range of socio-economic backgrounds, in which internal psychic conflict was a prominent theme, and in which emotional distress, melancholy, depression, psychological breakdown, and mental illness were recounted.

Many of these experiences appeared—either consciously to the interviewee her- or himself, or by virtue of a psycho-social, free association analysis of the interview as a whole—to be connected to the breakdown of an intimate relationship, often in the context of one or more earlier fractured relationships, and/or to other processes of social change that can be seen as characteristic of late modernity, such as geographical mobility, the experience of redundancy and job loss, or intense stress and workplace conflict in the contemporary, "flexible," neoliberal, performance-orientated labor market.[11] As such, they were stories of intense "individualization" in which interviewees talked about experiencing life as individuals who were alone and expected to be self-responsible. The self was experienced as in conflict, fractured, and dislocated, sometimes in relation to its past, sometimes from a sense of futurity. These were stories in which the self was problematized; its integrity and functioning ceased to be able to be taken for granted and came to be the object of self-reflection. But these experiences of self were always within relational contexts. They were stories in which being alone with the self was painful, sometimes intolerable, and in which the disembedded, changing, and often highly mobile social world—of family, friends, and work—failed to offer containment, leaving the self exposed and insecure. They were stories that spoke of the fundamental intertwining of the psychic and the social.

For many of the interviewees, it was the experience of such a fracturing of self, to a greater or lesser degree, that then meant that, in Honneth's words, "for the sake of their own future," they began "to place their very selves at the centre of their own life-planning and practice" (2004, 469); they developed practices of self-care and of relationships that, by accident or design, served to *suture* the self. They carved out time and space for a wide range of self-directed activities that would make them feel better—walking in the hills, running, dancing, going to the gym, listening to music, singing, playing an instrument, socializing with friends, spending time with a dog or cat, practicing meditation, pottering around the house, taking baths, engaging in counseling or psychotherapy, taking an evening class, reading, sewing, or just being alone. Many of these activities seemed to tackle psychic problems somatically; by engaging the body in movement, mental states that could not be willed away were shifted.

Other practices were about reworking connections with others—reaching out, engaging in sociability, or withdrawing from hyper-connectivity or negative relationships.

This attention to self was not the luxury of privilege—whatever the socio-economic position and background of the interviewee—and it was not an exercise in self-indulgence; rather, it was psychic well-being, or its lack, and, sometimes, psychic survival, that compelled it. For some, their local social milieu—particularly those living in the alternative community of Hebden Bridge, and some of those in Leeds—offered cultural support and encouragement for practices of self-care: an environment in which self-actualization is considered an important part of life. But others were not so supported, and struggled against a need for support, with a strong sense of personal failure and weakness.

So, it is my contention, on the basis of this research, that neither the individualization theorists nor their critics grasp the importance of the reparative practices of the sutured self. These practices are not straightforwardly "chosen," as tends to be suggested by the theorization of individualization in terms of the expansion of choice and the decline in the hold of tradition.[12] While I would broadly agree with such an analysis of the direction of social change, such an approach is insufficient for the understanding of the contemporary condition of personal life because it fails to heed the reality—"the hold"—of psychic processes.[13]

The practices of self that came to light in the research can be seen as the product of grappling with distress, disappointment, psychic pain, and loss. While they take place within the context of an increased cultural orientation toward autonomy and self-actualization, they are not solely to be understood as being about the promotion and engagement of these "virtues." And although there was considerable evidence of self-reflexivity among the interviewees in relation to their personal lives, there were limits to this self-reflexivity. Psychic conflict and distress could not straightforwardly be banished through the reflexive address of a rational internal conversation. Mental states were frequently and effectively shifted by somatic or relational practices when attempts at cognitive re-orientation failed.

If the critics are identifying in the individualization theorists an insufficient attention to relationality, I would concur on this count. Much of what I have just discussed as productive of an individualizing sense of self takes place in the context of problematic patterns of relationality, that is, when intimate relationships break down. But the critics themselves fail to recognize the intensely individualizing experience of psychic distress, its inherent loneliness, in which boundaries between self and other, questions of autonomy and connection, and the coherence of self become paramount.

More attention is needed to the suffering that this research suggests seems to be part and parcel of contemporary processes of individualization, as well as to the creative ways in which people attempt to deal with this.

Honneth (2004), the individualization theorist who accords real significance to the psychic, suggests that as the ideal of self-realization has increasingly become a compulsion, it promotes "forms of social suffering" that are "in a certain way without precedent in the history of capitalist societies"; these forms of social suffering "transpire in the realm of mental illness" (2004, 468). He cites the work of Ehrenberg (1998), who argues that there has been a rapid rise in the frequency of depression, as individuals become psychically overburdened by the demand that they must be themselves. Yet even Honneth, who recognizes the psychic consequences of social processes of individualization, does not dwell on the intersubjective, relational dynamics that, among my interviewees, seemed to produce much emotional distress.

I must confess to some inner conflict of my own in relation to the argument I have just made. In reporting psychic distress as a central finding of my research, am I throwing my lot in with the sociological triptych of patriarchal pessimists—Zygmunt Bauman (2001, 2003), Robert Putnam (2000), and Richard Sennett (1998)—who bemoan the demoralizing, anomic impact of individualization and the social transformations of the past three decades on intimacy, community, and personal character? When their work can so roundly be criticized for its implicit nostalgia for a lost era of secure male employment, with its gendered divisions of labor, and for a time of stable families and communities, am I not in danger of being read as singing the same tune? Or worse? Am I in danger of seeming to suggest that those who are living non-conventional lives, outside the heteronorm, are more miserable or madder than those who stay safely within the bounds of convention? I hope not.

The research certainly does not suggest that psychic stability and well-being are to be found in "normal" heterosexual relationships and families; I do not have comparative data on "normal" heterosexual relationships and families, and indeed, every one of my interviewees is in some way the product of a "normal" heterosexual family—either having exited from a "normal" heterosexual relationship and/or having grown up in such a family (there were no reported children of lesbian or gay parents in the sample).[14] It *should* be possible to offer an analysis of some of the negative psychosocial dimensions of individualization and transformations in intimate life without embracing a normative pessimism about social change. Moreover, there was much evidence among the interviewees of the development of relationship practices that served to suture the self.

Queer Connections

Many of the people interviewed were engaged in a set of interrelated relationship practices that can be understood as counter-heteronormative, in that they challenged the dominant heterosexual model of personal relationships that values and privileges the coresidential conjugal couple relationship above all others. These practices were the prioritizing of friendship, the decentering of sexual/love relationships, and the forming of non-conventional partnerships. I discuss these practices in more detail elsewhere (Roseneil 2008); for my purposes here, I shall only briefly outline their main characteristics.

Across the sample, men and women from all three localities, of a range of ages, lifestyles, occupations, and sexualities, placed a high value on their friends and their friendships. There was a strong discourse about the importance of, and need for, friendship in a changing and insecure world. Friends appeared more often than parents or siblings in the innermost circle of the relationship maps drawn by the interviewees, and there was little difference between those who were in couple relationships and those who were single in terms of the importance of friends. It was friends who provided most of the emotional care and support the interviewees received, particularly when sexual/love relationships ended, as well as much of the practical day-to-day assistance and support.

Most interviewees had a combination of long-established and more recent friendships in their "personal community" (Pahl and Spencer 2004), and had a range of more and less close friends. Many had an elective community, a cluster of friends, who lived locally, and some had been involved in actively constructing a neighborhood community of friends, either by moving to be near friends, or encouraging friends to move nearer to them. These local friendship networks socialized together and engaged in reciprocal child care and other forms of support. The physical space of the home, culturally associated since the rise of the companionate marriage model with the conjugal couple and the nuclear family, became a much less privatized place, open to the visits of friends, who would "hang out" and sometimes stay for extended periods, particularly during times of personal crisis. A number of interviewees considered ex-lovers/partners/spouses to be close friends, and there was a notable degree of movement between the categories of friend and lover.

In parallel with the importance accorded to friendship came a decentering of sexual/love relationships in the narratives told by the interviewees. There was a clear tendency to de-emphasize the couple relationship, both among those in relationships and those who were single. Although almost

all those who were in relationships placed their partner in the innermost circle on their relationship map, only one interviewee did this to the exclusion of all others. The other interviewees identified their friends, or a combination of friends, partner, children, and family as the most important people in their lives. This meant very few people constructed the sexual/love relationship as the exclusive space of intimacy in their lives, and indeed, for many it was not even the primary space of intimacy. This decentering of the sexual/love relationship was understood self-reflexively by many interviewees as consequent on the experience of divorce or the ending of a long-term cohabiting relationship; the pain and disruption this caused was seen as giving rise to a new orientation to relationships—the linked downplaying of sexual/love relationships and the increased valuing of friendships.

The heteronormative companionate conjugal couple model, which determines the sexual/love relationship to be coresidential (if no longer married), the primary (if not exclusive) space of intimacy, and to be moving in this direction if it has not yet been achieved, was, therefore, overwhelmingly not the practice of the people interviewed in this research.[15] Very few expressed a conscious yearning to be part of a conventional cohabiting couple or family. In not conforming to the dominant heteronormative relationship teleology, which posits that a relationship should be "going somewhere"—that somewhere being a shared residence and a long-term commitment—sexual/love relationships were described instead as being about the construction of mutual pleasure in the present. For many, although not all, they involved a significant degree of conscious, reflexive thought, and discussion and negotiation (Roseneil 2006a). Many of these relationships shared a rejection of the romance narrative, clearly separating sex from romance, with a small number of heterosexual relationships offering clear parallels to the "fuck buddies" of several of the gay men who were interviewed.

A sociohistoric lens on these counter-heteronormative relationship practices might understand them as made possible by discourses of permissive sexuality and the sexual liberalization of the past four decades (Seidman 1991, 1992), and by processes of gender change, sexual reordering, and individualization that have released (some) women and men from the heterorelational familial practices of modernity (Roseneil 2000b; Roseneil 2002). The sexual/love relationships of many of our interviewees might also be seen as examples of Giddens's (1992) notion of the contingent "pure relationship" and of "plastic sexuality." The relationships being constructed by the interviewees can also, I would suggest, be described as "queer connections," in that they challenge in a range of ways

the normativities of heterosexuality and heterorelationality, and in that they are being practiced not just by lesbians and gay men, but also by heterosexuals. Ways of life that have been seen as distinctively homosexual—the prioritizing of friendship, the integration of ex-lovers into friendship networks, the non-primacy of the conjugal couple—are being adopted by heterosexuals who are living particularly "individualized" lives. This can, therefore, be seen as contributing to the destabilization of the modern regime of sexuality, which instituted the binary categories of homosexuality and heterosexuality.

This suggests a significant refinement of theories of individualization. Processes of gender transformation—women's increased economic independence and the emergence of an expectation of women's economic status as individuals—the declining cultural hold of modern family forms, and the emergence of a new regime of the self in which individual self-realization is valorized, all contribute to the emergence of the counter-heteronormative practices, or the queer connections, I have described. In other words, the intensification of individualization serves to destabilize heteronormativity and the modern regime of sexuality. This is not to say that individualization makes people lesbian or gay, but it might be said that individualization promotes queerness, and that we are witnessing a process of queer individualization amongst a sector of the population.

It is possible to draw the first theme of this chapter (that of sutured selves) into dialogue with the second (queer connections) by returning to the consideration of the contribution of a psycho-social analysis. Alongside the largely positively inflected stories offered by the interviewees of the importance of friendship and of the new relationship forms in which they were engaged, the psychic conflicts, unease, and ambivalences that were expressed in the interviews must be registered. Close psycho-social readings of the interview texts suggest that many interviewees were experiencing considerable ambivalence about their intimate lives. Their queer connections were not straightforwardly "chosen," but were rather forged in the context of individual biographies that, as I have suggested, often featured considerable levels of emotional upheaval and distress, and fractured relationships. To a greater or lesser extent, many interviewees were seeking to protect their sutured selves, to maintain their psychic grounding in the swirling waters that tossed them between the rock of intimate connection, with its danger of further disappointment and loss, and the hard place of isolation, with its depressive depths of loneliness. This often meant seeking to ensure that sexual/love relationships did not take over emotional life, and expanding the sphere of intimacy to reduce its dependence on one potentially risky relationship.

Here again I am conscious of the danger of offering fodder for those who would see the counter-heteronormative practices I have described as the inferior, compensatory relationships of the lost and damaged. This is a risk I have to take. It seems, in this research project at least, that the cost of a psycho-social lens, of taking psychic life seriously, is relinquishing a straightforwardly celebratory, optimistic analysis of the queer transformations of the contemporary social world.

Concluding Comments

Every research project is a journey, from the posing of research questions and the construction of a theoretical framework at the start, to the publication of findings at the end. The substance of the journey I have made in carrying out this investigation into the personal lives of those who might be considered the most individualized is succinctly summed up in the use of the comma, which both separates and links the chapter's themes of sutured selves and queer connections. The use of the comma, as opposed to a slash, references my coming to terms with the leitmotiv of dualisms that has run through this project, a coming to terms that has been about learning to tolerate tensions and to stay with and explore antagonisms, rather than seeking to deny or defeat them. In psychoanalytic terms, it might be said that my struggle has been with splitting—the (defensive) division of the whole into opposites, in which one side is devalued and the other side idealized—and that my journey has been toward a more integrated understanding of my subject matter.[16] The tensions with which I have struggled include the tensions between optimism and pessimism about the direction of social change in personal life, between reflexivity and creative practices of self and the recalcitrant intrusion of psychic processes that exceed conscious control, and between individualization and relationality.

While I have proposed, in the notion of queer individualization, a reworking of Ulrich Beck's theory of individualization, I would concur with his characterization of the contemporary social condition as "the age of"—and a world of—"simultaneity, multiplicity, uncertainty . . . synthesis, ambivalence" (1997, 1). Personal life in the contemporary world, for those living at the cutting edge of individualization, involves both despair and hope, the pain of personal loss *and* the reparation offered by new, nonconventional connections, rupture *and* suture.

Acknowledgements: I would like to thank Shelley Budgeon and Jacqui Gabb, who were researchers on the Friendship and Non-Conventional Partnership Project, and the following, who read and commented on

earlier versions of this paper: Turid Markussen, Judith Stacey, Nina Wakeford, and Anna Yeatman.

Notes

1. This program was the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) Research Group for the Study of Care, Values and the Future of Welfare, which ran from 1999–2005, and was based at the University of Leeds (http://www.leeds.ac.uk/cava).
2. These figures refer to all persons in the population, not just adults.
3. Notable psychoanalytically oriented sociologists include members of the Frankfurt School (Adorno, Horkheimer, Marcuse), Nancy Chodorow (1999); Ian Craib (1994); and Anthony Elliott (1992, 2001).
4. For instance, Craib (1994); Hollway and Jefferson (2000); Chodorow (1999); Froggett (2002); Hoggett (2000); Rustin (1991); and Hollway (2004).
5. Texts that have come to assume foundational status within queer theory include Butler (1990); De Lauretis (1991); Fuss (1991); Sedgwick (1991); and Warner (2000).
6. In earlier publications, a sample of fifty-three was reported, but further analysis of the data has led to the exclusion of two interviews on the grounds that the date of birth and place of residence had been misrecorded, and were actually outside the sample criteria.
7. The majority of the first-round interviews were conducted by Shelley Budgeon, with a small number conducted by the author. All the second-round interviews were conducted by the author.
8. Following Simon Duncan and Darren Smith's (2002) mapping of the geography of family formations on the basis of the 1991 census, the project drew its interviewees from three localities characterized by considerable variation in terms of household and family form, and in terms of gender and family cultures. The localities—all in Yorkshire, in northern England—were inner-city Leeds, a multiethnic urban area characterized by a diversity of gender and family practices, a higher than average proportion of women in the labor force, and a large number of single person and noncouple households; Barnsley, a de-industrialized, former coal-mining town, which is more conventional in terms of gender and family relations and traditional in terms of household form; and Hebden Bridge, a small town in which alternative middle-class, "down-shifted"(lower-stress, lower-income) lifestyles and sexual non-conformity are common, and where there is a significant lesbian population.
9. For a detailed exemplification of the research's psycho-social-analysis, see Roseneil (2006b).
10. There are echoes here of Foucault's (1988b) discussion of the intensification of relationships to the self and Rose's (1990) analysis of practices of "governing the soul," albeit that Beck, Beck-Gernsheim, Giddens, and Honneth place greater

emphasis on agency, and less on processes of subjectification, than Foucault and Rose.

11. See Roseneil (2006b).
12. It should be noted that Ulrich Beck, Wolfgang Bonss and Christof Lau (2003), in response to a critique developed by Bruno Latour (2003), have recently stated that the "reflexivity" of reflexive modernization does not mean that people lead a more conscious life. But this represents, it seems to me, a shift in his position, and a divergence from Giddens.
13. Anthony Elliot (2001) critiques Giddens and other sociologists of the self for their lack of concern with the internal world of self-experience.
14. Indeed, Hochschild (2003) describes the "depressive solution" embraced by heterosexual women in the conventional family of the 1950, the mental health "problem with no name" that was addressed by Betty Friedan at the start of second-wave feminism, and was studied by George Brown and Tirril Harris (1978).
15. On the rise of the "companionate marriage" model as a dominant ideal in the postwar era, see Janet Finch and Penny Mansfield (1991).
16. I follow Jessica Benjamin (1988) in preferring a view of splitting as defensive, rather than as a developmental phase, as suggested by Melanie Klein (1948).

Chapter 8

"Lives of Their Own" Free from Violence: Individualization and Child-Welfare Interventions

Harry Ferguson

Introduction

The manner in which relationships within the family are becoming increasingly individualized is regarded by leading social theorists as a defining feature of late-modern societies (Beck 1992; Beck and Beck-Gernsheim 2002; Giddens 1991, 1994a). Women, men, and children, it is argued, are no longer bound to traditional definitions of roles and duties based on hierarchies of age, gender, and class, but rather are increasingly seeking autonomy and ways of having "lives of their own" within the family group. The extent to which families are becoming more democratic and lifestyles and personhood more chosen is contested (Jamieson 1998). But a striking feature of individualization theory and debates is the rather narrow perspective that is taken, as the focus is restricted to issues such as men and women's changing roles, balancing careers and relationship responsibilities, new kinds of decision making and identity politics about sexuality, having children, who does the housework, and so on. Deeper understandings of the complex moral, emotional, and practical dynamics of intrafamilial relationships have been produced through important work on divorce and the meanings and consequences of family "breakdown" for all family members (Smart and Neale 1999), and on the provision and ethics of care within families (Williams 2004). But little attention has been given to the relationship between individualization and state intervention into

the family in other key areas, such as where children are either known to be or are suspected of being at risk of abuse and neglect.

The aim of this chapter is to explore the concept and nature of individualization processes through an engagement with social work, and especially child welfare and protection. What, if any, relevance or value does the notion of individualization have when it routinely involves social workers in the use of statutory powers to remove children from families? How and in what ways might the concept enable researchers, policy makers and the general public to better understand what child and family workers do, and how might a focus on those practices shed light upon and help refine individualization theory? While I attempt to comment on some of the broad implications of social change, I shall mostly focus here on the practical effects of state intervention into personal lives in families by drawing on research into child-welfare practice. My primary concern then is with exploring what state professionals actually do in families, how family members relate to professionals, and the implications of this for the theory and practices of individualization.

I will argue that a core meaning of individualization in child welfare is that interventions provide new opportunities for children, women, and men to engage in life planning, and to shape and reshape their lives and especially those aspects connected with emotional distress, violence, and trauma. Yet I will also suggest that there are limits to imposing a totalizing concept of individualization that is somehow relevant to accounting for all families and interventions. Recent work on child welfare shows that disaggregating the "family" in terms of power, gender, and age relations is crucial to making sense of the meanings of child-welfare interventions and the possibilities for promoting democratic relationships in households (Featherstone 2004; Ferguson 2004; Holland et al. 2004). Carol Smart and Beccy Shipman (2004) argue that individualization theory requires a nonlinear view of families that takes account of the diversity of kinship arrangements and the different meanings "family" has even to those within the same group or community. Attention to social-work and child-welfare interventions shows something similar, in that deep tensions and contradictions arise, with the effect that the same interventions that individualize some children and young people are experienced by their carers and even by other children in the same family as undemocratic. The complexities are such that promoting a child's freedom to live a life of their own can for their parent(s) be a painful experience of feeling that they, the parents, have had their lives ruined.

Individualization and the "Family" in Late-Modern Child Welfare

There is considerable symmetry between changing awareness of child abuse and domestic violence, the development of modern child protection systems, and the individualization of childhood and the family. A key dimension of risk society and individualization processes for Beck and Beck-Gernsheim (2002) is how the spiral of individualization has taken hold *inside* the family. The social problem of child abuse has been central to that dynamic in that child protection is the social practice *par excellence* that has enabled the deepest penetration of the state into the family and insisted that children, in effect, have lives of their own, free from violence. Alongside this individualization of childhood is the individualization of parenting and the emergence of posttraditional notions of motherhood (and, to an extent, fatherhood) based on women having entitlement to a biography, a life of their own free from exploitation.

Analysis of the work of Western child-protection agencies since their beginnings in the late nineteenth century shows that by 1914, the foundations of the modern family and social-work intervention were put in place. This pivoted around a clear sexual division of labor in which men/fathers were regarded as providers and women/mothers as homemakers. Up to the 1970s, child "neglect" accounted for up to 90 percent of the cases and the "neglectful mother" was the key figure in child-protection casework. Having constructed women's roles as "specialists in love and emotions" (Giddens 1992), the state intervened to ensure that mothers did not forget their gendered place in the social order.

Child protection was part of a deeply patriarchal system, as the male dominated child-protection agencies, the police, the education department, children's homes, and the church sought to correct so-called "immoral women" and "neglectful mothers." This did not mean that men completely escaped regulation, as men who failed to be adequate breadwinners or to give their wives money and provide the family wage were labeled "defaulting fathers" (Ferguson 2007a). Otherwise, it was also up to him to "correct" his wife and ensure that she was a good enough mother. And when he failed in this, the state stepped in. There was no expectation whatsoever that fathers would become more directly involved in childcare. Men's domestic violence toward their wives was not really taken seriously, by the police or the criminal justice system. The lack of protection and justice for women and children reflected the denial of citizenship rights to them that characterized the period before second-wave feminism (Gordon 1989). Recognition of child sexual abuse constituted less than 1 percent of cases prior to the 1980s. This does not mean that such abuse did not go

on—we know from adult survivors that it did—but this reflects how sexuality, power, and the nature of intimate relations within the family were not engaged with in social casework.

Women did not have an identity or a biography separate from their husbands or their motherhood. Children were "protected" in the minimal sense that attempts were made to stop cruelty against them. In a minority of cases—less than 2 percent—this involved removal from parental custody (Ferguson 2004). They were not consulted about decisions, and their voices were largely absent from casework. Their identities were almost completely subsumed within the adult group. A strong demarcation existed between experts and lay people. The "science" of child protection remained largely uninterrogated at a public level. Expertise was approached as though it were akin to "traditional authority" (Giddens 1994a, 128). Despite child-welfare agencies making powerful scientific claims concerning knowledge and enlightenment, it was relatively common for children in child protection cases to die, although this was not a cause of scandal or viewed as unacceptable professional failure like it was to become in the mid-1970s and remains today. Family life in this era of industrial society was governed by what Beck and Beck-Gernsheim call "the obligation to solidarity" (2002, 89). The basic experience was one of mutual dependence to which personal wishes and dislikes had to be subordinated. The woman was dependent on the man's earnings, while he needed her everyday labor and care to be capable of functioning in the workplace. "There was not," as Beck and Beck-Gernsheim put it, "much scope, then, for individuals to break out" (2002, 89). And if they tried to, social workers were always there to keep them in their place.

If individualization theory is correct, then both the "family" and child-welfare interventions today are likely to be dramatically different from the traditional concepts and practices that went before. As the outlines of individualization theory have been sketched elsewhere in this book (see Chapters 1 and 2), I shall concentrate here on examining its merits as seen through the lens of child-welfare interventions. To what extent is a desire for autonomy and negotiated roles within the family—a "life of one's own" (Beck and Beck-Gernsheim 2002, 22)—evident in child-welfare cases and a feature of the service users' self-identities? Do welfare professionals recognize such individualization and enable service users to plan such lives? How, or do, child-welfare services, as regulatory state agencies, constrain identity formation, contributing to the at-best "precarious freedoms" (Beck and Beck-Gernsheim 1995, 25) that individualization opens up?

The impact of individualization processes is clearly evident in the typical profile of children and families that come to the attention of child-protection

services, which are nontraditional households experiencing poverty and other forms of social exclusion. My study of 319 cases reported to 3 social-work teams over a 3-month period (in Ireland) typifies this in how some 41 percent were lone-parent families, the vast majority headed by women, while 11 percent were reconstituted families (Ferguson and O'Reilly 2001). Other recent research, such as data from Canada, confirms that family diversity is the norm in child protection cases, with, for instance, nonresident fathers often playing a significant role in the background of lone-parent households headed by mothers, often while new lovers or "father-figures" are on the scene (Mayer et al. 2003). A clear expression of the broad acceptance of new lifestyle choices and politics was the decision in 2002 to legislate to change the UK adoption laws to allow gay and non-married heterosexual couples to adopt. Although initially defeated in the House of Lords, such was the huge wave of professional and lay opinion supporting the change that the amendment was carried into law (*Observer*, October 20, 2002). While driven by pragmatic concerns to find more "families" for children in long-term care, this vividly illustrates the individualization drive and momentum toward the democratization of families and personhood in which the very notion of "family" is being redefined.

Child protection has played a key role in modernizing and prizing open the "traditional" family, rendering visible its darkest secrets and making the family accessible to new forms of intervention. Definitions of abuse and the reasons why children are protected have expanded dramatically, from the "discovery" of the "battered child syndrome" in the 1960s by the American pediatrician Henry Kempe and his medical colleagues (Kempe et al. 1962), to new understandings of child sexual abuse in the 1970s and '80s, heavily influenced by the impact of feminism and the women's movement. Social workers now routinely work with the most intimate aspects of people's personal and sexual lives. In the UK, for instance, in 1978, less than 1 percent of cases (just 89 cases) involved children being placed on social-services departments' child-abuse registers as victims of child sexual abuse, while by the early 1990s, the proportion was 11 percent, which in absolute terms represents a 58-fold increase (Corby 1993). While there have been continuities with earlier decades—for instance, in the continued significance of "neglect" in casework—acknowledgement that serious physical and sexual harm is perpetrated against vulnerable children by parents (as well as by other carers and strangers) involved a distinct shift in recognition and regulation compared to the order of meanings of simple modernity. Indeed, the very term "child abuse" as a generic term to cover physical, sexual, and emotional abuse and neglect entered the vernacular of child protection and popular culture at this time in the 1970s and '80s.

I am arguing that social work has both contributed to and drawn sustenance from changes arising from the individualization of Western family life. The impact of late-modern social and cultural conditions means that families now tend to arrive on social workers' caseloads as already individualized, at least in the immediate sense that they tend to live in posttraditional family forms. Those professionals may then become intrinsically bound into the decision making and further individualizing of family members. Some may not do this due to their value base or organizational pressures. But the cultural imperatives and importance of individualization to the personal as well as professional lives of helping professionals means that it is at the heart of the overall momentum of the system. In challenging accepted norms and conventional boundaries since the 1970s, no professional group has embraced and promoted the democratization of personhood with more enthusiasm than social work. It has been the "expressive" profession *par excellence* (Martin 1981). While this, as I shall show, takes a variety of forms and has a number of possible consequences, its core feature is individualized life planning.

Child Protection and Individualized Life Planning

To ground this argument, it will be helpful to consider an actual case, and I have chosen to begin with an example that constitutes the ideal or purest individualized outcome in family intervention. This is when children wish to live at home, parents wish to be parents, and all family members are enabled to have better lives of their own while continuing to live together in the family and as a family. This refers to "the family" as a fluid entity that may or may not change over time, as adult relationships end and new partners come in, some with children, and so on—what Beck-Gernsheim (2002) calls "the post-familial family."

"Joanne Smith" was age ten at the time her school made a referral to social services. She lived with both her biological parents and her three brothers, ages seven, five, and two years. The family first had social-work involvement three years previously due to allegations of physical abuse and neglect by the parents. Research interviews took place with Mr. and Mrs. "Smith" (separately), Joanne, the social worker, the family support worker, and the School Principal, as well as a reading of the case file. Serious emotional abuse and neglect were substantiated in relation to the four children, but especially Joanne, to whom Mrs. Smith was viewed as very emotionally abusive and whose destructive and at times suicidal behavior was giving grave concern to the school. Mrs. Smith was also known to be hitting Joanne. The social worker and the community-based family support

worker spent the next year working intensively with each family member and with the family together as a group, and particularly with Mrs. Smith, Mr. Smith, and Joanne. A great deal of work went into helping Mrs. Smith change her self-image, esteem, and her actual parenting practices.

The workers implicitly understood what Giddens (1991) calls the "new intimacy" and the role of interventions in helping service users develop awareness and revise their project of the self. Mrs. Smith is clear about why she found it hard to care for her children: "I couldn't help my daughter because I needed help first." She had been raped a number of years earlier and had never told anyone about it. Being able to shed the burden of the rape felt "great . . . things got better with the kids, because it was all off my mind, I can talk to them now, before I shouted at them, because I didn't trust myself. I had all those emotional problems for ten years back." This process of recovery from the trauma of sexual violence that Mrs. Smith had begun is borne out by clinical practice and feminist research (Herman 1992). Mr. Smith saw how his partner was now "a lot better in herself, because a lot of the pressure that was on her, over that [rape], was taken off." Developing Mrs. Smith's capacity to help the children, and helping her in her own right, also meant focusing on Mrs. Smith to make her feel better about herself. "I felt she needed to like herself more, because she did not like herself," the family support worker said. They encouraged her to take care of her appearance. "She did little things like get her hair cut. She had no teeth and then she went and had her teeth done. She began to look after herself a little more . . . it was much more positive stuff."

Increasing her level of confidence enabled Mrs. Smith to become more intimate with her daughter, to whom the social worker sees her as much more tactile, as she is toward her sons. The social worker notes, "There'd be a lot more laughs and fun." According to Mrs. Smith, this transformation in her mastery extends to the practicalities of everyday living: "We go shopping as a family now. I can . . . do the shopping without screaming." Having started out as hostile to and lacking trust in professionals, this mother could not have been more grateful for the help and support she received that, she insisted, prevented the children from coming into statutory care: "Without the family support worker's help, I wouldn't be here." Although to a lesser extent, Mr. Smith was also worked with in terms of his parenting, and he too regarded the intervention as helpful in enabling him to better understand his loved ones and himself, and helping him be a better father.

The social worker also did direct work every week with Joanne on her own. Prior to working with the social worker, Joanne said she herself "was a really grouchy person and angry always, annoying my ma and just getting

in the way. The social worker has just taught me better ways to deal with my problems and that made me feel better. If I was going home, I'd feel happier." At work here is a form of child-care practice enabling parents and children to practice the new intimacy in terms of emotional communication and negotiation in the context of equal relationships (Giddens 1992). They were being assisted to move beyond traditional hierarchical forms of patriarchal relationships, and they moved toward the creation of a "democratic family" form, in which the children are heard as well as seen, and, feeling safe, women as well as men are treated with respect, as individuals in their own right, and men as well as women are enabled to have expressive emotional lives and relationships. As Brid Featherstone observes, this notion of "democratization" "supports the exercising of 'voice' on the part of all concerned and represents a clear rejection of the privileging of male voice and authority relations which were to be found in more traditional arrangements" (2004, 184–85).

Elements of individualization were achieved for all the family members in terms of the distinct needs and life plans of a mother, father, and children. I refer deliberately here to "mothers" and "fathers" because this is about the individualization of those identities within the family. Helping women/mothers and men/fathers to individualize by developing their own sense of self both outside of and together with their children is crucial to effective child welfare in an individualized culture. In turn, the individualization of children through helping them speak and be heard by powerful adults and engaging them in therapeutic and healing work not only helps them to be safe but also enables them to address the wounds from the adversity in their lives and gain the emotional well-being that can equip them to grow into adults who are able to practice intimacy in a respectful, healthy way (for an extended analysis of this case, see Ferguson 2007b).

Such individualized casework provides evidence of a move away from a construction of childhood as simply a period of dependency and powerlessness to seeing children as social actors (James, Jenks, and Prout 1998). Within welfare discourses, children are now beginning to be understood as having the capacity for individual or collective action as moral actors and are given rights to be heard and to influence decisions about their lives. Since the 1980s in many Western countries, this change has been written into legislation that prescribes that the child's wishes must be taken into account. It is also finding expression in the development of policies and practices of child and youth advocacy that attempt to provide structures, processes, and supports that give "voice" to children in decision making about their lives (Dalrymple 2003).

Social workers and other child-care professionals such as family support workers, I am arguing, have become agents of life planning for families with child-welfare concerns. In this, they share something in common with all helping professions in late modernity. Giddens (1992, 202) argues that the core task of psychotherapies in late modernity is individualized life-planning work that promotes people's "mastery" over their day-to-day lives so that they may be able to control their life circumstances and the future with some degree of success. The extraordinary growth that has occurred in recent years in therapy, counseling, and, indeed, social-work services arises from the way in which lay people, faced with new choices arising from individualization, use such experts as "sounding boards" for critical reflection on themselves and the planning of their lives and relationships. In the UK, for instance, the number of mental-health professionals has quadrupled since the 1970s (Füredi 2004).

Neither Giddens nor Beck mentions social work or child welfare, which, especially in child protection, involve statutory powers and regulatory functions that have distinct features that set them apart from practices like psychotherapy. Social-work practice, because of economic rationalization and concern about risk, has become increasingly regulated by management and audit procedures and focused on managing resources and inputs provided by other welfare agencies, with the effect that often less direct therapeutic work is done by social workers than in the past. As was evident in the example of Mrs. Smith, a family support worker who had the time did a lot of the direct work with the family. But social work is still centrally involved in a culture and system that promote life-planning work nonetheless.

Critics of this position typically argue two things. Firstly, because child-protection social work involves the use of statutory powers, it is inevitably involved in controlling people in a manner that is antithetical to the promotion of their capacities to exercise choice and govern their own lives (Garrett 2003, 2004; Scourfield and Welsh 2003). Sally Holland, Jonathan Scourfield, Sean O'Neill, and Andrew Pithouse (2004), on the basis of actual empirical research into child-welfare practice, show that group work interventions into families through a model of "family group conferences" have the capacity to promote more democratic decision making within families and to create more equal relations between vulnerable families and the state. While this usefully recognizes how interventions engage constructively with the complexities of late-modern "family" relations, they step back from a fuller endorsement of democratization processes because, they argue, the statutory character of child welfare necessitates "imposed

empowerment" where oppressive features of "social control" are maintained.

While Webb (2006) sees individualized life planning as being a defining feature of late-modern social work, he regards it as fatally flawed by the fact that it goes on through strategies of neoliberal governance in which the state has privatized risk and transferred collective responsibilities for welfare to individuals. Webb is correct that there are real dangers that individualization, when connected to neoliberalism, is too conditional in the help offered, especially when service users are not provided with the material resources to live by, and professionals with the range of skills needed to help them. But his criticisms greatly underestimate the possibilities for relieving suffering that interventions can bring and the precise nature of individualization through intervention.

A second, and related, criticism is that the model of the increasingly self-reflexive individual depicted in individualization theory relates primarily to people who are socially and economically privileged, those who have the cultural and material resources to engage in self-inspection (Lupton 1999, 114). "Just how 'reflexive' is it possible for a single mother in an urban ghetto to be?" asks Scott Lash. "Just how much freedom from the 'necessity' of 'structure' and structural poverty does this ghetto mother have to self-construct her own 'life narratives?'" (Lash 1994, 120). In a similar vein, Paul Garrett (2003, 2004) has criticized my use of the individualization thesis on the grounds that it is contaminated by bourgeois values of possessive individualism, and overlooks the poverty of service users and the traditional pattern of social work allegedly focusing in oppressive ways on mothers. He claims that "research still points to social work's continuing reinforcement of maternalism, even in the so-called 'post-traditional order'" (2003, 388). I agree that social work still tends to focus on mothers, and a pattern of intervention is evident where women are sometimes held too responsible for problems, to the neglect of men. Yet social work today is categorically not simply about the "reinforcement of maternalism" (see also Houston 2004).

A pattern is clearly evident for service-user mothers to recognize that they have very real problems and that they need help. By far, the most significant referral source in my child-protection study was mothers, who raised initial concern in 27 percent of cases. In 11 percent of cases, children brought the concern to light, either by directly reporting it or, much more often, by telling someone who then reported it. Some 61 percent of these self-referring mothers had histories of social-work involvement and were therefore re-referring themselves in a context of already having had received a social-work service. Why would these women behave in this way

if all they were getting was some kind of crude "reinforcement of maternalism"?

It is crucial to understand the suffering and vulnerability of these women and their children. Most not only lived in poverty but also had to cope with domestic violence, addiction problems, and histories of abuse in their own childhood. Some also had to deal with extreme child behavior and control problems, as well as a violent partner either present or in the background. Of the children who entered care, 67 percent were from these backgrounds. Having examined these women's (and children's) narratives, as well as those of the professionals who worked with them, the stereotype of social workers indiscriminately oppressing such women just does not reflect the sheer complexity of what is going on. These women—and some children, too—were choosing to report problems such as sexual and emotional abuse and domestic violence that remained hidden within the traditional family. In so doing, they were engaging social workers in historically new ways in helping them to reflexively construct their own biographies and plan their life projects. Such women were enabled to make crucial decisions about their lives, such as the following: Do I want to stay in this relationship? If I do, then what kind of relationship do I want? How can I have better relationships with my children? And what kind of life do I want for myself and my children? In the fewer cases in which fathers were present and they were engaged with, similar kinds of life-planning work went on with them.

For Beck and Beck-Gernsheim, changes in women's roles and expectations are a particularly important feature of individualization processes: "women today increasingly develop, and must develop, expectations, wishes and life projects which relate not only to the family but also to their own persons. . . . They can no longer think of themselves as just an 'appendage' of the family, but must increasingly come forward as individuals with their own interests and rights, plans and choices (Beck and Beck-Gernsheim 2002, 90). However, this is a strikingly "public" view of the consequences of individualization because of the great emphasis it places on women moving out of the home into the public arena to do paid work, have careers, to move beyond the family as it were, and to find a life for themselves. It requires some revision.

A particular feature of individualization in child welfare is that women have increasingly come forward with their own interests, rights, plans, and choices as *part of* the family. It is *because* of the family and *within it* that interventions can enable them to actualize their new rights to key aspects of a life of their own. This goes well beyond any kind of simplistic professional reinforcement of an ideology of maternalism and seeing women's

roles simply as traditional mothers. Often, the women themselves want to be free to *be* mothers, and, better still, the kinds of mothers they wish to be. This becomes possible if or when individualizing professionals are open to hearing and helping them through their ambivalence and struggle to achieve that. The life planning very often is in and for a new family, a "post-familial family." Yet, as I show below, these are not in any simple sense only "private" affairs. There is something inexorably public about these private practices in that they draw sustenance from a public movement of confessional intimacy where child abuse and protection are widely known and survivors have spoken out about experiencing violence.

At the core of individualized life planning in child welfare are the new opportunities that arise for people to shape and reshape their lives and especially those aspects connected with emotional distress, violence, and trauma. These opportunities extend to even the poorest and most socially excluded members of society (Ferguson 2003). These life-planning opportunities are relevant not only to victims of abuse, but also to abusers. Sometimes, as was shown in the case study of Mrs. Smith, in which a mother had experienced violence and was now abusing her daughter, this can be the same person. At its best, survivors of abuse are not only helped by social work, family-support interventions, and self-help initiatives to gain protection, but also to achieve some healing and plan new kinds of lives for themselves. Practice and the achievement of justice "at its best" do not always happen, and problems exist in making them universally available to all. Not all social workers and other professionals have the skill, time, or system support to engage service users in such life-planning. Not all service users are interested in or have the capacities to do this kind of self-work (Hoggett 2001). Research shows that many abused and at-risk children do not report their concerns, and the challenge is to break down the barriers to individualization that prevent all children from actively having lives of their own (Parton 2006, 179–83). Nevertheless, this does not dispel the real opportunities for individualized life planning.

To speak of individualized life planning and the shaping of biographies in these terms is not meant in some absolute sense of a total life transformation that suggests that people are freed to lift themselves out of poverty or other forms of disadvantage. It refers rather to how users of services have opportunities to gain insight into the choices they do have, how they can gain insight into their rights, behavior, and emotional life, how they need to be challenged to take responsibility for violent, abusive, or neglectful behavior, or helped to challenge powerful others to cease violence and be accountable, to learn about who they are as children, siblings, parents, lovers, and, when needed, to gain some healing. Thus, individualization

through child welfare is about helping vulnerable people live lives of their own within and as a family—so they can be "individually together" (Bauman 2002a, xiv) in loving, respectful ways—or to maximize children's and their parents' welfare if they have to be apart.

The case material presented here shows how individualization in welfare areas such as child protection has a particular character and relationship to failure that is crucial to grasp. In the precarious freedoms that it brings, individualization is at all times replete with risk and threatened with actual failure. The ever-present threat of relationship and/or career catastrophe, of experiencing a "broken or broken-down biography" (Beck and Beck-Gernsheim 2002, 24), is the dark side of decision making and life planning. Users of statutory welfare services are in some respects the same as citizens in general, and in other respects very particular in their circumstances. For the majority of clients of child protection, individualization is not simply about lifestyle choices and decisions about work, gender roles, and so on. It is that in addition to a chronic struggle to ward off suffering, failure, and disasters in personal relationships, such as losing one's children to the state. In characterizing individualization as a bourgeois luxury irrelevant to the lives of the disadvantaged, critics of individualization theory are missing the central point of it all in practices like child protection. It is precisely *because* of their suffering and the risk that pervades their lives that vulnerable people have something to gain from interventions that promote individualized life planning. The potential radicalism of such interventions is that they help people sometimes literally to have a life by protecting them from violence, and to be able to live it on their own terms, free from abuse, and with dignity, self-love, and respect.

Tensions and Contradictory Outcomes in Individualized Life-Planning Interventions in Families

I have been arguing that individualized life planning through child welfare is, on one level, a form of intervention that attempts to stabilize family relationships, stopping them from breaking down, again or more. In addition, rather than preventing (further) broken-down biographies, it may actively *create* breakdown—when helping women and children leave violent men, having offenders excluded from the home or imprisoned, or when removing children from parents. There is, as I have suggested, a powerful tendency in this area to regard individualization as either a positive or negative thing. We need to move beyond the one-dimensional critiques that assess interventions as simply good or bad, emancipatory or oppressive, to reach a deep understanding of the tensions and contradictory outcomes that

individualized life-planning interventions produce. While the ethic of intervention practices in late modernity can be said to be broadly democratizing, this does not mean that all members within the same family are empowered to live more contented lives of their own. The fact that some children need to be removed into care for their protection, often against the wishes of one or both parents, means that it is a fracturing of families that is required in the individualization of some childhoods. Democratization of families through child protection is not always or necessarily equivalent to promoting the equality of outcome for all.

Individualizing children can mean removing them from undemocratic families. All family members can be divided in their views on the merits of the children being received into care. One twelve-year-old girl in my research was clearly unhappy about being in care and saw little value in social intervention, while her sixteen-year-old sister who had been sexually assaulted by some twenty different men over the years due to parental neglect, and who reported the abuse through the school, experienced it as life saving and life affirming. The parents were (literally) divided in their perspectives on events: the mother left the father, the marriage was over, and each made accusations against the other about domestic violence.

Some mothers in my study deeply resented social workers because of what they had done with or to them, while their children welcomed the intervention, especially the life-planning opportunities it gave them. One such mother of seven children who initiated contact with social services twelve years previously to get help with her second child said, "I regret it now," and all her trust in social work was gone, not least because her eldest two children were taken into care. Her thirteen-year-old daughter was now choosing to stay there, and alleged physical and sexual abuse by her father and that her siblings were at risk from him also. According to this thirteen year old in the research interview, the risk of violence and misuse of drugs was such that, as she said, "I'd be dead by now if I was still living at home. I would be dead." This typifies how in late modernity, social intervention promotes contradictory outcomes of individualization within families and for family members: the young person regards her placement in care as an opportunity to both literally have a life and live a life of her own, while her mother in particular feels that her life has been taken from her by oppressive social workers. The reverse also happened in the research. In some cases, children were very critical of their treatment, even when at least one parent was positive about intervention.

Individualization through removal from the family should not therefore be taken as synonymous with happy endings and positive outcomes for all children. The feelings of loss, relief, pleasure, and sadness, are too

great, too mixed-up, to allow for linear, one-dimensional interpretations of young people's experiences, even within the same family. In an important sense, statutory intervention into families—especially when it necessitates the removal of children—both works with the fracturing of biographies that typifies individualization and intensifies it. It is the ultimate form of failed juggling of needs and desires resulting in breakdown biographies for all concerned. Yet in enabling vulnerable young people to have lives of their own, it can create new opportunity and hope. These are the kinds of contradictory outcomes that it is necessary to try and hold together in appreciating the nature of individualization processes in child and family social work.

Individualization Made Public: The New Subpolitics of Child Protection

Finally, this section presents some thoughts on the social and political context and the broader limits and possibilities of individualization. Even if there are demonstrable gains for the lives of some people, what are the broader cultural and sociological meanings and consequences of individualization processes? Does such a focus on the individual mean inevitable disconnection from and even the death of the social? How are connections forged in child welfare between people living lives of their own and having obligations to others? The dominant position in response to these questions seems to be negative and even despairing by critics who deplore the alleged emergence of a minimal self and a society rendered toxic, unequal, and bourgeois by so-called "therapy culture" (Bauman 2000; Füredi 2004). While there are indeed huge challenges as to how to create an egalitarian society and meaningful public sphere, with respect to child welfare, such one-dimensional responses are misplaced.

It is crucial to see that through child and woman protection, new face-to-face, virtual, and symbolic communities are being formed. Since child abuse gained wider recognition as a social problem in the 1970s, the circularity of knowledge from media coverage of abuse cases, court cases, and local knowledge has fed back into people's reflexive awareness of their lives and decisions, and more victims have felt empowered to come forward to seek help, providing a quality of belonging to a wider community of survivors. Such critical awareness helps to provide momentum to clear away the toxic bonds and structures that held simple modernity together. Individualization then, does not remain private, but becomes public and political in new ways.

This typifies Beckian (Beck 1997) "subpolitics" in how individuals and collectivities from outside the political system appear on the "stage of social design" to shape and "reinvent" politics, challenging powerful groups and transforming structures. This is apparent in the initiatives taken by courageous women and men to tell their stories of abuse in public, take court action against abusers, form self-help and survivor groups, write books, appear in the media, and publicly challenge the state and church for failing to protect them (McKay 1998; Raftery and O'Sullivan 1999). In places such as Ireland, for instance, where the Catholic Church has been historically dominant, survivor groups have been crucial to calling the clergy to account for decades of clerical child abuse that was systematically hidden. This has resulted in the state apologizing for failing to protect children in the past, setting up a major tribunal of inquiry at which the church and other agencies are held to account and victims are heard, and providing victims with compensation. These processes have been hugely influential in the church as well as the state losing legitimacy to govern personal lives and institutions, changing power relationships at a structural level and establishing new standards for democratic practice with children both within and outside the family.

The point is not that all relationships are now individualized and organized on a negotiated basis (Jamieson 1998). Evidence of unequal power relations between the genders and generations is apparent in variations in the extent of individualization in families from different ethnic groups (Smart and Shipman 2004). It is also evident in continued high rates of domestic violence and child abuse in all communities. What is different is that when the state does intervene, the opportunities within child welfare have come to include not merely ensuring literal survival and having a life, but also promoting children's welfare and autonomy to live a life of their own.

Processes of individualization have created the social conditions that make it possible for children to gain greater rights and more protection, and have also encouraged public protest when children's rights are violated. Since the mid-1970s, there has been a spate of public disclosures of the deaths of children in abuse cases where social workers were involved but "failed" to protect. In the face of public criticism for child protection failures, expertise has been demystified and has lost its traditional authority. People have been exposed to new insights into how they are governed and are able to be "cleverer" than in simple modernity (Giddens 1994a, 94). This does not mean that they are intellectually superior in the academic sense, but rather that they have to be able to cope with more choices and information, much of it contradictory (Beck and

Beck-Gernsheim 2002). This now includes significant amounts of information about child abuse and protection systems, the media reporting of which is among the most heavily discussed social issue of our time (Jackson and Scott 1999).

The effects are contradictory: this has caused a radicalization of doubt about the trustworthiness of institutions like the state and church and the ability of professionals to protect children, while at the same time opening up new opportunities for children to be protected from traditionally repressed forms of violence, such as sexual abuse, emotional abuse, and nonaccidental injury. There are clear correlations between the new subpolitics of child protection, child abuse becoming a public issue and regular topic of the confessional public domain, and the increased reporting of cases like the kinds of help-seeking and life-planning practices I have been pointing to in this chapter.

Crucially, individualization, at both the private and public levels, goes on within a context of liquid modernity (Bauman 2000) and highly mobile societies. Researchers need to speak of "liquid welfare," to account for mobilities (Urry 2000), and what moves, as well as what is stable, in understanding the nature of welfare practices and identity formation (Ferguson 2004 and forthcoming). Power and influence in intervention practices and the construction of cases move in different directions, flowing in and around different organizations, through parents, children, and other significant persons in communities, through the media and culture, and at all times through human persons, through bodies. In an individualized culture where the boundaries between private and public are shifting, such flows "point to a proliferation of multiple 'mobile' sites for potential democratization" (Sheller and Urry 2003, 108). As well as containing risks of failing and delivering oppressive interventions, these nonlinear flows of bureaucratic power in child welfare and the increased capacities of human beings today to be reflexive and demand to have lives of their own open up opportunities for child protection, healing, and life planning.

This page intentionally left blank

Chapter 9

The New Social "isms": Individualization and Social Policy Reform in Canada

Janine Brodie

Introduction

This chapter focuses on what I have termed the "new social-isms," and the ways in which these popular conceptual frames embed neoliberal political rationalities in social policy reform and citizenship practices in Canada. This term flags the many and different appeals to the "social" that have been interwoven into political rhetoric, social policy thinking, and policy performances in the past decade, among them social cohesion, social exclusion/inclusion, social capital, social care, social economy, and social investment. These concepts, and the social policy prescriptions that they evoke, contrast markedly with deployments of the social in the postwar model of social governance, such as social security, social justice, social citizenship, social solidarity, social rights, and social welfare. Although applications of the new social-isms vary widely both across national settings and in academic debates, the prominence afforded to these terms in contemporary social policy reform is often taken as evidence of a "social turn" in neoliberal governing practices, if not as a beacon of a new and still unfolding "late" or "post" neoliberal era. This social turn is represented as a qualitative departure from the familiar modalities of the postwar welfare state and neoliberal fundamentalism, as well as an exercise in pragmatism and reflexivity that responds to the "new social risks" of the contemporary era. It purportedly is shaping a "third way" or hybrid liberal state form that maneuvers through the uncharted waters of postindustrialism and globalization, while, at the same time, avoiding the perils of either "too much state" or "too much market" (Giddens 1998).

Evidence of this social turn abounds in the development policies and strategies of International Financial Institutions (IFIs), the social policy prescriptions of transnational think tanks such as the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), and the experiences of individual countries, especially Anglo-American democracies that embraced neoliberalism more fully than European welfare states. Beginning in the 1990s, for example, the World Bank (WB) confessed to the deep social costs and human insecurity exacted by Structural Adjustment Policies (SAPs) and shock therapy, and, increasingly across the decade, expressed its conversion, in rhetoric at least, to the new social-isms of social capital and social partnership (Stiglitz 2006). A similar social turn can be tracked across a variety of national settings during the 1990s. In the mid-1990s, the UK, in a seemingly paradigmatic manner, shifted from Thatcherism's punitive social retrenchment and privatization agenda to New Labour's Third Way of active welfarism and social investment policies (Newman 2001). New Zealand, once the poster child of the neoliberal "roll backs" in social programs, by the late 1990s, also began to "roll out" a new social ethos, grounded in the discourses and strategies of social partnership, social inclusion, and social investment (Larner and Craig 2005).

In Canada, social policy analysts point to a social turn beginning in the late 1990s—years that coincided with the return of federal budgetary surpluses. After years of retrenchment and a unilateral withdrawal from foundational pillars of the postwar social policy regime, the federal government began to reassert itself in the social policy field. It began to talk about social reinvestment and used the tax system to send money to targeted constituencies at the same time as it continued to divest in others. Both Canadian academics and policy networks expressed some optimism that the federal government's selective re-entry into the social field signaled the passing of the dark days of neoliberal retrenchment and the tentative coming out of a postneoliberal state structured around the principles of social investment, social inclusion, and social capital.

In this chapter, I offer a different perspective on social policy reform in Canada. Rather than comprising a qualitative shift away from neoliberal fundamentalism, I argue that the deployment of the new social-isms, specifically policy thinking linked to the concepts of social exclusion/inclusion and social capital, represents a series of governing experiments that promise to embed and reproduce neoliberal political rationalities in both social policy regimes and in broader cultural norms and identities. Although social exclusion/inclusion and social capital have distinct intellectual lineages, these conceptual frames have been progressively refracted in social policy thinking, in Canada and across many other advanced liberal

democracies, to perform a neoliberal social imaginary. This rests on the increasingly hegemonic and nonnegotiable claims of neoclassical economics, especially its foundational assumptions about the superiority of markets and market mechanisms in securing human well-being, and the primacy of the decontextualized individual as the iconic subject of contemporary social relations (Bauman 2000, 29–31). This chapter provides a critical reading of the recent publications on social exclusion/inclusion and social capital produced by the Policy Research Initiative (PRI), a horizontal research unit housed within the Canadian federal bureaucracy, in order to demonstrate this process of refracting and embedding. Before doing so, however, the chapter first explores the ideas of embedding, neoclassical *doxa*, and individualization.

Embedding Political Rationalities

During the past two decades, the postwar social architectures of advanced liberal democracies have been systematically, though in each case differently, eroded, restructured, and displaced by a variety of new approaches to social governance. These new governing experiments are as diverse as they are exploratory, ranging from punitive workfare regimes to ambitious social investment strategies, designed to respond to the "new social risks" of the twenty-first century. It is now widely recognized that the past two decades have brought a paradigmatic shift in the logic of social governance, one in which the strategies and institutions of Keynesian social liberalism have been progressively surpassed by neoliberal political rationalities and governing instruments (Dean 1999). In the process, the social aspirations and identities as well as the citizenship claims generated by the postwar regime of social governance, have lost their grounding, both inside official policy networks and increasingly in the popular imagination. This then is an era of transition in which the postwar social architecture has been rendered a silhouette in history, leaving in its wake absence, uncertainty, and experimentation.

According to Gøsta Esping-Andersen, the history of welfare states can be viewed as the combination of brief episodes of pivotal change and long periods of politics as usual, which are underpinned by a broad social consensus about the role of government, the substance of citizenship, and the goals of social policy. Pivotal or paradigmatic changes in the logic and institutions of modern welfarism occurred only twice before the present moment—in the late decades of the nineteenth century and in the years surrounding World War II. These transitional periods characteristically were marked by, first, a breakdown in the prevailing model of social governance

and intense debates about rival visions of collective social provision, followed by consensus building around a particular model of social governance, and ending in long periods of consolidation when the new model embedded both in policy instruments and citizenship regimes (Esping-Andersen 2002, 1–2).

This account of transformations in regimes of social governance mirrors the work of Karl Polanyi as well as more recent strains of regulation and governmentality theory. Polanyi, writing in the wake of the Great Depression of the 1930s, used the terms *disembedding* and *embedding* to describe the rise and fall of laissez-faire liberalism and the conditions leading to the formation of the welfare state across Western liberal democracies. According to Polanyi, this moment of pivotal change was marked by a collapse of the prevailing institutional order, social dislocations of all kinds, and intense political and ideological debates, between what he called "enlightened reactionaries," about rival rationalities, models of governance, and visions of the good society (Polanyi, 1957; Porter and Craig 2004, 391). The disembedding of laissez-faire, Polanyi argued, required nothing less than disrupting its carefully constructed social imaginary of a self-regulating market. Polanyi argued that "naturalism haunted the science of man, and the reintegration of society into the human world became the persistently sought aim of the evolution of social thought" (Polanyi 1957, 126).

Polanyi argued that "social history in the nineteenth century was thus the result of a double movement"—"the market expanded continuously but this movement was met by a countermovement checking the expansion in definite directions" (Polanyi 1957, 76, 130). In this chapter, I am less concerned with Polanyi's contention that market-based government either collapses under the weight of its own society-ravaging contradictions, or invents new institutions of societal protection. Instead, I focus on the meaning and processes underlying the concept of embedding, which Polanyi generally treated as self-evident, to explore how neoliberal political rationalities inform contemporary social policy thinking and prescribe congruent citizenship identities and practices. In other words, this chapter's focus is on the "society creating" dimensions of social policy reform (Fink, Lewis, and Clarke 2001, 3). The idea of reform then is read in the following two distinct ways: as a corrective exercise when existing social policies are reframed or new ones are created to better reflect shifting social needs and environmental changes, and as a reconfiguration and a constitutive process that shapes, reshapes, and embeds new identities and different formulations of common sense.

To embed means quite literally to set something firmly and deeply inside a broader logic and structure—to make something part of the integral whole that surrounds it. During the course of the past two decades, neoliberalism has progressively constituted the broader logic and structure within which public policy is formulated and developed. Neoliberalism, however, is less a coherent ideology than an amalgam of governing experiments that have been continuously reformulated and refined to respond to shifting economic and social problems, many of its own creation (Clarke 2004a). Although a reflexive and incomplete governing project, neoliberalism embraces a particular a set of political rationalities (or analytics of government) that form a discursive field, which reshapes and recodes, privileges certain vocabularies and styles of truth telling, promotes particular ways of seeing, calculating, and intervening, and speaks to and helps shape particular kinds of subject positions (Dean 1999, 23–31; Rose 1999, 24–30). This new vocabulary of governance, moreover, is markedly different and, indeed, incongruent with many elements of the postwar model of social governance.

This process of reconfiguring often involves the appropriation of the language of social movements and policy advocates and its redeployment in entirely different contexts that betray many of the original meanings and intentions. This politics of appropriation generally involves lifting a term out of its analytic or political context and placing it inside another, often antagonistic meaning system (Fine 2001). This is especially the case with respect to social policy thinking because its core concepts such as social well-being, social security, and social inclusion are both polysemic and imbued with power relations (Clarke 2004a, 37). These concepts take on different meanings depending on how and where they are located in broader discourses, and these locations, in turn, carry high political stakes. The next section of this chapter focuses on two such critical discursive frameworks—neoliberal economic orthodoxy, which has largely displaced alternative ways of framing public policy interventions in the social field and, relatedly, individualization, or what Beck and Beck-Gernsheim call the contemporary compulsion "to live a life of one's own" (2002, 22–26).

Neoclassical Economic *Doxa*

Neoliberalism is grounded in neoclassical economic *doxa*, which has progressively become the "unexamined frame for all further cognition," prescribing both the knowledge and techniques for social policy reform (Bauman 2000, 30). Grounded in this *doxa*, neoliberalism has revived the laissez-faire social imaginary of separate spheres, the fiction of natural and

self-governing markets, and political allegiance to the doctrine of the minimalist state. This orthodoxy is commonly understood as being antagonistic to the social broadly defined, not the least because of its unwavering commitment to methodological individualism, which reduces humanity, in all its diversity, historicity, and complexity to the stark and abstract formulation of autonomous and rational utility-maximizers. Relying on excessive abstraction and formal modeling, this style of truth telling requires, as an article of faith, that individuals accept "all other things being equal" when their lived experiences tell them precisely the opposite (Rose 1999, 30). As Ben Fine argues, one of the defining features of the present moment is that "economics has become dominated by its own neoclassical orthodoxy, one which is widely recognized from outside to be far removed from economic realities, to be totally intolerant of other approaches, and to be equally ignorant of its own history" (2001, 1).

Until quite recently, economics, both in theory and application, has tended to live a life quite apart from the other social sciences that, in turn, have been content to leave it alone to talk to its imaginary world of hypotheticals and formal models. Increasingly, however, orthodox economics has itself made a social turn, progressively colonizing the social sciences, especially at the point where they intersect with public policy. While it is widely recognized that neoliberal economists conquered finance ministries and central agencies some time ago, social policy making also has fallen under economics' seductive claims to certainty, "scientific" neutrality, and universalism. Thus, rather than stand in opposition to social thinking, economic orthodoxy is embedding itself into the very conceptualization of social problems and the generation of public policy solutions. As Fine explains, economics has become "parasitical upon the other social sciences," "picking up ideas that have originated there and reworking them through new economic principles" (2001, 11). This concept shopping tends to involve "running with a single idea," all the while being "profoundly ignorant" of the existing literature and analytic contexts and "profoundly arrogant" in "believing that the new results within economics are original" (2001, 11).

As a result, economic orthodoxy is no longer positioned in opposition to the social but, instead, presents itself as the preferred intellectual apparatus to frame contemporary thinking about social policy. In fact, it has recently generated a new subfield—social economics—which purports to draw the conceptual advances of the other social sciences under the broad umbrella of neoclassical economic fundamentalism (see Barrett 2005). This nascent subfield, however, does not challenge one of the most problematic assumptions of neoclassical *doxa*: that highly complex social

realities can be subsumed under the conceptual and methodological rubric of neoclassical economics (Bourdieu 2005, 2–3). Economic orthodoxy understands itself as being scientific, transparent, and universal, and thus superior to ethical or political rationales (Clarke 2004a, 89). Challenges to its self-proclaimed scientism, whether theoretical or experiential, are received as spurious, self-interested, and partial. As social policy advocates can readily attest, one can either accept the terms of economics' narrow conceptual framework (and thereby confirm its legitimacy and reinforce its hegemony) or be relegated to the sidelines of the debate. Neoclassical *doxa*, in other words, embeds in both policy making exercises and in the popular imagination specific ways of seeing social problems, of intervening and directing, and of forming subjectivities (Dean 1999, 23).

Individualization

Individualization is the second meaning system that serves to embed neoliberalism in social policy thinking and practice. While related to the ontological commitments to individualism of both economic orthodoxy and classical liberalism, individualization is a distinctly different process that is quite unique in the practice of contemporary governance. Bauman, in fact, argues that individualization is one of the two defining characteristics of the present moment—the other being the collapse of the modernist illusion of progress. "Individualization," Bauman writes, "now means something very different from what it meant a hundred years ago and what it conveyed at the early times of the modern era—the times of extolled 'emancipation' of man from the tightly knit tissue of communal dependency, surveillance and enforcement" (2000, 31).

Contemporary individualization, in contrast, places steeply rising demands on people to find personal causes and responses to what are, in effect, collective social problems. In Beck's view, everyone is now compelled to find "biographic solutions" to systemic contradictions (Beck and Beck-Gernsheim 2002, xxii). This new governing formula demands that individuals imagine themselves separately from group identities and claims and compels them to take responsibility for conducting their own lives (Beck and Beck-Gernsheim 2002, 24–25). Responsibility for addressing and coping with social inequalities that find their genesis in such systemic processes as market cycles, racism, or unequal gender orders is shifted onto the shoulders of individuals. Living your own life thus includes taking personal responsibility for "your own failures," skills deficits, and bad decisions. As a result of this discursive maneuver, structurally disadvantaged groups are "collectively individualized" both in

popular cultural representations and in public policy (Beck and Beck-Gernsheim 2002, 23–27).

In effect, individualization involves "the experts dumping their contradictions and conflicts at the feet of the individual and leaving him or her with the well-intentioned invitation to judge all of this critically on the basis of his or her own notions" (Beck quoted in Bauman 2001, 105–6). The problem with this formulation is not that individuals do not seek out biographic solutions, comply with such solutions when forced upon them, or, indeed, invent imaginary ones (Beck quoted in Bauman 2001, 105–6). Rather, the problem, as Bauman explains, is that the very formulation of a "biographic solution to systemic contradictions is an oxymoron; it may be sought but it cannot be found" (Bauman 2002b, 68). He continues as follows:

> The subjects of contemporary states are individuals by fate: the factors that constitute their individuality—confinement to individual resources and individual responsibility for the results of life choices—are not themselves matters of choice. We are all today "individuals *de jure*." This does not mean, though, that we are all "individuals *de facto*." More often than not, control over life is the way in which the story of life is told, rather than the way in which life is lived. (2002b, 69)

This process of individualization has already left its footprint in contemporary social policy reforms. During the past decade, social policy regimes in virtually all Western democracies have turned from a rights-based and redistributive model of social governance toward so-called "active" welfare policies that place priority on the development of human capital, individual self-sufficiency, and labor force participation. These reforms are represented as offering the poor a "hand up" rather than "a hand out." This shift in thinking minimizes, if not explicitly rejects, two critical assumptions that structured much of the politics of the last century and informed the development of the postwar welfare state. These are, first, that social structures systematically advantage some groups and disadvantage others, and, second, that public policy appropriately corrects for systemic barriers and inequalities. Active welfarism is just one example of the incessant production and reproduction of the contemporary individualized person that masks the ongoing relevance of systemic contradictions in determining vulnerabilities to poverty as well as capacities to achieve self-sufficiency.

The Policy Research Initiative

In order to demonstrate how economic orthodoxy and individualism are currently being interwoven into social policy reform thinking in Canada, I

focus on the recent publications of the Policy Research Initiative (2006). The PRI was established inside the Privy Council Office in 1996 to provide research on emerging horizontal issues (that is, issues that cut across the policy terrains of single line departments) and to integrate the results into the federal government's policy agenda. Besides a core group of policy analysts, which is increasingly dominated by economists, the PRI includes a large group of senior managers drawn from various branches of the federal bureaucracy. From the outset, the PRI has focused on the social question in contemporary governance, taking on the task of reconfiguring the remnants of equality-based social citizenship thinking with economistic assumptions and policy frames. Three of the five horizontal policy areas that the PRI has investigated in the new millennium directly focus on the questions of social governance: New Approaches to Addressing Poverty and Social Exclusion, Social Capital as a Public Policy Tool, and Social Economy: Entrepreneurial Spirit in Community Service. The rest of this chapter examines the first two.

Social Exclusion and Social Inclusion

The PRI's project on Poverty and Social Exclusion was launched in 2003, as Executive Director Jean Pierre Voyer explained, to "provide new conceptual bases for how we think about poverty" and to determine "the kind of society we want and the levels of inequality we are willing to tolerate" (2004, 1). Although the idea of social exclusion can be traced back to the work of early sociologists such as Émile Durkheim, the origins of the term "*social exclusion*" are far more recent, and are usually associated with the French welfare state of the early 1970s. French social bureaucrats used the term "social exclusion" to identify groups, such as lone mothers, the disabled, and drug addicts, to name a few, that were increasingly recognized as "social problems" but were excluded from social programs. In other words, social exclusion meant being outside the conceptual parameters of the postwar regime of social governance. Once social policies were developed to address the specific needs of these groups, they were considered included (Daly and Saraceno 2002, 85–86). It was only a decade later, when the economies of Western countries staggered under the combined weight of stagflation and record unemployment rates, that the term "social exclusion" became increasingly associated with social integration and especially with labor force participation. At the same time, the term "social inclusion" began to displace social exclusion in official policy discourses. Social inclusion strategies (SIS) aim primarily at drawing the variously marginalized into the labor market, although often only at its "flexible" periphery.

This widespread shift in language from poverty to social exclusion to social inclusion represents more than literary license. The words and metaphors employed in social policy thinking invite individuals to locate themselves, society, and government within the landscape of these social imaginaries. For example, the stock-in-trade language of welfare liberalism, terms such as social citizenship, social insurance, and social safety net, embed in the popular imagination the understanding that everyone was vulnerable to risk, through no particular fault of their own, and that no one should be allowed to fall through the cracks into a world of abject poverty and insecurity. Whether, indeed, this was the lived experience of all Canadians is another question. The point I want to make here is simply that this was, and to some extent still is, how Canadians understood the goals of social governance. The inclusion/exclusion binary, in contrast, imagines a very different social landscape, inviting people to think about society as being divided into two camps. The vast majority are "normal" insiders who, by virtue of being on the inside, are integrated, content, and self-sufficient, while a minority of outsiders sit on the fringes of normal society and must be somehow drawn in. In this social imaginary, the included and the excluded are not mutually constituting: the institutions and processes that constitute the center do not produce and reproduce peripheral "excluded" populations (Bryne 1999, 1–4).

The PRI's 2003 research theme on poverty and social exclusion stands out as a labored attempt to refract the contemporary experience of poverty in Canada through the lenses of economic *doxa* and neoliberal individualization. This research initiative is firmly embedded within a neoliberal policy frame, beginning first by casting the issue of poverty aside and then fusing it with the idea of social exclusion. "Poverty," the PRI claims, "is the cause and the consequence of social exclusion" (Kunz and Frank 2004, 3). It follows then that any social reform aimed at either poverty or social exclusion will reduce both. Income redistribution, once a central concern and an end in itself for welfare liberalism, is thus displaced from the policy agenda. The PRI also implicitly suggests that poverty reduction, in and of itself, is a futile exercise. Embedding another fundamental article of faith of economic orthodoxy, the PRI asserts that poverty is natural and inevitable: "Poverty and exclusion will remain a fact of all societies rich and poor" (Kunz and Frank 2004, 8). The only variables in this equation are the faces of the poor, which change across time and place (Kunz and Frank 2004, 4). Finally, the PRI discounts the idea that poverty is deeply rooted in social and economic structures—in systemic contradictions. Instead, using cohort data gathered from Canadians between 1996 and 2001, the PRI makes the case that poverty is best understood as something that happens

to individuals as a result of their own missed opportunities and misfortunes. The PRI next asserts that individuals normally have (or should have) the resources—"'buffers' [to] overcome life's calamities"—to ride out these temporary experiences of being poor (Kunz and Frank 2004, 5).

Having untied the experience as well as responses to poverty from their structural moorings, the PRI does concede that there are identifiable subgroups in the general population—approximately 8 percent of working-age Canadians—for whom poverty is neither temporary nor fluid. Canada's "persistently poor" are largely confined to five groups—lone parent families, unattached older individuals, persons with work-limiting disabilities, aboriginal peoples living off reserves, and recent immigrants. These groups are 5 to 9 times more likely to experience long-term poverty than other Canadians (Hatfield 2004, 19, 22). While conceptually distinct, "these groups," according to the PRI, "share a number of things in common. Each group carries an identity marker defined by an event occurring over the course of life, ranging from a change in family status (divorce) or lack thereof (single), a change in health status, or a change in place of residence. Departure from some of these characteristics," the researchers add, "reduces the risks of long-term poverty" (Kunz and Frank 2004, 5).

Perhaps the most striking observation to be drawn from these findings is that these are largely structural markers that the poor cannot realistically depart from. Persons with work-limiting disabilities, for example, generally cannot simply choose to transcend the physical, social, and institutional constraints associated with disability. Neither can aboriginal peoples, on or off reserves, depart easily from a historical legacy of colonization and institutional racism.

Related to this, the term "recent immigrant" masks the fact that the vast majority of recent immigrants in Canada are people of color, and thus race rather than length of residency may be the critical marker underlying the growing incidence of poverty and exclusion among this group. Moreover, each of the PRI's five categories of the persistently poor are themselves internally skewed by gender. The PRI's gender aggregated data veils the unacceptably high rates of poverty among marginalized women (Brodie 2007). Among the persistently poor, women wear double and triple markers, yet there is virtually no recognition of unequal gender or racial orders.

In fact, among the so-called "persistently poor," only two categories—lone parents and unattached individuals—would appear to be able to depart from their marker, most obviously through marriage. Disregarding these palpable contradictions that violate the elegant simplicity of its model, the PRI offers the following advice for "avoiding low income for

members of all high risk groups" (Hatfield 2004, 22). First and foremost is *attachment to paid work* followed by the following individualized strategies:

- exit from high-risk group
- draw on spouse for support
- belong to only one high-risk group
- graduate from high school
- live in a region with a high employment rate. (Hatfield 2004, 22–23)

The PRI's conceptual breakthrough is a quintessential example of neoliberal individualization. Although it identifies Canada's poor by group-based or systemic markers, its proposed strategies for poverty alleviation are framed in terms of individual choices and private solutions. As such, this policy advice simultaneously assigns responsibility for structural inequalities and risk management onto individuals and validates the market as the primary mechanism whereby individuals secure personal security and well being (Clarke 2004a, 90–91). Economic orthodoxy reduces human welfare, in all its complexities, to market income, but this measure does not account for, let alone recognize, the many contributions to human well-being that are generated outside the market, through unpaid care, kinship, social citizenship, solidarity, and political equality.

This said, the PRI's advice to the persistently poor to get a job or depend on a spouse must be read with considerable skepticism. Although the market is represented as the most important source of human welfare, it is not a neutral mechanism. Markets have proved themselves, time and again, to be notorious places of discrimination, exploitation, harassment, stress, and exclusion (Brush 2002). It is thus far from axiomatic that paid work is a passport to social inclusion, especially in an increasingly polarized labor market. Bad jobs may only provide what Amartya Sen identifies as unfavorable inclusion or "disempowering inclusion" (Lister 2004). As well, marriage often simply privatizes dependency, leaving the vulnerable subject to informal authority structures and without adequate protection from psychological or physical violence.

Social Capital

Contemporary social reform thinking reconfigures the social in ways that embed neoliberal *doxa* in public policy, cultural practice, and common sense. Social capital is the second building block in this social imaginary. For, if the concept of social inclusion works to erase unequal social structures and individualize poverty, social capital similarly erases governments

and the public sector and reduces the idea of sociability to individual utility maximization (Fine 2001, 5). The fundamental premise of social capital theory is that relationships matter, helping people achieve things that they could not achieve by themselves (Field 2003, 1). The juxtaposition of social with capital also reinforces a social imaginary of ins and outs—a bifurcated society consisting of social entrepreneurs, individuals who invest in relationships and networks and are rewarded with all kinds of dividends, and the social capital poor, the unsuccessful individuals and communities that consistently register a social capital deficit by failing to build networks that have the potential for personal payback.

This particular construction of social capital rests comfortably with economic *doxa* but it does not reflect the origins of the concept. French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu introduced the term in the early 1980s to help explain why dominant classes remain dominant. His answer was a relatively simple one as well as a necessary corrective to some currents of economic reductionism then popular in social-science thinking (1980). Bourdieu argues that there were various kinds of capital—economic, social, cultural, and symbolic—and that each of these provided advantage and social position. Members of the dominant class remain dominant because of their wealth, to be sure, but also because of whom they know and socialize with, and what they know. Bourdieu consistently rejects representations of social capital as operating as some kind of parallel or alternative system of exchange with respect to capitalism. Rather, he emphasizes that what counts as social capital and its distribution among various populations is irreducibly attached to class stratification, which, in turn, is associated with the exercise of economic and other forms of exploitation (Bourdieu 2005; Fine 2001, 191). Individuals may possess and deploy social capital for personal advancement, but social capital is generated elsewhere, in broader structures of advantage and disadvantage. As much as it is represented otherwise, social capital is neither an innocent nor inclusive concept.

Bourdieu's original contributions to social capital theory were soon eclipsed by two American social scientists, James Coleman and Robert Putnam, whose work largely elides structural barriers and systemic inequalities. Coleman's contribution to social capital theory was his finding that getting ahead involves both getting an education (human capital) and forming networks (social capital). Personal success stories are the product of both what individuals know and who individuals know. Robert Putnam, however, is largely responsible for popularizing the concept in contemporary international and national social policy circles. Putnam's analytic eye was cast at the systemic level and on what he saw as the widespread breakdown in

public trust, social cohesion, and sociability in American society. Putnam's investigations led him to conclude that community activity, for example, in sports clubs, builds social capital as a collective resource that, in turn, fuels and sustains cooperation, trust, and reciprocity (Putnam 1995). All these noneconomic factors, it should be underlined, are critical to the functioning of liberalized markets.

During the last decade, there has been a remarkable proliferation of books, conferences, policy papers, and public policies focusing on social capital. As Ben Fine puts it, social capital "tapped the intellectual nerve of social theory at the turn of the millennium" (Fine 2001, 191). But if the answer was so resoundingly "social capital," what was the question? I would suggest that social capital provides neoliberalism with a model of social governance that fills in for social policy, reduces the power of the state through the formation of community networks, and reinforces processes of individualization. Social capital presents itself as an alternative to the social state, but, as I now discuss, this is more a symptom of the arrogance of economic *doxa* than a viable design for social governance.

The Canadian federal government's adventures with social capital theory began in the PRI's early years but accelerated in the new millennium when, in 2000, officials from the OECD, the PRI, and Human Resources Development Canada (HRDC) held a joint conference in Quebec City "to examine how human capital and social capital interact to influence sustained economic growth and well-being" (Policy Research Initiative 2005, 4). In the following year, the PRI invited Robert Putnam to its National Policy Research Conference to debate with Canadian academic John Helliwell the potential applications of social capital in Canadian social and public policy. Finally, in January 2003, a meeting of federal deputy ministers launched the PRI's research theme on social capital, instructing it to "assess the potential role and contribution of social capital in the achievement of federal policy objectives, with the hope that clearer awareness and understanding of the phenomenon could help to better tune public policies and programs and broaden future policy options" (Policy Research Initiative 2005, 4).

The PRI's most challenging analytic task has been to devise a definition of social capital that is congruent with neoliberal *doxa* and the residualization and individualization of social policy. The PRI has opted to conceptualize social capital as something that can accrue to an individual through the development of strong connections to family and friends (bonding capital), integration into diverse networks (bridging capital), and access to strategic centers (linking capital). The PRI defines social capital as "the networks of social relations that may provide individuals and groups with

access to resources and support" (Policy Research Initiative 2005, 1). According to this decontextualized and instrumental reading, social capital operates in much the same way as financial capital does in an open market. Social capital can be "converted into another form of capital" such as financial or cultural capital (Bourdieu 1980). It can be invested to "promote the development of financial capital." Individuals can accumulate social capital, form social capital stock, diversify, and reinvest (Levesque 2005, 6). Social capital helps people both "get by and get ahead." Those with a deep and diversified portfolio "tend to be more 'hired, housed, healthy, and happy'" (Policy Research Initiative 2005, 1). By extension, the jobless, the homeless, the unhealthy, and the depressed are represented as poor social capitalists.

For individuals, the potential payoffs of social capital accumulation are as diverse as it seems they are multiple. An entrepreneurial social capitalist, the PRI suggests, might draw on bonding networks, that is, family and friends, to obtain child care or informal health care, or, when times are difficult, food, clothing, and housing. Unpaid care work is in this way capitalized. Bridging and linking capital might provide the inside track for a new job or business contacts, a new role model, or access to otherwise inaccessible service providers. Canadians with different backgrounds, moreover, benefit more from the strategic deployment of certain kinds of social capital. The PRI notes that, while immigrants tend to have strong ties to families and friends, these "strong bonding networks could hinder upward mobility in mainstream society." New immigrants, thus, are advised to build bridging networks outside their ethnic network in order to get a job and get ahead (Policy Research Initiative 2005, 15).

For the most part, the government is largely absent from the PRI's social capital story, but it does note that social capital can inform social policy making in the following three ways: First, the PRI advises governments to be sensitive to existing social capital when formulating programs. Second, governments should try to create conditions for networks to grow and to tap into existing social networks whenever possible. Finally, the PRI suggests that there is a place for governments to build infrastructures where networking can thrive, such as community centers, and, as important, to provide support for what the PRI terms "social brokers"—the local coaches, activists, and leaders that broker connections to positions of power. In all, the PRI's application of social capital attempts to reconfigure personal and community life to fit within the prevailing economic orthodoxy and advises policy makers to reproduce this social imaginary in social policy reform. Social capital thus conceived is all about individualization as well as the off loading of social problems onto individuals, families, and

vaguely defined, if not imagined, communities. But just as in capital markets, social resources are distributed unevenly, and, indeed, always tend toward oligopoly. As much as social networking is constructed as the invisible hand of social well-being, social capital markets are profoundly shaped by social structures and their attendant webs and clusters of power and prejudice. Bridges can be opened or drawn shut, social networks can be inclusive and exclusive, and they can, as Bourdieu first noted, concentrate opportunity and privilege rather than redistribute them, even to the most ambitious social entrepreneur.

Conclusion

The social architectures of advanced liberal democracies are currently undergoing substantial renovations to better fit with neoliberal social imaginaries and disciplinary practices, as well as to respond to the social contradictions generated by a globalizing international political economy. As this chapter discusses, new deployments of the social—what I term as the new social-isms—have been central to this ongoing process of policy experimentation. The Canadian experience, however, suggests that contemporary performances of social policy reform call for a critical interrogation of both the substance of these reforms and their society-creating dimensions. I use the word "perform" quite deliberately to underline that these policy frames are "less of a description of how the world is, as an image in which the world is being made" (Massey 1999, 40).

The performance of social exclusion and inclusion examined in this chapter imagines that individuals can depart from the very markers of persistent poverty that betray deep-seated social inequalities grounded in, among other things, race, gender, and ability. The social capital policy frame, in turn, assumes the existence of functioning and inclusive social networks that can stand in for social programs and a democratic social ethos. Yet, neither the individualized individual nor a third space of social networks exists outside their discursive construction; as Rose puts it, they are not "aboriginal" realities or a "national given" (Rose 1999, 168). Rather than timeless platforms upon which new social architectures are built, they are themselves constituted through a particular way of imagining social governance. This social imaginary, moreover, is circumscribed and structured by an orthodoxy that does not correspond either to the ways most individuals experience their daily lives or to the complexities of social life. As such, these experiments in social governance reflect and reproduce the abstract and scholastic foundations of neoclassical economics (Bourdieu 2005). How these social imaginaries embed, if they are to embed at all in a

reformed social policy regime in Canada, remains open to question.

In 2006 the newly elected conservative government exiled the PRI from its home in the executive wing to a much weakened line department responsible for social policy. The new government, moreover, has demonstrated a marked indifference to building a new social architecture to address the growing and diverse social needs of the early twenty-first century. This indifference is less a governing strategy than evidence of a growing crisis in social governance. The contemporary globalizing era continues to call out for new modes of social governance as well as new social imaginaries that make space for collective commitments to social justice and social well-being. These social goals are beyond the conceptual or material reach of the individualized individual.

Acknowledgements: This research was supported by the Canada Research Chair Program in which I hold a Tier 1 Chair in Political Economy and Social Governance. I would also like to thank Malinda Smith, Lois Harder, and Catherine Kellogg for their careful reading of earlier versions of this chapter, as well as Cosmo Howard both for "imagining" this volume and bringing it to completion.

This page intentionally left blank

Chapter 10

Governing Individuality

Paul Henman

Introduction

> The whole purpose of places like Starbucks is for people with no decision-making ability whatsoever to make six decisions to buy one cup of coffee. Short, tall, lite, dark, caf, decaf, low-fat, non-fat, et cetera. So people who don't know what the hell they're doing or who on earth they are can, for only $2.95, get not just a cup of coffee, but an absolutely defining sense of self.
>
> —*Joe Fox (Tom Hanks) in* You've Got Mail *(1998)*

As this quote from Hollywood illustrates, choice is one means by which we come to define our own self. Our expression of our preferences through choice enables us to distinguish ourselves from others who have different choices and preferences. In this way, choosing provides us with the freedom to define our individuality. But to see our choice of Starbucks coffee solely as an exercise of freedom misses the ways in which the choices we make, the range of choices on offer, and the location in which we make choices is intensely manufactured, shaped, and governed. In short, we exercise our choices within governed spaces. The ordering process is geared toward maximizing our purchases. The drink sizes on offer, as Morgan Spurlock in *Super Size Me* (2004) notes, do not include "small." Add-ons, "meal deals," suggestive marketing—"would you like fries with that?"—loyalty programs, and special offers influence our choices in particular directions. Advertising also seeks to induce our desire for products through glamour. In many ways, the myriad practices by which we express ourselves through choice are highly governed. It is this interplay between individualization and governmental processes that is the topic of this chapter.

The idea of individualization embraces this framework of individual identity through free choice. At first blush, the idea of an "individualized society" (Bauman 2001) produced by processes of "individualization" (Beck and Beck-Gernsheim 2002) conjures images of a world largely inhabited by the independent, self-acting, and free "man" much-favored by neoclassical economics and neoliberalism (Hindess 2004; cf. Yeatman, Chapter 3 of this volume). Such an image would, it seems, have little to do with the institution of government and governmental practices. After all, freedom is usually defined as an absence of constraint, and limiting the interference of government institutions in individuals' lives is a paramount neoliberal aspiration (Dean 1999, chap. 6; Foucault 1991; Gordon 1991; Howard, Chapter 1 of this volume).

While popular and neoliberal thought may articulate a view of society as a collection of autonomous, independent, yet interacting beings, individualization theorists highlight the ways in which such a perspective results from *social* processes. For example, over the last few decades, both employers and the welfare state have increasingly sought to individualize responsibility and construct individuals as the authors of their own futures. Similarly, cultural attitudes about intimate relationships have destabilized gender roles, thereby requiring individuals to take action to define and negotiate the way in which their relationships will work (Bauman 2000; Beck and Beck-Gernsheim 2002). While the individualization literature has examined these social processes in a wide range of settings, the relationship between individualization processes and the institution and practice of government has received limited attention. Thus, the key objective of this chapter is to examine the complex interrelationships between individualization and government, a domain that raises the following questions: What is the role of government within an "individualized society"? In what ways does governing contribute to the constitution of autonomous, self-governing selves? How is it possible to govern, maintain order, or ensure a level of integration in a world of biographical individuals (Beck and Beck-Gernsheim 2002, 18)? What does it mean to govern a society in a postsocial world?[1]

To engage with these questions, this chapter draws on the later work of Michel Foucault and the "governmentality" literature he inspired. In examining the governance of individuals, the paper begins by articulating Foucault's conception of government and his notion of governmentality. The chapter then considers two aspects of governing individuality: the formation of self-governing subjects and the differential government of subpopulations, as ways in which governments individualize their activities. The centrality of statistics in individualizing governmental processes is examined.

Statistics underpin the way in which the contemporary state constitutes subpopulations and differentially acts on the individuals within them. These analyses highlight the way in which individualization processes are also governmental processes, and thus domains for the exercise of power.

Foucault's Account of Government

In general parlance, "government" typically refers to both the institution of the state and its activity of directing the populace that exists within the state's jurisdiction. It is coupled with a negative or "sovereign" conception of power as "power over" (Foucault 1978, 1991). It is this idea of government and power that classical and neoclassical liberalism work from and that leads adherents to seek to minimize the governmental activities of the state in order to enhance individual freedoms.

Foucault's work is a response to these ideas. His conception of power emphasizes its "positive," constructive, and ubiquitous nature. His "microphysics of power" is envisaged in terms of "capillaries" rather than "iron cages" as follows: "power is not an institution, and not a structure; neither is it a certain strength we are endowed with; it is the name that one attributes to a complex strategical situation in a particular society" (1978, 93).

In a similar way, Foucault's understanding of "government" destabilizes its traditional meaning. Instead of imagining governmental power as centrally located in the head or institution of the state, Foucault argues that it is necessary to think of governmental practices as infused throughout society. In this respect, he famously argues that "in political thought and analysis, we still have not cut off the head of the king" (Foucault 1978, 88–89, 1980, 121–22). The following excerpt demonstrates that Foucault's conception of government is linked to his conception of power:

> The exercise of power consists in guiding the possibility of conduct and putting in order the possible outcome. Basically power is less a confrontation between two adversaries or the linking of one to the other than a question of government. This word must be allowed the very broad meaning which it had in the sixteenth century. "Government" did not refer only to political structures or to the management of states; rather it designated the way in which the conduct of individuals or of groups might be directed: the government of children, of souls, of communities, of families, of the sick. It did not only cover the legitimately constituted forms of political or economic subjection, but also modes of action, more or less considered and calculated, which were destined to act upon the possibilities of action of other people. To govern . . . is to structure the possible field of action of others. (1982, 221)

Put simply, government is "the conduct of conduct" (Foucault 1982, 220–21; Gordon 1991, 2) or, as Mitchell Dean prefers, the "calculated direction of conduct" (1999, 10–16). Foucault chooses this broader definition, for, he argues, it provides a better understanding of how modern political power is exercised. When "government" is formally attached to the state, then the ways in which the state indirectly governs subjects are overlooked (cf. Rose and Miller 1992).[2]

In contrast to classical liberal and neoliberal ideas of government whereby an absence of state government is conceived as enabling the exercise of individual freedom, Foucault views governmental activities as lying in the large space between control and coercion on the one end of the spectrum, and unlimited free movement or autonomy on the other. Governing—in this view—involves a mix of constraint and freedom. Understood in this way, governmental practices—especially in advanced liberalism—operate with and through freedom. Individuals' "free" choices have been made within a domain infused with power. Indeed, Nikolas Rose argues that the reality of (advanced) liberalism is that individuals are "governed through [their] freedom" (1999). It is the constitution of the governable subjects of advanced liberalism, which the individualization literature points to, that we now consider.

Neoliberalism and the Constitution of Free Individuals

Although Foucault did not undertake a detailed examination of neoliberal government, many others have used his conceptual legacy to do so. Where neoliberal discourse sees the operation of free choice in independent individuals as an outcome of the limiting of state government interference in human affairs, governmentality analyses suggest that it is in fact a form of governing. Rose argues that

> modern individuals are not merely "free to choose," but *obliged to be free*, to understand and enact their lives in terms of choice. They must interpret their past and dream their future as outcomes of choices made or choices still to make. Their choices are, in their turn, seen as realizations of the attributes of the choosing person—expressions of personality—and reflect back upon the person who has made them. (1999, 87; emphasis original)

In emphasizing the ways in which people conceptualize and think about themselves and their agency, that is their "subjectivities," governmentality accounts of neoliberalism accord with those given by individualization

theorists. Social processes are at work in establishing particular kinds of people.

However, the crucial point of governmentality is that it is not simply about the construction of independent self-governing individuals, but it is also the means by which governmental objectives are met. Rose suggests that "[i]t has become possible to govern without governing *society*—to govern through the 'responsibilized' and 'educated' anxieties and aspirations of individuals and their families" (1999, 88, emphasis original).

Neoliberal states govern through individuals in order to manage the claims made upon the state. In so doing, self-governing citizens are recruited into the work of the state, be it in limiting public health expenditure by exercising and giving up smoking, in reducing welfare expenditure by being a proactive, entrepreneurial jobseeker (Dean 1995), or in curtailing demands for policing resources by taking appropriate security measures (O'Malley 1996).

Experts are a key element in the conduct of neoliberal government, for they help to provide the links between state objectives and personal interests. For example, Foucault's earlier work demonstrates how the development of the human sciences (and statistics) led to the notion of the "norm" and the "abnormal" (Foucault 1972; Foucault et al. 2003). The norm provides an important means by which individuals are measured and highlights the domains of "abnormality" for governance. The truth claims of experts thus provide a powerful discourse that shapes the way in which individuals examine, constitute, and act on themselves, and defines the objectives of self-governance. As Rose notes, "The relation between expertise and its subjects . . . is not (or not only) one of domination, but one of subjectification, of 'making up' persons whose relations to themselves are configured within a grid of norms and knowledges" (1999, 92).

It is not surprising that from within this mindset, the practices of governing, those practices that "structure the possible field of action of others," (Foucault 1982, 221) are not easily discerned, unless, of course, they are the blindingly obvious and coercive forms of government long eschewed and expunged by liberalism. Thus, although processes of individualization make governing invisible, the deployment of a governmentality framework makes visible the governmental aspects of individuals, particularly the way in which the subjectivities of individuals are constituted—that is, the way they come to see themselves and interpret their life stories—and how those individuals are governed in an individualized society. In other words, neoliberal government depends on individuals, and individuality is a product of liberal government.[3]

The Duality of Individualized Government

Governing in an individualized society can thus be seen to involve a twofold process: the formation of individuals and individualized forms of governing. First, individual subjects are to be "made up" (cf. Hacking 1986), their subjectivities modelled so that people perceive themselves as independent individuals actively constructing their lives. As already explained, this is a governmental process, as it involves the active structuring of the way individuals think of and act on themselves. The deployment of disciplinary power is a key element in these processes (Foucault 1977). Once configured in such a way, selves are acted upon in a way that reinforces and enhances this subjective sense of self. Governing individually means to engage with and shape the field of action of each person differently so as to take account of their individual needs, wants, and desires. In order to govern in the individualized society, governmental actions need to be targeted to the particular realities of individuals. One-size-fits-all universal services and policies are increasingly inappropriate. Clearly, these two processes are highly interrelated, for the process of governing individually concurrently shapes and reinforces one's subjectivity, that is, the way in which one perceives and acts upon oneself. This is clearly evident in the various domains examined within the individualization literature from employment relations, consumption, intimate relations, welfare, and so on (Bauman 2000, 2001, 2003; Beck and Beck-Gernsheim 1995, 2002).

In each case—both the formation and engagement of selves—governmental practices include both practices of the state and practices of private agencies. Contrary to the view of liberalism and neoliberalism that the state is the sole locus of government that needs to be kept in check, private agencies also govern in that they "structure the possible field of action of others" (Foucault 1982, 221). Indeed, it was Foucault's innovation of returning to the older meaning of "government" that points to the way in which individuals are governed beyond the state.

The making up of individual subjectivities, the formation of selves, has been carefully examined elsewhere. It was the focus of the later works of Foucault, including *The Use of Pleasure* (1985) and *The Care of the Self* (1986).[4] Modern and contemporary forms of constituting subjectivities have been expertly examined by Nikolas Rose in his analysis of the psychological sciences (Rose 1996c) and by others (Dean 1999, 2002). Rather than rehearse this material, I turn now to the practices associated with individualized forms of governing.

Statistics and the Formation of the Social Imaginary

In his 1979 Tanner Lectures, entitled "*Omnes et Singulatim*" ("For All and For Each"), Foucault (1981) argues that the operation of governmental power has involved the dual operation of two forms of power: one focused on the collective citizenry and one focused on the individual. Elsewhere he notes, "The state's power . . . is both an individualizing and a totalizing form of power" (1982, 213). Traditional forms of political power involve the "city-citizen game"—that is, a political dynamic based on the notion of free and equal citizens who are part of a political community and who have claims on the state to freedoms and rights. The power operating within the "city-citizen game" contrasts with the operation of pastoral power as part of the "shepherd-flock game" whereby the individual is conceptualized as a living being whose needs and well-being are to be understood and acted on by the state in a manner that understands his or her intrinsic individuality (Dean 1999). These two contrasting operations of governmental power help highlight the shifts in the nature of governance from an emphasis on the collective or "social" (cf. Rose 1996c), to the individual.

The twentieth-century welfare state might be seen to give greater emphasis to the city-citizen game, whereby individuals' entwining with the state was based on the idea of the universal human being with citizenship rights equal to those of all other citizens. In contrast, advanced liberalism, in the late twentieth and early twenty-first century, involves a more individualized approach to the management of its population.

Twentieth-century Fordist society was a society of mass production. Corporations mass-produced consumer goods and services largely marketed at the general public. State-operated bureaucracies also worked efficiently to manage national populations through the large-scale processing of information. The welfare state linked with Keynesian macroeconomic management offered population-wide solutions to guarantee the welfare of its people. Consequently, state and private agencies on the whole did not treat each person as an individual with unique needs. This was evident with the often-heard complaint of an individual being treated like a number and not like a person. People also had a limited capacity to express their individuality through mass consumer goods. The social imaginary[5] was society as a collective, as a nation (Hindess 1998).

The postwar "Keynesian National Welfare State" (Jessop 2002) reflects the ascendancy of the "social" in the social imaginary, but this imaginary has a long heritage based on the birth of the idea of the "population." According to Foucault, the imaginary of the collective, the social, or the population was central to the birth of the modern governmental rationality.

Summarizing Foucault's argument, Andrew Barry states that during the nineteenth century, "the governmental State was no longer defined in relation to its physical territory, its surface area, but in relation to its social geography, its population and its economy"(1996, 126).

It was statistics that brought about the emergence of the population as a domain and an object of government. In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, statistics brought to light a domain not previously understood within classical liberalism's focus on the family. Statistics, Foucault recounts,

> gradually reveals that population has its own regularities, its own rate of deaths and diseases, its cycles of scarcity, etc.; statistics shows also that the domain of population involves a range of intrinsic, aggregate effects, phenomena that are irreducible to those of the family, such as epidemics, endemic levels of mortality, ascending spirals of labour and wealth; lastly it shows that, through its shifts, customs, activities, etc., population has specific economic effects. (Foucault 1991, 99)

It is thus no surprise that the technology of statistics, coupled with the technology of probability, led to the formation of insurance as the model for managing risks within the frame of the population (Bernstein 1996; Donzelot 1988; Ewald 1991; Hacking 1982, 1991). Accordingly, since the early twentieth century, social insurance has been the iconic form of the welfare state. Social risks of unemployment, disability, age, and the like were protected through the collectivizing of risks. Social insurance is based on the notion that every individual is equally at risk from the vagaries of the modern capitalist state, and that collectivizing risk is an effective way to weather the unavoidable storm of probability.

While the mass-produced and "social" ways of governing were defining qualities of the Keynesian National Welfare State, in the contemporary and increasingly individualized society, such forms of operation are no longer sustainable. When people increasingly think of themselves as unique individuals, they wish to be treated as such and wish to have the resources to express their own individuality. The social imaginary is individualism—where "social problems are increasingly perceived in terms of psychological dispositions" (Beck and Beck-Gernsheim 2002, 39). While it would be an overstatement to pronounce the end of mass production, one can observe the emergence of more flexible organizational operations that purport to respond differently to—to target—the different needs of specific individuals. Instead of offering a one-size-fits-all product, companies now produce a range of products that reflect the diverse wants and needs of consumer society. Welfare is increasingly based on individualized-tailored

services to match the particular needs of individuals—as defined by the individual or the state or both—and to constitute them as self-actualizing beings.

When social forms of governing are no longer sustainable, how are agencies able to govern collectivities in an individualized world? To be sure, an individualized "self culture" does not spell the "death of the social" and the operation of government "for all and for each"—as some have argued (Rose 1996c)—but rather generates new problems for managing populations. Indeed, the population, as an object of government, does not disappear, but rather is reconstituted. To understand how, again consider the role of statistics. Just as statistics in the nineteenth century constituted the population as an independent entity with its own dynamics and, in turn, became the means through which that domain could be governed, in a similar manner, statistics in the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries have constituted segmented subpopulations with distinct and independent dynamics, which in turn provide the means for their government.

Instead of reinforcing a picture of a dynamic social body, today's statistical analyses, which assess social phenomena according to different personal characteristics, make visible the social body's segmented nature. Instead of a picture of a social body in which all are at equal risk, contemporary statistical analyses reveal that some groups of individuals are more at risk than others. For instance, Thomas Osborne notes that "whereas police[6] tended to equalize subjects, modern statistics began to differentiate; it became a technology of individuation" (1996, 104). As a result, the rationality of universal social policies (and social insurance in particular) is punctured, and a rationality of targeting solidifies. Pierre Rosanvallon describes this process in his study of the contemporary transformation of the welfare state as follows:

> Solidarity used to be based on the increasing "mutualisation" or sharing of social risks, so that the welfare state was conceived as a kind of *insurance society* under the "veil of ignorance." . . . The system, which had the advantage of producing social solidarity through methods of redistribution opaque to the actors, has begun to crumble. . . . The development of social knowledge, and the greater visibility of the "gains" and "losses" resulting from that knowledge, has involved a lifting of the veil of ignorance. In other words, it has become much more problematic to consider the whole nation as a single class facing identical risks . . . as society gains more knowledge of its differences, a considerable change in the perception of fairness tends to be produced. (Rosanvallon 2000, 4, 29; emphasis original)

One such example is the now-familiar categories associated with increased risks of poverty, including low education and skills, race and ethnicity, sex, disability, and sole-parenthood. Statistical and data profiling techniques have similarly revealed subpopulation differences in the use of drugs (Newcomb 1997), the risk of car accidents, preferred consumption goods, political affiliations, the incidence of welfare or taxation fraud, and health outcomes (Sussman et al. 1995). What distinguishes the current social imaginary is not a shared universal humanity, but rather a heightened awareness of the differences between individuals and groups, and statistics has significantly contributed to this perception.

As a result of this continued and heightened emergence of the differentiated nature of society, "targeted government"—that is, governmental actions differently targeted toward various individuals or subpopulations—has become a logical and "natural" response to these social conditions.[7] Targeted government operates by segmenting or subdividing the population and differentially acting upon or governing each subpopulation (Henman 2004, 2005). No doubt, public policy has always been targeted to some extent. For example, old-age pensions and disability services respectively target people of a particular age group or with certain incapacities. What is significant about contemporary targeted government is its finer and more complex differentiation of subpopulations and corresponding modes of government. It is these targeted modes of governing that enable mass bureaucracies and companies to engage with people *qua* individuals.

Governing Individually

I have already suggested that the problem of government in an individualized society is how large agencies are able to govern or shape the behavior of collectivities in an individualized world. In an individualized society in which people conceptualize themselves as unique individuals and wish to be treated as such, Fordist modes of governing are not sufficiently responsive or sensitive to individual needs. This creates a significant problem for governments that seek to shape human behavior. How do large-scale institutions efficiently deal with masses of people as individuals? It is simply not possible for large agencies to deal with each person as a unique individual with his or her own personal histories and idiosyncrasies. Statistics and their constitution of subpopulations provide the means by which the state is able to govern "individually." It is through statistics—and the associated practices of data profiling, customer relationship management, and

data mining—that contemporary governments and businesses now come to know about and act upon individuals (Elmer 2004).

Beck notes that in an individualized "self culture," treatment on the basis of one's individuality or by individual merit is viewed as the pre-eminent form of fairness (Beck 1992, chap. 3). However, to discriminate on the basis of one's individuality, it is necessary to have knowledge, first about a person's unique individuality, and second about the form of treatment appropriate to a person's individuality. It is the nature of these knowledges and the way in which they are obtained and mobilized that has given rise to new forms of individualized government. The development of increasingly abstract relationships, in which people deal with others whom they do not personally know, is a well-documented feature of modernity (see for example Simmel and Levine 1971). This creates a problem for the personalized treatment of others. If the person one is dealing with is not known personally and intimately, how does one know how to treat them in accordance to their individuality? Knowing the individuality of a person in today's world of anonymous relations is largely through a set of abstract individual characteristics, such as occupation, sex, skin color, income level, HIV status, country of birth, age, address, marital status, and various DNA markers.[8] From the perspective of contemporary institutions, a person's individuality is not an organic, detailed entity, but rather a composite picture obtained from the (perhaps unique) combination of abstract characteristics or markers that are attached to that individual.

When all that is known about a person is a small set of abstract characteristics, the way in which decisions are made about the governmental distribution of opportunities and chances needs to be rethought. It is now commonplace to make assumptions about an individual based on one's experience with persons with similar characteristics. Medical professionals categorize patients to identify appropriate treatments, insurance companies assess a person's risk based on their similarity to others, and employers hire on the basis of an applicant's similarity to good existing employees.

Undoubtedly, the contemporary example *par excellence* of this kind of individualized governance is Customer Relationship Management (CRM). CRM, as one information systems textbook states, refers to "a company-wide, ongoing process whereby customer information is intelligently used to service customers more efficiently, thus optimizing customer satisfaction and company profits" (Sharp 2003, 230). CRM involves, firstly, the analytical techniques to analyze and differentiate the customer base in terms of customer needs and customer profitability and risk. Secondly, CRM involves the techniques—including products and services—that are employed for different customer groups. Such techniques include targeted

marketing of products to customers with a predicted interest in them, discounts, special deals and added services for high-value customers, and rewards for organizational "loyalty." Clear examples include the different tiers of airline points programs and credit or charge card programs. In a similar manner, the book seller Amazon provides suggestions on books the customer might like to read and purchase based on matching his or her pattern of purchases with others with similar patterns. Less visible is the practice of prioritizing customer calls based on geography: those living in high value areas jump to the front of the electronic queue, whereas low-profit customers are put on hold for an extended period. In each case, the customer base is delineated and served (governed) accordingly. But, importantly, the goal is that each person is made to feel as if she is treated as a *valued individual*.

The public sector also has examples of sophisticated forms of targeted government that differentially manage the population. On such example is the Computer Assisted Passenger Prescreening System (CAPPS-I) used in the United States.[9] The computer system operates by assigning scores to passengers on the basis of how much information is available to the airline that uses the system. The passengers that are selected (and their luggage) are given greater scrutiny than other passengers (Electronic Privacy Information Center 2003). Another example is Australia's Job Seeker's Classification Index (JSCI), which is used by the Australian welfare delivery agency, Centrelink, to rank and classify unemployed persons into groups according to their predicted chances of becoming long-term unemployed and their need for employment assistance. The classifications are used to identify the level of government funding to private employment service providers for each unemployed person. Those predicted to have greater barriers to employment are funded to receive greater levels of employment assistance (Australian Government: DEWRS 1998; McDonald, Marston, and Buckley 2003). Each of these examples represents an "individualized" form of government. Instead of a universal approach to the whole (or relevant) population, governmental actions—that is, the structuring of the conduct of others—are tailored to reflect each individual. Yet, as was noted earlier, such individualized government does not operate by understanding each person as a unique being, but rather as a being possessing a set of abstract characteristics (for example sex, age, postcode, or ethnicity).

On the whole, such practices are not contested. There are occasions when they are criticized—for example, the use of racial indicators to aid the identification of terrorists in the passenger prescreening system—but generally, they seem to be accepted by the community. The invisible nature of many of these practices is one reason for this. Like the streaming of call

center calls, individuals are often not aware of how agencies differentially govern citizens and consumers. A second reason is that they are technical. Instead of being based on prejudicial distinctions, such as classical forms of racism and sexism, such data profiling practices are based on data that "objectively" identifies statistical relationships between increased (or decreased) risks and ascribed personal characteristics. One example is as follows: I am not turning down your credit card application because I have a personal problem with the fact that you are black; rather, the fact that you are black (and live in suburb X, and have no tertiary education, and . . .) means that you are objectively predicted to be a high credit risk. This example suggests a third reason why such practices are not widely contested. It is not one ascribed characteristic that differentiates (discriminates), but rather a collection of characteristics (that is, address, educational attainment, and so on) are used to form a complex grid to map personal identities to risks, and then to governmental practices. Accordingly, such practices are perceived not to act on subpopulations defined by an ascribed personal characteristic, but rather on the combination of a set of characteristics that defines each person as a "unique" individual. Citizens are not governed universally, nor differentially, but individually.[10]

Conclusion

The individualization literature has clearly demonstrated the ways in which individuals in contemporary society conceive of and act on themselves. However, along with the emphasis on the ways in which individuals make their own biographies, there is a tendency to neglect the ways in which such biographies are externally shaped. However, Bauman, borrowing from Marx, critically reminds us that in the era of individualization, "people make their lives but not under conditions of their choice" (Bauman 2001). This chapter deploys a particular understanding of government defined as the "structur[ing] [of] the possible field of action of others" (Foucault 1982, 221) to give greater visibility to the ways in which individuals' biographies are shaped, and their free choices are structured, by governmental action.

Statistics and the related applications of data profiling, data mining, and Customer Relationship Management are an important individualizing technology. It is through statistics that the old social imaginary of an undifferentiated collective has been punctured and the reality of subpopulations segmented along the lines of personal characteristics has been constituted. Not only do statistics "make up" individuals, defined in terms of unique collections of abstract characteristics, but statistics also provide the means

through which governments and private companies can know and act upon individuals individually.

I have argued that a governmental analytic enhances critical engagement with processes of individualization. As a concluding example, consider the question of stratification and inequality in the individualized society. Beck and Beck-Gernsheim have argued that the individualized society has broken down the operation of status and class, yet society remains unequal and poverty is increasingly precarious (2002). The picture articulated by Beck is one in which inequality remains, but stratification disappears (Beck 1992). Complicating this picture are the processes of "individualized" or targeted government articulated in this chapter. It may be the case that subjective stratification with its concomitant objective stratification is subsiding,[11] but might an individualized society precipitate objective stratification in a different form? Noting that individualized government tends to operate by differentiating and acting on the social body along abstract personal characteristics, it seems likely that individuals with certain clusters of characteristics associated with disadvantage (or advantage) are governed similarly in different domains, as a result reinforcing their social disadvantage (or advantage) and coalescing into strata. This remains a question for further analysis, but demonstrates the potential insight from a governmental approach to individualization.

Acknowledgements: I thank Cosmo Howard for the very thoughtful comments on an earlier draft of this chapter and for the opportunity to present this paper at the individualization symposium he organized.

Notes

1. While Margaret Thatcher's famous quip that "there is no such thing as society" perhaps summarizes the neoliberal mindset, social theorists have also deliberated on the nature of society when the idea of "the social" has waned (Rose 1996a; Dean 1997).
2. See also Hunt and Wickham's (1994) account of governance.
3. I acknowledge Cosmo Howard for clearly making this point.
4. See also Foucault (1988a; 1988b).
5. Charles Taylor defines the social imaginary as "the ways people imagine their social existence, how they fit together with others, how things go on between them and their fellows, the expectations that are normally met, and the deeper normative notions and images that underlie these expectations" (2004, 23).
6. Here "police" refers to "both the condition of order in the community and the ordinances that sought the institution and maintenance of that order in

fifteenth- to seventeenth-century German statute law" (Dean 1999, 90; cf. Foucault 1988b, 153–55; Knemeyer 1980).

7. See Valverde and Mopas (2004) for a slightly different slant to targeted government and not the more restrictive contemporary focus on law enforcement.
8. Bowker and Star (1999) provide an incisive account of the processes and politics of classification.
9. A more sophisticated system called CAPPS-II was to be introduced, but its development was terminated in 2004 due to privacy and technical problems. Its replacement, Secure Flight, was suspended in February 2006 (Source Watch 2006a, 2006b).
10. See Henman (2004, 2005) for a discussion of the policy and ethical issues associated with targeted forms of government.
11. "Subjective stratification" refers to the way people comprehend society as stratified, whereas "objective stratification" refers to the empirical reality of divided society, which is independent of whether the public perceives it as such.

This page intentionally left blank

Chapter 11

Institutionalized Individualism and the Care of the Self: Single Mothers and the State

Michelle Brady

> There certainly does exist a positive demand: that for a [social] security that opens the way to richer, more numerous, more diverse, and more flexible relations with oneself and with one's environment, while guaranteeing to each individual a real autonomy. This is a new fact that ought to be taken into account in discussions on social protection. (Foucault 1988c, 161)

Introduction

In the last two decades, the Australian income support (Social Security) system has shifted from an emphasis on providing a financial safety net to a focus on building the capacities of individuals to plan for their futures and move into employment. In this respect, Australia shares a broadly similar trajectory to welfare reforms in other industrialized countries, where the priority in recent years has been on reducing "welfare dependency" and "activating" recipients though individualized interventions. In Australia, as in other jurisdictions, this policy direction has attracted considerable criticism from welfare advocates and academic observers. New "active" income support arrangements have been critiqued for penalizing the vulnerable, ignoring the special challenges faced by groups such as single parents, and lacking necessary material supports, such as transport or childcare subsidies (Goodin 2001; Howard 2006).

Other critics utilizing a governmentality or Foucauldian framework have focused directly on the capacity-building elements of Australian welfare reform, arguing that these reflect a broader governmental project of neo- or advanced liberalism to discipline and normalize the "ethical"

orientations and practices of welfare recipients (Dean 1995, 1998; McDonald and Marston 2005; McDonald, Marston, and Buckley 2003a). Governmentality studies, such as Mitchell Dean's (1995, 1998) research on income support for the unemployed, Catherine McDonald, Greg Marston, and Amma Buckley's (2003, 2005) studies of state-funded employment services, and Barbara Cruikshank's (1993) research on welfare reform in the United States, tend to focus on disciplinary and normalizing aspects of contemporary social assistance systems. They show how an individual's work upon his/herself may greatly increase his/her ability to undertake some activities, such as writing a job application letter that sells their employment and personal attributes, but the same initiatives "decrease the number of different ways a person might be able to respond in a given situation; they narrow behavioral options" (McWhorter, 1999, 179–80). In other words, government-sponsored initiatives to support individual capacity building are seen as promoting neoliberal ethical capacities, such as individual responsibility and entrepreneurial self-government, at the expense of alternative ethical capacities.

Other analysts focusing particularly on the post-1996 reforms of the Howard Coalition Government in Australia have argued that compulsory services for income support recipients may "open the lives and beings of vulnerable persons to intrusion by potentially alien personal and cultural values," and they have further noted that the income support recipient is no longer "regarded as the best judge of her own needs and prospects" (Shaver 2002, 341). Despite the policy rhetoric of autonomy, empowerment, and enablement, these capacity-building initiatives are portrayed as attempts to discipline and normalize welfare recipients through close surveillance and the imposition of narrow neoliberal identities and subjectivities.

While I agree with many of these analyses, it is also important to consider whether there are points at which contemporary capacity-building initiatives can be separated from processes of normalization. To consider this question, I draw upon Foucault's later studies on the governance of the self and others, which explicitly considered forms of work on the self that did not decrease behavioral options. Foucault used the phrase "technologies of the self" to denote practices that "permit individuals to effect by their own means or with the help of others a certain number of operations on their own bodies and souls, thoughts, conduct, and way of being, so as to transform themselves in order to attain a certain state of happiness, purity, wisdom, perfection, or immortality" (1990, 18). Foucault was concerned with technologies of the self as a practice of freedom and was interested in the Hellenistic practice and concept of caring for the self, which he suggested offered an alternative model to dominant contemporary modes of subjectivity (1988a). The work of governmentality theorists such as

Dean, McDonald and Cruikshank has been very important in highlighting the ways that many income support programs limit behavioral options. However, it is also important to utilize theoretical tools that allow us as researchers to ask if some programs incorporate an imagining and building up of what could be, and a rejection of normalizing and totalizing relations to oneself. If as researchers we only examine these programs through the lens of dominant normalizing discourses and disciplinary practices, then these questions are not asked and the possibility that such spaces may exist or are being opened up is not considered. The lens of "care of the self" allows these questions to be asked, and possibilities to be considered, without losing the important insight that such programs may involve practices of normalization and discipline.

This chapter poses these questions in relation to two major Australian capacity-building programs for single parents receiving income support that operated between 1989 and 2006; namely the Jobs, Education, and Training (JET) program (1989–2006) and Personal Adviser (PA) program (2003–06). It does this through a critical analysis of the official policy practices of the JET and PA programs as described in policy documents, and an examination of clients' experiences with these programs, as articulated in interviews with single mothers in 2005 and 2006, through the lens of Foucault's work on the care of the self.

The JET and PA programs are interesting case studies because of their relative size (they are the two largest Australian programs that have attempted to develop income support recipients' capabilities through one on one advice and counseling) and because they invoke two distinctly different political rationalities. JET invoked social democratic discourses in which participation in the public sphere was a privilege which should be extended to other groups that had been excluded, such as women with children, through the provision of greater opportunities for education and training. The PA program invoked new-paternalist discourses in which women with children and people with a disability needed new obligations so that they would be compelled to become more included within the public sphere. Empirical studies that inquire into the nature of these spaces not only contribute to more nuanced understandings of income support programs, but also to the "renewing [of] the conceptual categories that dominate the way we approach all these problems of social guarantees and security" (Foucault 1988c, 166), and the efforts to bring about positive social change.

Capabilities, Power, and the Welfare State

The governmentality literature in English speaking countries has taken up and applied Foucault's argument that it is necessary for political theory to

free itself from a sovereign model of power. This model of power, which has dominated much political thought, conceives of power as something that is transmitted from the state downward and is possessed by a person or group, and furthermore suggests that power relationships can be separated from knowledge relationships. In contrast, Foucault conceives of modern power relations as "capillary" in nature and embedded within other types of relations such as knowledge relationships or sexual relationships (Foucault 1990, 94). Foucault also emphasizes the role of institutions, including institutions beyond the state, through his emphasis on governance, which he defines as a collection of structured attempts to act upon others by acting upon their conduct, that are informed by governmentalities (ways of thinking about the practice of governance) (Gordon 1991, 2).

One of the governmentality literature's key contribuitions has been detailed empirical studies illustrating the particular practices through which institutions produce individuals and their subjectivities (Cruikshank 1993; Dean 1995, 1998). This touches upon aspects of Beck and Beck-Gernsheim's (2002) concern with the *institutional individualization of social life* but is also distinctly different. Both approaches emphaize that today individuals are tied into networks of institutional regulations that place new controls and demands upon them and that a distinctive feature of these guidelines is their requirement that individuals take action on their own behalf. Beck and Beck-Gernsheim contrast the guidelines of the modern welfare state, which tends to involve "offers of services or incentives to take action" with traditional guidelines, which they argue tended to involve severe restrictions, or prohibitions rather than incentives (Beck and Beck-Gernsheim 2002, 3). While institutional practices are seemingly central to their thesis, Beck and Beck-Gernsheim (2002) devote very little attention to the ways in which institutions act upon individuals. In contrast, governmentality studies have been concerned to illuminate the particular ways of thinking (rationalities) that orientate activities of governing and the specific practices that institutions have used to act upon the conduct of others. Governmentality studies, and research inspired by Foucault's insights, bring to the individualization debate insights into the relations of power and knowledge which produce individuals as individuals and as particular kinds of individuals.

Foucault and those inspired by his research argue that power relations produce individuals' capabilities rather than simply repressing them (Foucault 1990). This perspective on power renders problematic an important idea within the liberal model of freedom—that the development of individuals' capabilities necessarily allows them to resist the power of the sovereign. Through his work on governance and disciplinary power, Foucault

demonstrates that the development of one's capabilities and the promotion of specific freedoms may be tied to the intensification of power relations, and that the enhancement of certain capacities through relations of power can in itself block "many other viable forms of life" (Hoy 2004). The aim of many contemporary governmentality studies, and other studies drawing upon Foucault's thought, is to make visible the relationship in contemporary life between the development of capabilities and power relations. Foucault's conceptualization of the exercise of power as governance, or the management of possibilities, also highlights that the actions of an individual or group are not determined by the exercise of power, but rather that there are several possible courses of action they may take. In this way, it is possible to imagine resistance as the creative traversing of the field of possible action rather than solely the negation, or reversal, of force relations (Foucault et al. 2003, 139).

Foucault's later works moved away from a "demonstration-denunciation of a vast empire of normalization" (Gros 2005, 512), and explicitly recognized that positive social change requires that the uncovering of regimes of domination is accompanied by the development of new forms of life. An important innovation at the same time was his development of a theoretically elaborated concept of domination, which he distinguished from a nominal conception of power as follows: "When an individual or social group manages to block a field of relations of power, to render them impassive and invariable and to prevent all reversibility of movement—by means of instruments which can be economic, political, or military means—we are facing what can be called a state of domination" (1988a, 3). Liberation from states of domination, such as the liberation of colonial people from their colonizers, is a necessary precondition for the practice of freedom, argues Foucault. However, emancipation is "not sufficient to establish the practice of liberty that will later on be necessary for this people, this society and these individuals to decide upon receivable and acceptable kinds of their existence [*sic*] or political society" (Foucault 1988a, 3). Instead, what is necessary is the development of new ways of being, and it is in the context of this concern that he examines the practice of the "care of the self" in Hellenistic culture. His analysis of Hellenistic practice simultaneously aims to destabilize the contemporary relationship between the subject and truth through a demonstration of how this relationship has changed throughout history, and to provide the grounds for individuals to develop new relations to themselves and new forms of life.

Contemporary practices of the self are dominated by the imperative to know ourselves, and Foucault suggests that seeking one's "innermost truth will always be to continue to obey" (Gros 2005, 510). Foucault argues that

"in the modern west I am only a subject of truth from start to finish of my subjection to the other" (Gros 2005, 510). An alternative model that rejects the idea of a pre-existing natural self, and does not involve a continuous subjection of the self to the other, lies in the Hellenistic practices of care of the self. In these practices, the injunction to know the self was always subordinated to the imperative to "care for the self," and it was through caring for oneself that one came to know oneself. This practice involves an *askēsis*, a long "work of the self on the self, an elaboration of the self by the self, a progressive transformation of the self by the self by which one takes responsibility in a long labour," and through which one prepares oneself for challenges that one may face in the future (Foucault et al. 2005, 16, 497–99). Foucault was not advocating a revival of Hellenistic ethics, but was rather more specifically suggesting that some of its elements, including the "idea of a work of the self on the self," could acquire "a contemporary meaning" (Veyne, 1997, 231).

While Foucault appears to see that this model of self-constitution and relationship between the subject and truth provided the grounds for the development of ways out of the simultaneously individualizing and totalizing practices of the state, the governmentality literature has largely ignored these later works. Instead it has primarily confined itself to exploring how the constitution of the self is connected to the ever-tightening grip of practices of domination, rather than how practices of self-constitution may help individuals to reject such domination.[1] Foucault's widely cited suggestion that "maybe the target nowadays is not to discover what we are but to refuse what we are. We have to imagine and to build up what we could be to get rid of this kind of political 'double bind,' which is the simultaneous individualization and totalization of modern power structures" implies the need both to critique existing structures and imagine alternatives (Foucault et al. 2003, 134).

Those contemporary commentators who have examined Foucault's positive contribution to politics have emphasized the need for "the maximization of freedom as self-definition, a freedom accomplished in and through the very act of personalized creative resistance to the forces of external constraint" (Tobias 2005, 69). However, as Saul Tobias argues, this emphasis on the ability of individuals to resist domination and exercise agency has been largely abstracted "from the concrete context and conditions under which chosen ends can be effectively pursued" (2005, 70). The case of single parents and income support brings to the foreground the problem that individuals are not only capable of practicing freedom but also have certain material needs, such as shelter, nutrition, and affiliation, that must be met for these capabilities to be realized (Tobias 2005, 69). In

this way, this chapter not only uses Foucault's work on care of the self to interrogate contemporary Australian income support programs, but also uses this case to critique and extend contemporary interpretations of Foucault.[2]

The empirical analysis draws upon a review of a range of relevant texts including policy documents, staff manuals, documents provided to clients, Hansard reports,[3] and media releases, along with unstructured interviews with service providers and policy makers in 2006. Studies of political rationalities usually draw upon official documents and the discourses of those who design and implement programs of governance. Less attention has been paid to the subjects of governance and the ways in which they take up, resist, and mediate these practices of governance.[4] This silence has the effect (intentional or otherwise) of suggesting that programs of rule are taken up unproblematically by their targets. This is also a problem if it is accepted that resistance to contemporary modes of governance may involve ways of creatively utilizing the different forms of action made possible under neoliberal forms of governance. Such creative utilization may open up spaces for a care of the self, although this space may not be evident from a review of the rationalities of governance alone.

Therefore this chapter also draws from unstructured thematic interviews with a group of thirty single parents who were receiving income support and had at least one child aged less than seven years at the time of their first interview in 2005. Participants were re-interviewed approximately twelve months later in 2006. At both interviews, all interviewees were asked if they had been invited to participate in these programs, and the following themes were explored: expectations of and reactions to the interview, their relationship with the staff member from Centrelink (the national benefits agency), the types of relations to self these programs promoted, and the material details of what had occurred (such as receipt of a printed plan).

Forming and Reforming Single Parents

Single parents can only be governed as a collective if they are known as such, and within the early decades of the Australian welfare state, they were not. Instead of a collective known as single parents, there were, until the late 1970s, collectives such as widows, unmarried mothers, and deserted wives. Widows became the first single women with children to receive income support benefits from the federal government in 1942. Later, benefits were extended to other groups, and by the late 1970s, all single persons who were in financial need and had a dependent child were entitled to a payment. However, policy documents continued to discuss "separated wives,"

"de facto wives," and "de jure widowers," and to provide different payments according to the route by which an individual came to have a dependent child and be single or separated (Hammond 1980). Administrative categories, such as widows, constitute the very realities that policies act upon (Cruikshank 1999, 111). By the late 1970s, considerable policy resources were being devoted to locating and creating the data necessary to produce a unified grouping of "single parents" (Hammond 1980). This collective of single parents had firmly been established within the policy imagination by the mid-1980s. Given the establishment of single parents as a collective, there began two decades of continuous and systematic investigations into the problem of the growth of the population of single parents.

The most comprehensive of the early investigations was the paper *Bringing Up Children Alone: Policies for Sole Parents* (Raymond 1987), produced as part of the two year *Social Security Review* (SSR) (1986 to 1988). This paper identified two central problems: the growth in the number of women with children relying on income support due to a dramatic increase in the overall number of single parents and their low labor market participation rates (Raymond 1987, 28),[5] and secondly the high rates of poverty among single parents who were primarily women. Reflecting this, the review recommended increased benefit levels, the continuation of payments for a short period after parents lost eligibility due to paid work, and "intervention at an early stage, to help sole parents with improving their levels of skills and confidence, to provide job search assistance, and to provide access to suitable childcare at a reasonable cost" (Raymond 1987, 129). This final recommendation was implemented in the form of the Jobs, Education, and Training (JET) program, which was launched by the Hawke Labor government in 1989. JET combined material assistance (in the form of childcare subsidies and education supplements) and interpersonal assistance (assistance with making choices around employment and education, including selecting education programs and child care), and marked the first practical demonstration of an emerging official concern with the planning abilities of income support recipients. Until 2006, this linking of individualized interpersonal assistance to limited material supports such as childcare subsidies remained the primary approach to "reforming" single parents and transforming their income support payments. However, with the introduction of the next major federal program targeted at single parents, the Personal Adviser (PA) program, the particular way that these elements were twinned was changed.

Moving toward an "Active Society": The JET Program

While the JET program linked the provision of material assistance to counseling, an analysis of the Parliamentary Hansard and policy documents reveals that the provision of material assistance was most strongly emphasized in the program, and the techniques the JET adviser used to provide counseling were not a central concern (Australian House of Representatives 1989, 1741; Australian Senate 1988, 3435). Some JET advisers developed formal written plans with clients, but there was no effort at the policy level to encourage a systematic approach to how advisers would develop the plans. This contrasts with the Personal Adviser program, where government ministers and federal agencies made explicit that the development of a written plan, and the advice given in developing this, were the primary forms of assistance (Vanstone 2002). The existing JET program continued until 2006, but in a modified form.

New income support programs for single parents in Australia are invariably implemented and experienced within several dominant and overlapping discourses regarding single parents, including: official state discourses concerning welfare dependency; public moral panics concerning the sexual morality and work ethics of single mothers, and counterdiscourses from welfare rights advocates that attempt to emphasize the "normality" of single parents; and official state and public discourses about appropriate practices of motherhood. Interviewees frequently invoked elements of these dominant discourses and sometimes subordinate counterdiscourses to explain their experiences of JET (and other programs). While interviews with single mothers provide insights into the operation of JET (and also the PA program),[6] I do not assume that their experience represents some uncontested evidence of the real nature of these programs. Rather, drawing on Joan Scott (1992, 37), I recognize "the discursive nature of 'experience' and the politics of its production."[7]

I present two cases that illustrate the points at which the images and discourses surrounding single parenthood, motherhood, and the state connected with interviewees' experiences of the JET program. These points of connection illustrate how broader discourses about motherhood and single parents structure and shape how single parents experience JET and utilize it. In particular, the first case illustrates how the dominance of discourses about irresponsible single mothers and those who "[ab]used the system" acted to buttress some interviewees' acceptance of the close monitoring of single parents' activities through JET (and also the PA program), and to foreclose their reflection on how these programs could be creatively utilized. The second case illustrates how some interviewees incorporated the capabilities they gained with the support of the JET program towards a

practice of caring for the self. Their rejection of dominant discourses about single mothers buttressed their ethic of caring for the self and vice versa. The two individual cases that I am presenting here represent two distinct types of experience of JET that emerged when I looked across the thirty interviews rather than two unique individual experiences.

The first case I will present is that of Anne-Marie.[8] When I interviewed Anne-Marie in 2005, she was twenty-one years old, had a two-year-old child whom she was raising alone, and had been studying full-time for the previous two years. Throughout the interview, she frequently referred to cases of single mothers who lacked initiative or motivation, or "used the system." When I asked her about the impending new requirements for single mothers, she began by saying,

> I've heard some bad things about it on the news about how people, I don't know if you heard that show [*Today Tonight*],[9] there was a whole group of young people on the side of the street that had children and they were saying, "Oh, it's so bad and I've got no qualifications." And I thought, "Well go out there and get one." Like, if I don't have any qualifications—I know that they have got a ton of babies—and I was like, "you know?" they're not six yet, you've got another five years to go get something //yeah//. Some of us thought, "you know?" I mean all they have to do is like a year's computer course or something to get a good job. //yeah// . . . And I think what are they going to do when their kid's at school anyway? I mean, they've got school for like six hours, are they going to sit at home and do nothing? or still get income that the government's giving them and they're not doing anything. //yeah// "you know?" a part time job is not difficult, or something. (Anne-Marie interview 2005; text inside "//" indicates interruptions by the interviewer)

Anne-Marie clearly invokes dominant state and public discourses regarding welfare dependency and also signals her distance from this culture when she says, "Some of us thought, 'you know?'"

Anne-Marie's reflections upon her place within the moral hierarchy of single mothers arose again when we discussed the JET program and she revealed that she had been required to attend a face-to-face interview to discuss her goals in life when she applied for a JET childcare subsidy. When I asked, "how was that experience? Was it something that was useful or . . . ?" she quickly raised concerns about irresponsible single mothers who rely upon others as follows: "It was really good, yeah. I think it should be done for everyone. Because I know a lot [of] great friends of mine that have started um courses just because they "you know?" get two dollars a day . . . child care and then drop out a couple months later. //yeah// So that's a pity "you know?" Yeah. Using off the system [laughs]" (Anne-Marie interview 2005). She described the interaction between the adviser and herself as

"mainly [the JET adviser] asking questions," and she noted, "They didn't give me any advice, it was just all questions" (Anne-Marie interview 2005). Anne-Marie accepted that compulsory interviews were necessary to distinguish between those who were "using off the system" and those who had legitimate study plans. The interview also appeared useful for her insofar as the JET adviser's acceptance of what she was told confirmed to Anne-Marie that her plans were legitimate.

What do Anne-Marie's experiences illustrate about the spaces for the expansion of behavioral options and self-care that are opened up by the JET program? Firstly, it is important to recognize that the education supplement ($120 per month) and the JET childcare subsidy played a very important role in assisting her to gain postsecondary qualifications. By 2006, Anne-Marie had completed a Technical and Further Education (TAFE) diploma, and eighteen months of an education degree. At the same time, some aspects of Anne-Marie's JET experience, and in particular the relationship between her and the JET adviser, did not support the expansion of behavioral options, or individual autonomy.

Foucault's work on the role of the guide within the West is useful here. He argues that while the practice of the care of the self in the ancient world depended upon the presence of a guide, the role of this guide differed greatly from that which would later be played by the priest, the director of the monastery, and the social workers and counselors of the welfare state (Foucault et al. 2005, 496). The relationship between the guide and the guided in the ancient world was supported by a multiplicity of social relations (including strictly scholastic organizations, private counselors and family relationships) (Foucault et al. 2005, 497) and unlike the JET interaction described here, the individual who was guided did not need to say a great deal about herself, or reveal her secrets. Instead, it was important that the guide spoke so as to persuade the individual guided (the disciple) of the precepts that would allow her to know how to act in "all circumstances of life" (Foucault 1987, 163). Such relationships of guidance and advice were sought to overcome an unfortunate event, or for a specific period of one's life, and since the role of the guide was always orientated toward an eventual autonomy they did not require the complete obedience of the disciple. It was not necessary, then, for the guides to have complete knowledge of a disciple such that they "may exert complete power over" them (Foucault 1987, 163).

Ostensibly JET was about increasing individuals' financial autonomy. However the relationship Anne-Marie experienced did not appear to be "a relationship between two wills" (Foucault 1987, 163) that supported her autonomy in a broader sense and helped her to develop tools for situations

that she might encounter in the future. Instead it was a relationship in which she was encouraged to submit to the assessment of the adviser concerning which of her ambitions were valid. Practical difficulties with this relationship structure become apparent when considered in the context of problems that Anne-Marie faced during the subsequent year (2005–06). During the twelve months between my first and second interview with Anne-Marie, she studied full time, engaged in part-time employment, and had full caring responsibility for her two-year-old son Daniel. At the first interview, she argued that preparing for a future career was the best way she could help her son,[10] and was critical of parents receiving income support who were not studying or working. But her stance was directly challenged that year by Daniel's kindergarten teacher, who argued that Daniel was not meeting expected developmental goals and that Anne-Marie needed to spend more time with him. Ultimately, Anne-Marie met the kindergarten teacher's expectations and managed to continue her degree by only studying when Daniel was at child-care or asleep and reducing her paid work (and thus total income). But in describing this year, the phrases "tired," "no time for myself," "some days I just could not cope with Daniel," and "I just wanted to quit the study" arose.

While Foucault describes the speech of the guide in the ancient world as providing individuals with equipment that comes to their aid when an event occurs (Foucault 2005, 326), the JET interaction had not provided Anne-Marie with tools that she could use in this time of challenges. It should be emphasized here that many of the difficulties Anne-Marie encountered were not unique but experienced by many other interviewees.

The second case study I present is that of Katherine, whose narratives around parenting and income support contrast with Anne-Marie's. Katherine was also studying for a university degree, sometimes obtained personal and childcare support from her parents, and became a mum at a relatively young age (twenty-three years). Katherine, like Anne-Marie, was highly aware of the negative social assumptions about single parents. Only a short way into the interview, she raised the topic and her concerns. She began by discussing the complexity of the income support system, and argued that there was a substantial lack of information provided to individuals to enable them to negotiate the complex payment system and its relationship to child support, childcare benefits, and the tax system. She contrasted this with the detailed "TaxPack" that assists taxpayers to submit individual tax returns, and reflected that this difference appeared to be based on an assumption that income support clients were "stupid."

While Katherine did not flatly reject the idea that some people may benefit from motherly advice on caring for children or choosing a childcare

center, she argued strongly that there was a very wide range of diversity among single parents. She reflected, "there is just a real lack of understanding of the range of people that are in that group and the diversity . . . everything from . . . domestic violence and mental illness, and health and education and the number of children. It's huge!" (Katherine interview 2005). She suggested that out of this mental picture of "what a single mum is" came an unwillingness to give clients "the accurate and numerical and guts of . . . information" they needed and "that some single mums would find really helpful to plan and all that stuff." Secondly, from this picture came "the bit of a patronizing attitude that you wouldn't plan, 'you know?' to do anything else with the rest of your life; 'you know?' if *they* didn't help you" (Katherine interview 2005).

Throughout my interview with Katherine, she took a critical (as distinct from negative) and questioning attitude toward dominant discourses regarding single parents, "welfare reforms," and the processes surrounding income support. This stance also shaped her experience of JET. When I first asked Katherine about JET, she replied that the adviser had given her information about childcare that had turned out to be true, but that for a long time she had not fully understood. When I asked, "Can you tell me a bit about the advice that the JET Adviser gave you?" she replied,

> I don't think she gave me an awful lot of advice because I pretty much knew what I wanted to do, I knew what course I wanted to study, I had already talked to the [university] about what "you know?" times, . . . what sort of load I would be doing, what days it was so, "you know?" I had that pretty much sorted. I really got her support and advice in terms of child care. . . . That was probably another instance, I guess, where I went for information as . . . I had already done my own investigation into what child care places were good around here. I had been on the waiting list for [university] child care and I hadn't been able to get in and she [the JET adviser] gave me some really good advice but also it was a little bit of that . . . feeling of sort of patronizing, right, but it was like *[long pause]* . . . I mean, she was great, she was a very nice lady but she was saying things like . . . and "keep an eye on him in the morning," . . . and I thought . . . are you telling me this because I am a single mum essentially, because it is like you wouldn't tell your average mum you met on the street that, which is pretty obvious? *[laughs]* (Katherine interview 2005)

Katherine went to the JET adviser seeking specific advice in terms of childcare. While she received some good advice about how to find the childcare spots she needed, Katherine interpreted the adviser's actions as demonstrating negative assumptions about the abilities of single parents.

Katherine did not understand the JET adviser as an expert whose judgments regarding single parents should necessarily be accepted and while she had never had to attend a compulsory JET interview she objected strongly to the concept of compulsory interviews. For Katherine, compulsory interviews were an assertion by the federal government that they were her "boss" and illustrated that they did not respect her "autonomy and purpose." While she recognized that there were things that she could learn from JET and other programs, she approached them with a certain ethic that involved placing a high value on her own well-being and her autonomy while also being concerned for her daughter's welfare.

Foucault recognizes that creative practices of self-constitution need to draw upon material that is already available within one's society (Sawaki 2004, 176). Specifically, he argues that the practices of the self, through which the subject constitutes herself, are "not something that the individual invents by herself," but rather are things that are within, and practiced and suggested by, the society in which the subject is located (Foucault 1988a, 11). It is possible that in contemporary Australian life, such cultural practices may be contained within liberal state institutions and programs rather than always outside of them. Both Anne-Marie and Katherine utilized material support from JET to increase the types of employment they may obtain in the future, but the nature of their relationship to themselves was different. Katherine also appeared to gain other tools that assisted her in practicing her freedom.

The Personal Adviser Program

In 2001 the Howard Coalition government announced a new Personal Adviser (PA) program and new activity requirements for single parents as part of a series of changes targeted at income support recipients who had no or very limited activity requirements, such as persons with a disability, older unemployed persons, and Indigenous Australians living in remote areas. PAs were defined as "not expert . . . not the specialists," but rather as "service brokers" who would "broker which specialist assistance or which sorts of assistance people should be referred to" (Australian Senate 2001, 459). With the introduction of the PA program, the identification of barriers and plans was retagged as "assistance." A ministerial media release stated that "Personal Advisers will assist people identify [*sic*] their barriers to work and help them develop a plan to overcome these obstructions. The assistance will take into account a customer's goals and aspirations, their existing skills and education, their health and other personal circumstances, their family situation and caring responsibilities" (Vanstone 2002). Requirements for single parents were gradated according to the age of their

youngest child, with annual PA interviews commencing when their youngest turned six, and the requirement to complete six hours of an "approved activity" (such as education or paid work) each week commencing once their youngest child turned twelve. The forty-six-page *Parents and Employment Booklet* (Australian Government: FaCS 2005) provided to all parents receiving income support emphasized that the process would develop and enhance the individual's capabilities even when they were already meeting their "activity requirements."

Individuals with participation requirements would need to record specific details of how they were meeting these in a *Participation Record* booklet, but it was emphasized that individuals would have freedom to decide how to meet these requirements. The *Parents and Employment Booklet* notes, "The requirements are flexible and will be tailored to your circumstances. How you manage your participation is up to you. You just need to make sure that at the end of every 26 weeks (six months) you've met your required total" (Australian Government: FaCS 2005). The PA interview and the process of developing a Participation Plan was described in promotional material as transforming individual lives through changing attitudes toward paid work and increasing individuals' confidence (Australian Government: Centrelink 2003d; Australian Government: Centrelink 2003e). A client who had an interview was to receive a printed Participation Plan containing current activities, current goals, steps the client would take to achieve his/her goals, any actions the PA would take (such as referrals), and when Centrelink would recontact the client to review their progress (Australian Government: Centrelink 2003e).[11] According to official documents this planning process and the hard copy of the Participation Plan were intended to encourage clients to be active in preparing for their futures, to enable them to make active choices about how to balance their participation requirements, and to help keep them on track by serving as a tangible reminder of the goals and activities that they had agreed to (Social Research Centre 2004, iii).

Insofar as the Participation Plan achieved these things, it may be tempting to draw parallels between it and the Hellenistic *hupomnemata* that Foucault argues was a key support in the practice of the care of the self, together with practices of listening and meditation. In the ancient world, the *hupomnemata* "could be account books, public registers, individual notebooks serving as memoranda. . . . Into them one entered quotations, fragments of works, examples, and actions to which one had been witness to or of which one had read the account, reflections or reasonings one had heard or had come to mind. They constituted a material memory of things read, heard, or thought" (Foucault 2000, 209) and were "reread from time

to time so as to reactualize their contents" (Foucault 1987, 500). Cressida Heyes draws such a parallel in her study of *Weight Watchers* when she suggests that this organization's "leaflets handed out at meetings, magazine articles, website materials, and even cookbooks" (2006, 140) are *hupomnemata* because, like the Greek *hupomnemata* that was understood as a "manual for reacting to situations in which one might find oneself, a treatise for adjusting one's behavior to fit the circumstances," (Foucault 1990, 106) and which one meditated upon, the *Weight Watchers* material emphasizes that clients should make their own choices and approach food flexibly. Clients are encouraged to carry the leaflets around, and to reread them when necessary.

Heyes does recognize that in the ancient-world individuals collected quotes in their *hupomnemata* largely for their own use, while *Weight Watchers*' material is largely prewritten for clients and only provides small "interactive moments"(Heyes 2006, 144). However, she does not explore these differences in practices between the two contexts, but instead concentrates upon the language used and concludes that "the *hupomnemata* of these organizations [*Weight Watchers*] use asketic language[12] to conceal their implication in normalization" (Heyes 2006, 126). In partial contrast, I suggest that the effects of such practices of governance (of the self and others) are connected to *both* the content of what is said, read, and written *and* how these practices of speaking, reading, and self-writing are carried out and what they consist of. Indeed Foucault's oeuvre has demonstrated the valuable insights that can be gained from paying attention to the material practices and technologies of governance (Rose, 2006, 84–85).

While one can draw certain parallels between the role of Participation Plans and the role self writing (*hupomnemata)* in the ancient world, there are also radical differences in the practices that produced these forms of self-writing. The *hupomnemata* was assembled by each individual primarily for his own use in caring for himself and was to assist in developing and supporting the autonomy of the individual. While the PA policy material emphasizes that "Participation Plans" are to support clients in actively preparing for their futures, the whole process of developing and preparing these plans is not orientated around the autonomy of the individual. Instead, the Participation Plans emerge out of interactions that have rigidly asymmetrical power relations and a mode of questioning that has resonances of relations between director and monk in early Christianity, and later between social workers and clients within the welfare state. As I described above, the JET interview sometimes involved a detailed questioning of the client, but within the PA program, this structure was intensified and was codified within bureaucratic procedures that included an

electronic template (a "Participation Tool") that specified all the personal details the PA was to obtain (Australian Government: FaCS 2003). For reasons of space, I will only outline the template headings and main questions here (see Table 11.1), but even these give an indication of the vast amount of intimate knowledge that was sought within the interaction. The most intimate questions, such as those under the heading "family situation," were prefaced by the statement, "The next question is asked to help me find out a bit more about you in order to understand what options may be suitable to form part of your plan."

The telos of the questioning was to uncover those personal characteristics that might prevent an individual from becoming financially autonomous in the future and to "bring about long term attitudinal change among customers not really looking to work or participate in other activities" (Social Research Centre 2004, 11). In a series of remarkably similar PA "success stories" presented in Centrelink press releases, this telos was clearly outlined. Two of these releases open with a description of how PAs persuade clients to confide in them, thereby uncovering the clients' depression or low self-esteem. Both of these press releases conclude with the PA subsequently finding out that the client's mental health and workforce participation had been radically transformed because of the PA interaction (Australian Government: Centrelink 2003b; Australian Government: Centrelink 2003c). Within the PA interaction, the adviser was supposed to

Table 11.1: Main questions in the PA Participation Toolset[13]

"Activities: can you tell me about some of the activities you have been doing over the last few months?"
"Interests: what are your interests?"
"Literacy"
"Education"
"Work skills"
"Last employment: can you tell me the main reason you stopped working in the last job you had?"
"Health: how would you describe your overall health?"
"Transport: in terms of transport, how do you get where you need to go?"
Typical week ("What happens in a typical week for you?")
Family situation ("Can you tell me about your current family situation?")
"Interactions "What interactions do you have with others?"
"Children's carer: who is the most responsible for the care of your children?"

uncover personal characteristics that might assist or inhibit clients' financial autonomy in the future. As I argued above in my discussion of the JET program, it is useful to contrast this use of intimate questioning with the role of the guide in the Hellenistic practices of caring for the self. The Hellenistic guide was not concerned with uncovering intimate details about the individual because they aimed to arm "the subject with a truth that he did not know and that did not dwell within him" and to have the individual who was guided to progressively put this learned and memorized truth into practice to create a self that did not yet exist (Foucault et al. 2005, 501). This practice of learning and memorizing truth was to provide individuals with "the weapons and the courage" (Foucault et al. 2005, 495) to keep control in the face of events that could occur (Foucault et al. 2005, 498).

Within the PA interaction, this emphasis was inverted. The aim was for the PA to uncover the truth about the individual, such as their low self-esteem, that already exists and dwells within them. Where the Hellenistic practice of caring for oneself involved a long work of the self upon the self, the PA press releases suggest that once the clients have revealed the truth about themselves, such as their negative attitudes about paid work or lack of self-esteem, they are quickly transformed. Further, they suggest that within the interview itself, the client needs only to remain open to questioning and should take a primarily passive orientation to themselves.[14] Relatively little attention was paid to providing clients with the tools they needed to manage events that they might encounter in their attempts to develop new capabilities in relation to paid work or education where the clients felt that such tools would be helpful.

My claim that within the PA interview clients' obedience to the advice and questioning of the PAs was encouraged requires some further elaboration with reference to interviewees' experiences. Within single mothers' narratives about the PA interaction, they clearly articulated that they were very conscious of the in-depth questioning they experienced, and that they received very little knowledge from PAs in return. Interviewees were not only aware of this structure but most were critical of it. Their dissatisfaction with the imbalance between the knowledge the PA gained about the client and the knowledge the PA provided to the client arose most starkly in my interview with Kelly. When I asked her, "Did you find anything about it [the PA interview] useful?" she immediately replied,

> Nah, nah it's [a] total waste of my time, well I shouldn't say that because . . . I had to do it, it was compulsory // Yeah // . . . It was a waste of effort, there was nothing that came out of it that I didn't know. And then what I wanted

> to know, she couldn't help me with anyway . . . I wanted confirmation on the [policy] changes . . . and she couldn't tell me. //
>
> Interviewer: Anything?
>
> // No, she basically said that she wasn't aware of the situation and . . . I said well this is the information I've got, told her where I got it from and in fact it's actually taken off of legislative sites.
>
> Interviewer: And she [*long pause*] didn't know?
>
> No, had no know[ledge]—and yet part of her job was to tell me how the changes were gonna affect me . . . she wasn't even sure whether voluntary work or study would come into the equation. And I said, pfff well what good is this? I said, well can you then tell me that? (Kelly interview 2006; text inside "//" indicates interruptions by the interviewer)

As she continued to describe her experience, Kelly went on to question why the PA required such detailed personal information about her. She stated:

> They wanted to know what I do . . . whether I care for kids, home duties, working, my goals, things relevant to me reaching my goals and . . . how will I reach them . . . she said . . . that it's only purely for their records. [long pause] And I said well that's good 'cause I don't want you to tell everybody else. // Okay // So I don't know what, who they were planning on telling, not that anybody else would be interested I mean, the tax office might care about the tax on what I earn, I'll tell 'em I work, "you know?" doesn't everybody have a goal of getting better? "you know?" of improving their financial circumstances, I mean *tsk* 99 point 9 percent of people. (Kelly interview 2006)

Kelly's statements can be read as a critique of the incompetence of a particular PA. However I also read her critique as striking more broadly at the structure of the relationship between the client and PA.

Kelly's experience was unique among the interviewees because she explicitly challenged the PA, but the concerns she expressed about being questioned intensely and being given little information in return were not unique and were found within the narratives of all interviewees who attended a PA interview. Like Kelly, other interviewees also argued that they wanted to improve their employment prospects, to develop their abilities to take up employment they found absorbing and worthwhile, to increase their financial stability, and to have their status as autonomous individuals respected. However, like Kelly they frequently found that these desires were not recognized in their interactions with PAs or with Centrelink staff, and in the changes proposed in the 2005 *Welfare to Work* budget package.

Conclusion

The PA and JET programs aimed to promote a number of client capabilities—such as employment skills and awareness of support services, as well as the ability to make clear plans, identify steps needed to fulfill them, and monitor their progress. These are the sort of capabilities that income support recipients and their advocates would probably accept as valuable and important. At the same time, the practices of the JET and PA programs were ultimately as constraining as they were enabling. Although Centrelink claimed that PAs helped customers[15] "towards actively determining their future" and "offer[ed] . . . support and encouragement with . . . current and future plans," the PA interview procedures were not orientated toward the autonomy of the individual. Instead they focused upon uncovering clients' existing characteristics and moving individuals off income support. Yet individuals are never the complete subjects of any single regime of governance (Rose 1996b, 140), and as the case studies I presented illustrate, single mothers actively mediated and resisted these discourses and practices. While the supports for developing capabilities offered within the PA and JET programs were tied into processes of normalization, some single mothers were aware that they could gain useful knowledge and obtain important services from PAs and JET advisers without fully submitting to the practices of these programs. Their critical awareness enabled them to incorporate these capabilities into what I am calling a practice of caring for the self—understood as expanding one's relation with one's environment and oneself, and arming oneself with the tools with which to face the future.

The point here is not simply to laud the existence of creative resistance toward attempts to govern, but rather to illustrate empirical instances of where the development of capabilities is separated from highly normalizing practices. Single mothers, like other individuals, need support to expand their relations with themselves and their environment, and there is a need for such support to be provided in ways that expand single parents' behavioral options and supports their autonomy. This point where single parents are attempting to separate the development of their capabilities from normalizing and disciplining practices is a point at which those who advocate positive social reforms need to intervene more clearly. Such interventions are urgently needed because single parents are currently experiencing the closing down of spaces that might permit the expansion of behavioral options. The Australian government is progressively implementing tougher part-time work requirements, effective reductions in payment levels, and the removal of childcare subsidies for clients studying for

degrees and diplomas. More than ever, there is a need for alternatives to be developed that answer a positive demand for social security.

Acknowledgements: I would like to thank the Centre for Social and Community Research, Murdoch University, where I was a Visiting Research Fellow in 2005 and a visitor in 2006, for providing facilities that assisted in the conduct of the field work for this project. I would like to thank Patricia Harris, Cosmo Howard, Ondine Park, Lyndal Sleep and Sara Dorow who read earlier versions of this paper and provided helpful comments.

Notes

1. Foucault suggests the relationship of self to self is not "the only point of possible resistance to political power," but rather because "governmentality implies the relationship of self to self," this may be an important point at which to intervene in relations of power (Foucault 1988a, 19).
2. This idea draws on Saul Tobias (2005) who argues that Martha Nussbaum's and Amartya Sen's work on capabilities is complementary to Foucault's work on care of the self.
3. Hansard is the official transcript of the proceedings of the Australian parliament.
4. Elizabeth Murphy's (2003) longitudinal qualitative study of mothers' experiences of infant feeding regimes is one study that does examine such practices.
5. The comparatively low rates of economic participation by married women was not addressed as a matter for concern.
6. JET continued until 2006 and many of the interviewees in my project had participated in it at some point.
7. While the affirmation of "experience" as incontestable evidence has been very important to much feminist work, I take as valid Scott's arguments that "[the] appeal to experience as uncontestable evidence, as an originary point of explanation . . . weakens the critical thrust of [feminist] histories of difference" because, by taking "as self-evident the identities of those whose experience is being documented," differences and identities are naturalized and "the possibility of examining those assumptions and practices that excluded considerations of difference in the first place" is lost (Scott 1992, 24–25). This accompanies a loss of the possibility for change in the way certain events, emotions, desires, and so on are experienced (Weedon 1999).
8. All of the names used in this paper are pseudonyms. In the transcripts the following conventions are used: [ ] are used to indicate text that has been inserted by the author to assist the reader; // are used to indicate where the speech of one speaker is interrupted by the other.
9. *Today Tonight* is a tabloid current affairs show similar to the U.S. show *Hard Copy*, and is aired on the national free-to-air TV network Channel Seven.

10. This stance was an explicit part of the official discourses at the time. For example, the *Parents and Employment Booklet* given to all parents receiving income support read, "Planning and preparing for a return to work as your children grow older, or staying connected to the workforce, is one of the best ways towards a secure future for you and your family" (Australian Government: FaCS 2005, 2).
11. Some of this information was obtained from printouts of the screens in the Personal Adviser plan obtained from the Australian Government: FaCS in 2004.
12. By "ascetic language," Heyes appears to mean language that recalls the Greek term *askēsis*, which denoted "*any* kind of practical training or exercise" (emphasis in the original) (Foucault, 2001, 143) and which Foucault defined elsewhere as "a work of the self on the self, an elaboration of the self by the self, a progressive transformation of the self by the self by which one takes responsibility in a long labour" (Foucault et al. 2005, 16).
13. This information was obtained from printouts of the screens in the Personal Adviser plan obtained from Australian Government: FaCS (2004).
14. This section draws upon ideas in Michael Humphries's (1997) analysis of changes in the practices of Christian confession.
15. Centrelink uses the term "customers" rather than clients.

Contributors

Michelle Brady is a PhD student in the Department of Sociology at the University of Alberta. Her research interests include governance, subjectivity and time, motherhood, welfare states in transition, and post-structuralist social theory. Her doctoral project applies Foucault's work on care of the self to an analysis of government capacity building programs for single mothers in Australia. Before taking up her graduate studies, she worked in the Australian federal government in social policy development.

Janine Brodie is Professor of Political Science at the University of Alberta. She is a fellow of the Royal Society of Canada and was appointed as a Canada Research Chair (Tier 1) in Social Governance and Political Economy in 2004. Dr. Brodie's publication and research foci are Canadian political economy and politics, gender and politics, social theory and policy, and governance in an era of globalization.

Harry Ferguson is Professor of Social Work at the University of the West of England. He has researched and published on child abuse and protection, domestic violence, fatherhood, men and masculinities, and theorizing social work and welfare. His books include *Protecting Children in Time: Child Abuse, Child Protection and the Consequences of Modernity* (2004, Palgrave Macmillan).

Paul Henman is a senior lecturer in social policy at the University of Queensland. His main research interest is in the nexus between social policy, public administration, and information technology, where he is an international expert on e-government. His most recent book, *Administering Welfare Reform: International Transformations in Welfare Governance* (2006, Policy Press), was edited with Menno Fenger. He is currently completing a book entitled *Governing Electronically: E-government and the reconfiguration of public administration, policy and power* (2008, Routledge).

Paul Hoggett is Professor of Politics and Director of the Centre for Psycho-Social Studies at the University of the West of England. He has a long-standing interest in the role of emotion and unconscious forces in political behavior, and his current work focuses on the "emotion work" required of regeneration workers as they negotiate the ethical dilemmas of their jobs. Major research contracts in the past have included the Home Office, Joseph

Rowntree, and the European Foundation. Previous books include *Partisans in an Uncertain World: The Psychoanalysis of Engagement* (1992, Free Association Books) and *Emotional Life and the Politics of Welfare* (2000, Macmillan).

Cosmo Howard is Assistant Professor in the Department of Political Science and School of Public Administration at the University of Victoria, British Columbia. His research interests include the application of theories of individualization to the study of public administration, the impact of welfare reform on front-line social service delivery, and the governance arrangements of national statistics agencies in a comparative perspective. He has recently published articles and chapters on street-level bureaucracy, contemporary civics education, and governance issues for public sector boards. He is coauthor of *Social, Policy, Public Policy: From Problem to Practice* (2001, Allen and Unwin).

Marj Mayo is Professor of Community Development at Goldsmith's College, University of London. Her research interests have been concerned with community development and adult community education, with a current focus upon community participation in urban regeneration. Her publications include *Communities and Caring: The Mixed Economy of Welfare* (1994, Palgrave Macmillan), *Imagining Tomorrow: Adult Education for Transformation* (1997, Niace), and *Cultures, Communities, Identities* (with Jo Campling, 2000, Palgrave Macmillan).

Chris Miller is Professor of Social and Community Development at the University of the West of England. He has considerable experience in the areas of community development, nonprofit organizations, public-sector trade unionism, and the organization and delivery of public services. Recent publications include *Public Service Trade Unionism and Radical Politics* (1996, Dartmouth) and *Producing Welfare: A Modern Agenda* (2004, Palgrave Macmillan). He is also Editor of the international *Community Development Journal*, published by Oxford University Press.

Melinda Mills is Co-Editor of *International Sociology* and is the Rosalind Franklin Research Fellow for the Department of Sociology at the University of Groningen. She has also worked at the University of Alberta, the University of Bielefeld (Germany), and the Free University Amsterdam (Netherlands). She is coeditor of *Globalization, Uncertainty and Youth in Society* (2005, Routledge) and *Globalization, Uncertainty and Men's Careers: An International Comparison* (2006, Edward Elgar Press). Recent publications

and research interests include: life-course research, cross-national comparative research, globalization, inequality, and event history methods.

Gerd Nollmann received a doctorate in sociology from the University of Muenster, Germany. He has taught sociology at the Universities of Duisburg-Essen and Muenster, where he is currently a Professor of Comparative Research. He has worked as a publisher and marketing director for Bertelsmann and Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht. In his scientific work, he focuses on the application of interpretive sociological theories to social research as well as the analysis of social inequalities. He is the author or editor of eight books and twenty articles in sociological journals.

Sasha Roseneil is Professor of Sociology and Social Theory, and Co-Director of the Birkbeck Institute for Social Research at Birkbeck College, University of London. She is also Professor II of Sociology in the Centre for Women's Studies and Gender Research at the University of Oslo. She is one of the founding editors of the journal *Feminist Theory*, and is the author of *Disarming Patriarchy* (1995, Open University Press) and *Common Women, Uncommon Practices: The Queer Feminisms of Greenham* (2000, Cassell). She is editor or coeditor of *Stirring It: Challenges for Feminism* (1994, Taylor and Francis), *Practising Identities* (1999, Macmillan), *Consuming Cultures* (1999, Macmillan), *Globalization and Social Movements* (2000, Palgrave), and special issues of the journals *Citizenship Studies* (2000), *Feminist Theory* (2001, 2003), *Current Sociology* (2004), and *Social Politics* (2004). Her latest book is *Sociability, Sexuality, Self: Relationality and Individualization* (2008, Routledge).

Hermann Strasser is Professor and Chair of Sociology at the University of Duisburg-Essen. His research focuses on the paradigmatic structure of sociological theories as well as the analysis of social change and social inequality. He is the author or editor of some twenty-five books and more than one hundred articles in sociological journals. Among his book publications are *The Normative Structure of Sociology* (1976, Routledge and Kegan Paul), *Introduction to Theories of Social Change* (with Susan C. Randall, 1981, Routledge and Kegan Paul), *Die Analyse sozialer Ungleichheit* (with John H. Goldthorpe, 1985, Westdeutscher Verlag), *Cocas Fluch* (with Thomas Schweer, 1994, Westdeutscher Verlag), and *Modern Germany* (with Harold Kerbo, 2000, McGraw-Hill).

Anna Yeatman is Professor and Canada Research Chair (Social Theory and Policy) in the Department of Political Science at the University of Alberta.

Her research interests include freedom and subjective experience, contemporary issues of personhood, citizenship, and human rights, democratic theory and practice, and embodied practices of self-awareness, teaching and learning. She is the author of *Bureaucrats, Femocrats, Technocrats: Essays on the Contemporary Australian State* (1990, Allen and Unwin) and *Postmodern Revisionings of the Political* (1994, Routledge), and the editor of *Activism and the Policy Process* (1998, Allen and Unwin).

Reference List

Adams, J. 2005. Max Weber's economy and society: A critical companion. In *The rule of the father: Patriarchy and patrimonialism in early modern Europe*, ed. C. Camic, P. Gorski, and D. Trubek, 237–67. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.

Alderson, A. S., and F. Nielsen. 2002. Globalization and the great u-turn: Income inequality trends in 16 OECD countries. *American Journal of Sociology* 107 (5): 1244–99.

Altman, D. 1982. *The homosexualization of America: The Americanization of the homosexual*. New York: St. Martin's Press.

Andersen, H., and L. B. Kaspersen. 2000. *Classical and modern social theory*. Malden, MA: Blackwell.

Atkinson, P., and D. Silverman. 1997. Kundera's immortality: The interview society and the invention of the self. *Qualitative Inquiry* 3 (3): 304.

Australian Government: Centrelink. 2003a. Kick starting new lives is all in a day's work: Victorian media release. Canberra: Centrelink, September 29.

———. 2003b. From depression the only way is up: Victorian media release. Canberra: Centrelink, August 18.

———. 2003c. A little bit of belief goes a long way: Victorian media release. Canberra: Centrelink, August 21.

———. 2003d. Taking a gamble on a gambler: Victorian media release. Canberra: Centrelink, August 15.

———. 2003e. Working with his people: Western Australia media release. Canberra: Centrelink, May 28.

Australian Government: DEWRS. 1998. Job seeker classification instrument. Homepage of Department of Employment, Workplace Relations and Small Business. Available at http://www.workplace.gov.au/jsci.

Australian Government: FaCS. 2003. Guide to social security law: 5.1.220 participation interviews for PP—Interview content. Available at http://pandora.nla.gov.au/pan/36600/20040102/www.facs.gov.au/guide/ssguide/351220.htm. Updated September 22. Accessed January 1, 2007.

———. 2004. Personal Adviser Plan Screen printouts, unpublished administrative documentation, Canberra: Department of Family and Community Services

———. 2005. Parenting and employment: A guide to support your workforce participation. Canberra: Department of Family and Community Services.

Australian House of Representatives. 1989. Social Security and Veterans' Affairs

Legislation Amendment Bill (no. 3) 1989: Second reading. *House of Representatives Hansard*, October 24. Canberra: Parliament of Australia.

Australian Senate. 1988. Question without notice: Pensioners and single parents. *Senate Hansard*. December 5. Canberra: Parliament of Australia.

———. 2001. Family and Community Services Portfolio: Australian Institute of Family studies, Community Affairs Legislation Committee, Estimates Committee. *Senate Hansard*. May 30. Canberra: Parliament of Australia.

Banks, S., and R. Williams. 2005. Accounting for ethical difficulties in social welfare work: Issues, problems and dilemmas. *British Journal of Social Work* 35 (7): 1005–22.

Barrett, C. 2005. *The social economics of poverty*. London: Routledge.

Barry, A. 1996. Lines of communication and spaces of rule. In *Foucault and political reason*, ed. A. Barry, T. Osbourne, and N. Rose, 123–41. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Baudrillard, J. 1994. *Simulacra and simulation*. Ann Arbor: Univeristy of Michigan Press.

Bauman, Z. 1993. *Postmodern ethics*. Oxford: Blackwell.

———. 2000. *Liquid modernity*. London: Polity.

———. 2001. *The individualized society*. Cambridge: Polity.

———. 2002a. Individually, together. In *Individualization: Institutionalized individualism and its social and political consequences, ed*. U. Beck and E. Beck-Gernsheim, xiv–xix. Cambridge: Polity.

———. 2002b. *Society under siege*. Cambridge: Polity.

———. 2003. *Liquid love: On the frailty of human bonds*. Cambridge: Polity.

———. 2004. *Identity: Conversations with Benedetto Vecchi*. Cambridge: Polity.

———. 2005. *Liquid life*. Cambridge: Polity.

Beck, U. 1992. *Risk society: Towards a new modernity*. London: Sage.

———. 1994. The reinvention of politics: Towards a theory of reflexive modernization. In *Reflexive modernization: Politics, tradition and aesthetics in the modern social order*, ed. U. Beck, A. Giddens, and S. Lash, 1–55. Cambridge: Polity.

———. 1997. *The reinvention of politics: Rethinking modernity in the global social order*. Cambridge: Polity.

———. 2000. *The brave new world of work*. Cambridge: Policy.

———. 2002. The cosmopolitan society and its enemies. *Theory, Culture & Society* 19 (1–2): 17–44.

Beck, U., and E. Beck-Gernsheim. 1995. *The normal chaos of love*. Cambridge: Polity.

———. 2002. *Individualization: Institutionalized individualism and its social and political consequences*. London: Sage.

Beck, U., A. Giddens, and S. Lash 1994. *Reflexive modernization: Politics, tradition and aesthetics in the modern social order*. Cambridge: Polity.

Beck, U., W. Bonss, and C. Lau. 2003. The theory of reflexive modernization: Problematic, hypothesis and research programme. *Theory, Culture & Society* 20 (2): 1–33.

Beck, U., and J. Willms. 2004. *Conversations with Ulrich Beck*. Cambridge: Polity.

Becker, R. 2003. Expansion and persistent inequalities of education in Germany. *European Sociological Review* 19:1–24.

Beck-Gernsheim, E. 2002. *Reinventing the family: In search of new lifestyles*. Cambridge: Polity.

Bendle, M. F. 2002. The crisis of identity in high modernity. *The British Journal of Sociology* 53 (1): 1–18.

Benjamin, J. 1978. Authority and the family revisited: or, A world without fathers? *New German Critique* 13:35–57.

———. 1988. *The bonds of love: Psychoanalysis, feminism, and the problem of domination*. 1st ed. New York: Pantheon.

———. 2004. Beyond doer and done to: An intersubjective view of thirdness. *The Psychoanalytic Quarterly* 73 (1): 5–46.

Berger, P. A., P. Steinmuller, and P. Sopp. 1993. Differentiation of life courses? Changing patterns of labour market sequences in West Germany. *European Sociological Review* 9 (1): 43–65.

Bernstein, B. B. 1971. *Class, codes and control*. London: Rouledge.

Bernstein, P. L. 1996. *Against the gods: The remarkable story of risk*. New York: John Wiley and Sons.

Bertram, H., and C. Dannenbeck. 1990. Pluralisierung von lebenslagen und invidualisierung von lebensfurhrungen. Zur theorie und empirie regionaler disparitaten in der bundesrepublik Deutschland. *Soziale Welt* 7:207–29.

Billari, F. C. 2001. The analysis of early life courses: Complex descriptions of the transition to adulthood. *Journal of Population Research* 18 (2): 119–42.

Bolam, B., S. Murphy, and K. Gleeson. 2004. Individualisation and inequalities in health: A qualitative study of class identity and health. *Social Science & Medicine* 59 (7): 1355–65.

Bottero, W., and S. Irwin. 2003. Locating difference: Class, "race" and gender, and the shaping of social inequalities. *The Sociological Review* 51 (4): 433–62.

Bourdieu, P. 1980. Le capital social: Notes provisoires. *Actes de la Recherche en Sciences Sociales* 31:2–3.

———. 1984. *Distinction: A social critique of the judgement of taste*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

———. 1990. *The logic of practice*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.

———. 2005. *The social structures of the economy*. Cambridge: Polity.

Bowker, G. C. and S. L. Star. 1999. *Sorting things out: Classification and its consequences*. Cambridge: Massachusetts Institute of Technology Press.

Brannen, J., and A. Nilsen. 2005. Individualisation, choice and structure: a discussion of current trends in sociological analysis. *Sociological Review* 53 (3): 412–28.

Breen, R. 1997. Risk, recommodification and stratification. *Sociology* 31 (3): 473–89.

Brodie, J. Forthcoming. Putting gender back in: Women and social policy reform in Canada. In *Regendering the nation state*, ed. Y. Abu-Laban. Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press.

Brown, G. W., and T. O. Harris. 1978. *Social origins of depression: A study of psychiatric disorder in women*. New York: Free Press.

Brush, L. D. 2002. Changing the subject: Gender and welfare regime studies. *Social Politics: International Studies in Gender, State and Society* 9:161–86.

Bryne, D. 1999. *Social exclusion*. Buckingham, UK: Open University Press.

Buchmann, M. 1989. *The script of life in modern society: Entry into adulthood in a changing world*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Budgeon, S. 2003. *Choosing a self: Young women and the individualization of identity*. Westport, CT: Praeger.

Burrows, R., and B. Loader. 1994. *Towards a post-Fordist welfare state*? London: Routledge.

Butler, J. P. 1990. *Gender trouble: Feminism and the subversion of identity*. New York: Routledge.

Chodorow, N. 1999. *The power of feelings: Personal meaning in psychoanalysis, gender, and culture*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

Clarke, J. 2004a. *Changing welfare, changing states: New directions in welfare policy*. London: Sage.

Clarke, J. 2004b. Dissolving the public realm? The logics and limits of neo-liberalism. *Journal of Social Policy* 33 (1): 27–48.

Coburn, D. 2004. Beyond the income inequality hypothesis: class, neo-liberalism, and health inequalities. *Social Science and Medicine* 58 (1): 41–56.

Cooper, A., and J. Lousada. 2005. Borderline welfare: Feeling and fear of feeling in modern welfare. London: Karnac.

Corby, B. 1993. *Child abuse: Towards a knowledge base*. Milton Keynes, UK: Open University Press.

Côté, J. E. 2000. *Arrested adulthood: The changing nature of maturity and identity*. New York: New York University Press.

Côté, J. E., and C. Levine. 2002. *Identity formation, agency and culture: A social psychological synthesis*. Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.

Côté, J. E., and S. J. Schwartz. 2002. Comparing psychological and sociological approaches to identity: Identity status, identity capital, and the individualization process. *Journal of Adolescence* 25 (6): 571–86.

Craib, I. 1994. *The importance of disappointment*. London: Routledge.

———. 1995. Some comments on the sociology of emotions. *Sociology* 29 (1): 151–58.

Crompton, R. 1993. *Class and stratification: An introduction to current debates*. Cambridge: Polity.

Cruikshank, B. 1993. Revolutions within: self-government and self-esteem. *Economy and Society* 22 (3): 327–44.

Dahrendorf, R. 1958. Homo sociologicus: Versuch zur geschichte, bedeutung und kritik der kategorie der sozialen rolle. In *Pfade aus Utopia. Arbeiten zur theorie und methode der soziologie*, ed. R. Dahrendorf, 128–93. München: Piper.

Dalrymple, J. 2003. Professional advocacy as a force for resistance in child welfare. *British Journal of Social Work* 33 (8): 1043–62.

Daly, M., and C. Saraceno. 2002. Social exclusion and gender relations. In *Contested concepts in gender and social politics*, ed. B. Hobson, J. Lewis, and B. Simm, 84–104. Cheltenham, UK: Edward Elgar.

De Lauretis, T. 1991. Queer theory: Lesbian and gay sexualities, an introduction. *Differences* 3 (2): iii–xviii.

Dean, M. 1995. Governing the unemployed self in an active society. *Economy and Society* 24 (4): 559–83.

———. 1997. Sociology after society. In *Sociology after Postmodernism*, ed. D. Owen, 205–28. London: Sage.

———. 1998. Administering asceticism: Reworking the ethical life of the unemployed citizen. In *Governing Australia: Studies in contemporary rationalities of government*, ed. M. Dean and B. Hindess, 87–107. Melbourne: Cambridge University Press.

———. 1999. *Governmentality: Power and rule in modern society*. London: Sage.

———. 2002. The regulation of the self. In *Social Change*, ed. T. Jordan and S. Pile, 229–57. Oxford: Blackwell.

Deleuze, G., and F. Guattari. 1987. *A thousand plateaus: Capitalism and schizophrenia*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Donzelot, J. 1988. The promotion of the social. *Economy and Society* 17 (3): 395–427.

Duncan, S. 2005. Mothering, class and rationality. *The Sociological review* 53 (1): 50–76.

Duncan, S., and D. Smith. 2002. Geographies of family formations: Spatial differences and gender cultures in Britain. *Transactions* 27 (4): 471–93.

Duncan, S., and R. Edwards. 1999. *Lone mothers, paid work and gendered moral rationalities*. London: Palgrave Macmillan.

Dunifon, R., and G. J. Duncan. 1998. Long-run effects of motivation on labor-market success. *Social Psychology Quarterly* 61 (1): 33–48.

Durkheim, E. 1893. *The division of labor in society*. Trans. George Simpson. New York: Free Press. Reprinted, 1964.

———.1897. *Suicide: A study in sociology*. Trans. J. A. Spaulding and G. Simpson. New York: Free Press. Reprinted, 1951.

———. 1898. Individualism and the intellectuals. Trans. S. Lukes. *Political Studies* 17:14–31. Reprinted, 1969.

———. 1912. *The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life*. Trans. K. E. Fields. New York: Free Press. Reprinted, 1995.

———. 1914. The dualism of human nature and its social conditions. In *Emile Durkheim 1858–1917*, ed. K. H. Wolff, 325–40. Columbus: Ohio State University Press. Reprinted, 1960.

Dykstra, P. A. 2003. Levenslooppatronen: Toenemende variate? *Bevolking en Gezin* 32 (2): 21–34.

Ehrenberg, A. 1998. *La fatigue d'être soi: Dépression et société*. Paris: Odile Jacob.

Elchardus, M., and W. Smits. 2006. The persistence of the standardized life cycle. *Time & Society* 15 (2–3): 303–26.

Elder, G. H. 1974. *Children of the Great Depression. Social change in life experience*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Elder, G. H., and J. K. Liker. 1982. Hard times in women's lives: Historical influences across forty years. *The American Journal of Sociology* 88 (2): 241–69.

Electronic Privacy Information Center. 2003. Passenger profiling. Available at http://www.epic.org/privacy/airtravel/profiling.html. Accessed December 9, 2003.

Elias, N. 1939. *The society of individuals*. Trans. M. Schröter. Oxford: Basil Blackwell. Reprinted, 1991.

Elliott, A. 1992. *Social theory and psychoanalysis in transition: Self and society from Freud to Kristeva*. Cambridge: Blackwell.

———. 2001. *Concepts of the self*. Cambridge: Polity.

———. 2002. Beck's sociology of risk: A critical assessment. *Sociology* 36 (2): 293–315.

Elmer, Greg. 2004. *Profiling Machines*, Cambridge: Massachusetts Institute of Technology Press.

Erikson, R., and J. H. Goldthorpe. 1992. *The constant flux: A study of class mobility in industrial societies*. Oxford: Clarendon.

Esping-Andersen, G. 2002. *Why we need a new welfare state*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Esser, H. 1991. *Alltagshandeln und verstehen*. Tübingen: Mohr.

Etzioni, A. 1993. *The spirit of community: Rights, responsibilities, and the communitarian agenda*. New York: Crown Publishers.

Ewald, F. 1991. Insurance and risk. In *The Foucault effect*, ed. G. Burchell, C. Gordon, and P. Miller, 197–210. London: Harvester Wheatsheaf.

Featherstone, B. 2004. *Family life and family support*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Feldenkrais, M. 1990. *Awareness through movement: Health exercises for personal growth*. London: Arkana Penguin.

Ferguson, H. 2003. Welfare, social exclusion and reflexivity: The case of child and woman protection. *Journal of Social Policy* 32 (2): 199–216.

Ferguson, H. 2004. *Protecting children in time: Child abuse, child protection and the consequences of modernity*. London: Palgrave Macmillan.

Ferguson, H. 2007a. Abused and looked after children as "moral dirt": Child abuse and institutional care in historical perspective. *Journal of Social Policy* 36 (1): 123–39.

Ferguson, H. 2007b. Promoting safety and democratic relations for abused children and their families: Best practice in child protection with family support. In *Best practice in social work: Critical perspectives*, ed. K. Jones, B. Cooper, and H. Ferguson. Basingstoke, UK: Palgrave.

Ferguson, H. Forthcoming. Liquid social work: Welfare interventions as mobile practices. *British Journal of Social Work*: n.p.

Ferguson, H., and M. O'Reilly. 2001. *Keeping children safe: Child abuse, child protection and the promotion of welfare*. Dublin: A & A Farmar.

Field, J. 2003. *Social capital*. London: Routledge.

Finch, J. 1989. *Family obligations and social change*. Cambridge: Polity.

Finch, J., and D. Groves. 1983. *A labour of love: Women, work, and caring*. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.

Finch, J., and P. Mansfield. 1991. Social reconstruction and companionate marriage. In *Marriage, domestic life and social change*, ed. D. Clark, 7–32. London: Routledge.

Finch, J., and J. Mason. 1993. *Negotiating family responsibilities*. London: Routledge.

Fine, B. 2001. *Social capital versus social theory: Political economy and social science at the turn of the millennium*. New York: Routledge.

Fink, J., G. Lewis, and J. Clarke. 2001. Introduction: Transitions and trajectories in European welfare. In *Rethinking European welfare*, ed. J. Fink, G. Lewis, and J. Clarke, 1–30. London: Sage.

Foucault, M. 1972. *The archaeology of knowledge*. London: Tavistock.

———. 1977. *Discipline and punish: The birth of the prison*. London: Penguin.

———. 1978. *The history of sexuality; Volume 1: An introduction*. London: Penguin.

———. 1980. *Power/knowledge*. New York: Harvester Wheatsheaf.

———. 1981. *Omnes et singulatim: Towards a criticism of political reason*. *The Tanner lectures on human values* 11:223–54.

———. 1982. The subject and power. In *Michel Foucault: Beyond structuralism and hermeneutics*, ed. H. L. Dreyfus and P. Rabinow, 208–26. Sussex: Harvester Press.

———. 1985. *The use of pleasure: The history of sexuality*. New York: Vintage.

———. 1986. *The care of the self: The history of sexuality*. New York: Vintage Books.

———. 1987. About the beginnings of the hermeneutics of the self. In *Religion and culture*, ed. J. R. Carrette, 158–81. Manchester: Manchester University Press.

———. 1988a. The ethic of care of the self as a practice of freedom: An interview with Michel Foucault January 20, 1984. In *The final Foucault*, ed. J.A.D.R. Bernauer, 1–20. Cambridge: Massachusetts Institute of Technology Press.

———. 1988b. *The history of sexuality: The care of the self*. London: Allen Lane.

———. 1988c. Social security. In *Politics, philosophy, culture: Interviews and other writings, 1977–1984*, ed. L. D. Kritzman, 159–77. New York: Routledge.

———. 1990. *History of sexuality: An introduction*. New York: Random House.

———. 1991. Governmentality. In *The Foucault effect*, ed. G. Burchell, C. Gordon, and P. Miller, 87–104. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

———. 2000. Self-writing. In *Essential works of Foucault 1954–1984*, ed. P. Rabinow, 207–22. Melbourne: Penguin.

Foucault, M., M. Bertani, A. Fontana, F. Ewald, and D. Macey. 2003. *Society must be defended: Lectures at the Collège de France, 1975–1976*. 1st ed. New York: Picador.

Foucault, M., F. Gros, F. Ewald, and A. Fontana. 2005. *The hermeneutics of the subject: Lectures at the Collège de France, 1981–1982*. 1st ed. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Foucault, M., V. Marchetti, A. Salomoni, and A. I. Davidson. 2003. *Abnormal: Lectures at the Collège de France, 1974–1975*. 1st ed. New York: Picador.

Frank, D. J., and J. W. Meyer. 2002. The profusion of individual roles and identities in the postwar period. *Sociological Theory* 20:86–105.

French, R. 1999. The importance of capacities in psychoanalysis and the language of human development. *The International Journal of Psycho-Analysis* 80:1215–26.

Friedman, L. M. 1990. *The republic of choice: Law, authority and culture*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Froggett, L. 2002. *Love, hate and welfare: Psychosocial approaches to policy and practice*. Bristol, UK: Policy Press.

Füredi, F. 2004. *Therapy culture: Cultivating vulnerability in an uncertain age*. London: Routledge.

Furlong, A., and F. Cartmel. 1997. *Young people and social change: Individualization and risk in late modernity*. Buckingham, UK: Open University Press.

Fuss, D. 1991. *Inside/out: Lesbian theories, gay theories*. New York: Routledge.

Gambetta, D. 1987. *Were they pushed or did they jump? Individual decision mechanisms in education*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Garrett, P. M. 2003. The trouble with Harry: Why the "new agenda of life politics" fails to convince. *British Journal of Social Work* 33 (3): 381–97.

———. 2004. More trouble with Harry: A rejoinder in the "life politics" debate. *British Journal of Social Work* 34 (4): 577–89.

Gerhard, U. 2004. Women and individualization. Paper presented to ESRC Research Group for the Study of Care, Values and the Future of Welfare Colloquium, Leeds. December 2004.

Giddens, A. 1991. *Modernity and self-identity: Self and society in the late modern age*. Cambridge: Polity.

———. 1992. *The transformation of intimacy: Sexuality, love and eroticism in modern societies*. Cambridge: Polity.

———. 1994a. *Beyond left and right: The future of radical politics*. Cambridge: Polity.

———. 1994b. Living in a post-traditional society. In *Reflexive modernization: Politics, tradition and aesthetics in the modern social order*, ed. U. Beck, A. Giddens, and S. Lash, 56–109. Cambridge: Polity.

———. 1998. *The third way: The renewal of social democracy*. Cambridge: Polity.

———. 2000. *The third way and its critics*. Cambridge: Polity.

Gillies, V. 2005. Raising the "meritocracy": Parenting and the individualization of social class. *Sociology—The Journal of the British Sociological Association* 39 (5): 835–53.

Goldenweiser, A. 1938. The concept of causality in the physical and social sciences. *American Sociological Review* 3 (5): 624–36.

Goldthorpe, J. H. 2000. Rent, class conflict and class structure: A commentary on Sorensen. *American Journal of Sociology* 105:1572–82.

Goodin, R. E. 2001. False principles of welfare reform. *Australian Journal of Social Issues* 36 (3): 189–206.

Gordon, C. 1991. Governmental rationality: An introduction. In *The Foucault effect*, ed. G. Burchell, C. Gordon, and P. Miller, 1–52. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Gordon, L. 1989. *Heroes of their own lives: The politics and history of family violence, Boston 1870–1960*. London: Virago.

Groarke, S. 2002. Psychoanalysis and structuration theory: The social logic of identity. *Sociology* 36 (3): 559–76.

Gros, F. 2005. Course context. In *The hermeneutics of the subject: Lectures at the Collège de France, 1981–1982*. 1st ed. Ed. M. Foucault, F. Gros, F. Ewald, and A. Fontana, 507–50. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Hacking, I. 1982. Biopower and the avalanche of printed numbers. *Humanities in Society* 5 (3/4): 279–95.

———. 1986. Making up people. In *Reconstructing individualism: Autonomy, individuality, and the self in western thought*, ed. T. C. Heller, M. Sosna, and D. E. Wellbert, 222–36. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.

———. 1991. How should we do the history of statistics? In *The Foucault Effect*, ed. G. Burchell, C. Gordon, and P. Miller, 181–95. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Hammond, C. 1980. *A review of the characteristics of sole parents assisted under the Social Services Act*. Canberra: Dept. of Social Security, Research and Statistics Branch.

Hanly, C. 1984. Ego ideal and ideal ego. *The International Journal of Psycho-Analysis* 65 (3): 253–61.

Harris, A. 2001. Revisiting bedroom culture: New spaces for young women's politics. *Hecate* 27 (1): 128–37.

Harris, I. 1998. *The mind of John Locke: A study of political theory in an intellectual setting*. Rev. ed. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Hatfield, M. 2004. Vulnerability to persistent low income. *Horizons: Policy Research Initiative* 7 (2): 19–26.

Hegel, G. 1991. *Elements of the philosophy of right*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Heider, F. 1958. *The psychology of interpersonal relations*. New York: Wiley.

Heinz, W. R., and H. Krüger. 2001. Life course: Innovations and challenges for social research. *Current Sociology* 49 (2): 29–45.

Henman, P. 2004. Targeted! Population segmentation, electronic surveillance and governing the unemployed in Australia. *International Sociology* 19 (2): 173–91.

———. 2005. E-government, targeting and DTA profiling: Policy and ethical issues of differential treatment. *Journal of E-government* 2 (1): 79–98.

Herman, J. 1992. *Trauma and recovery*. London: Pandora.

Hey, V. 2005. The constricting social logics of sociality and survival: Cultures of classed be/longing in late modernity. *Sociology* 39 (5): 855–72.

Heyes, C. J. 2006. Foucault goes to Weight Watchers. *Hypatia* 21 (2): 126–49.

Hindess, B. 1996. Liberalism, socialism and democracy: Variations on a governmental theme. In *Foucault and political reason: Liberalism, neo-liberalism and*

rationalities of government, ed. A. Barry, T. Osborne, and N. Rose, 65–80. London: UCL Press.

———. 1998. Neo-liberalism and the national economy. In *Governing Australia: Studies in Contemporary Rationalities of Government*, ed. M. Dean and B. Hindess, 210–226. Melbourne: Cambridge University Press.

———. 2004. Liberalism—What's in a name. In *Global governmentality*, ed. W. Larner and W. Walters, 21–39. London: Routledge.

Hirschman, A. O. 1970. *Exit, voice, and loyalty; Responses to decline in firms, organizations, and states*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Hochschild, A. R. 2003. *Commercialization of intimate life: Notes from home and work*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Hoggett, P. 2000. *Emotional life and the politics of welfare*. Basingstoke, UK: Macmillan.

———. 2001. Agency, rationality and social policy. *Journal of Social Policy* 30 (1): 37–56.

———. 2005. Radical uncertainty: Human emotion and ethical dilemmas. In *Trust, risk and uncertainty*, ed. S. Watson and A. Moran. Basingstoke, UK: Palgrave Macmillan.

Hoggett, P., P. Beedell, L. Jimenez, M. Mayo, and C. Miller. 2006. Identity, life history and commitment to welfare. *Journal of Social Policy* 35 (4): 689–704.

Holland, S., J. Scourfield, S. O'Neill, and A. Pithouse. 2004. Democratising the family and the state? The case of family group conferences in child welfare. *Journal of Social Policy* 34 (1): 59–77.

Hollway, W. 2004. Editorial. *Critical psychology* 10: n.p.

Hollway, W., and T. Jefferson. 2000. *Doing qualitative research differently: Free association, narrative and the interview method*. London: Sage.

Honig, B. 1996. Difference, dilemmas and the politics of home. In *Democracy and difference: Contesting the boundaries of the political*, ed. S. Benhabib, 257–77. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Honneth, A. 2004. Organized self-realization: Some paradoxes of individualization. *European Journal of Social Theory* 7 (4): 463–78.

Hook, S. 1974. *Pragmatism and the tragic sense of life*. New York: Basic Books.

Horkheimer, M. 1949. Authority and the family today. In *The family: Its function and destiny*, ed. R. Anshen, 359–74. New York: Harper.

Houston, S. 2004. Critical commentary: Garrett contra Ferguson: A meta-theoretical appraisal of the "Rumble in the Jungle." *British Journal of Social Work* 34:261–67.

Howard, C. 2006. The new governance of Australian welfare: Street-level contingencies. In *Administering welfare reform: International transformations in welfare governance*, ed. P. Henman and M. Fenger, 137–59. Bristol: Policy Press.

Hoy, D. C. 2004. *Critical resistance: From poststructuralism to post-critique*. Cambridge: Massachusetts Institute of Technology Press.

Huinink, J., and M. Wagner. 1998. Individualisierung und die pluralisierung von lebensformen. In *Die individualisierungsthese*, ed. J. Friedrichs, 85–106. Opladen: Leske and Budrich.

Humphries, M. L. 1997. Michel Foucault on writing and the self in the meditations of Marcus Aurelius and Confessions of St. Augustine. *Arethusa* 30 (1): 125–38.

Hunt, A., and Wickham, G. 1994. *Foucault and law*. London: Pluto Press.

Iyengar, S. 1991. *Is anyone responsible? How television frames political issues.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Jackson, S., and S. Scott. 1999. Risk anxiety and the social construction of childhood. In *Risk and sociocultural theory*, ed. D. Lupton, 86–107. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Jacobs, P., and S. Landau. 1967. *The new radicals: A report with documents*. Harmondsworth: Penguin.

James, A., C. Jenks, and A. Prout. 1998. *Theorizing childhood*. Cambridge: Polity.

James, M. 2006. *Misrecognized materialists: Social movements in Canadian constitutional politics*. Vancouver: UBC Press.

Jamieson, L. 1998. *Intimacy: Personal relationships in modern societies*. Malden, MA: Polity.

———. 1999. Intimacy transformed? A critical look at the "pure relationship." *Sociology* 33 (3): 477–94.

Jessop, B. 2002. *The future of the capitalist state*. Cambridge: Polity.

———. 2003. Governance and metagovernance: On reflexivity, requisite variety and requisite irony. In *Governance as social and political communication*, ed. H. Bang, 101–16. Manchester: Manchester University Press.

Kempe, C. H., F. N. Silverman, B. F. Steele, and W. Droegemuller. 1962. The battered child syndrome. *Journal of the American Medical Association* 181 (1): 17–24.

Klein, M. 1948. *Contributions to psycho-analysis 1921–1945*. London: Hogarth Press.

———. 1975. Some theoretical conclusions regarding the emotional life of the infant. In *Envy and Gratitude and Other Works 1946–1963*, ed. M. Klein. London: Hogarth Press and the Institute of Psycho-Analysis. Originally published, 1952.

Kluegel, J. R., and E. R. Smith. 1986. *Beliefs about inequality: Americans' views of what is and what ought to be*. New York: A. de Gruyter.

Knemeyer, F. L. 1980. Polizei. *Economy and Society* 9 (2): 172–96.

Kohler, U. 2005. Statusinkonsistenz und entstrukturierung von lebenslagen: Empirische untersuchung zweier individualisierungshypothesen mit querschnittsdaten aus 28 Landern. *Kolner Zeitschrift fur Soziologie und Sozialpsychologie* 57 (2): 230–53.

Kohli, M. 1986. The world we forgot: A historical overview of the life course. In *Later life: The social psychology of aging*, ed. W. Marshall, 271–303. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.

Krüger, H. 2003. The life-course regime: Ambiguities between interrelatedness and individualization. In *Social dynamics of the life course: Transitions, institutions and interrelations*, ed. W. R. Heinz and V. W. Marshall, 33–56. New York: Aldine.

Kunz, J., and J. Frank. 2004. Poverty: Thy name is Hydra. *Horizons: Policy Research Initiative* 7 (2): 4–8.

Kymlicka, W. 1991. *Liberalism, community, and culture*. Oxford: Clarendon.

Langford, W. 1999. *Revolutions of the heart: Gender, power, and the delusions of love*. London: Routledge.

Larner, W., and D. Craig. 2005. After neoliberalism? Community activism and local partnerships in Aotearoa, New Zealand. *Antipode* 37 (3): 402–24.

Larner, W., and W. Walters. 2000. Privatisation, governance and identity: The United Kingdom and New Zealand compared. *Policy & Politics* 28 (3): 361–77.

Lasch, C. 1977. *Haven in a heartless world: The family besieged*. New York: Basic Books.

Lasch, C. 1979. *The culture of narcissism: American life in an age of diminishing expectations*. New York: W. W. Norton.

Lash, S. 1993. Reflexive modernization: The aesthetic dimension. *Theory, Culture & Society* 10 (1): 1–23.

———. 1994. Reflexivity and its doubles: Structure, aesthetics, community. In *Reflexive modernization*, ed. U. Beck, A. Giddens, and S. Lash, 110–73. Cambridge: Polity.

Latour, B. 2003. "Is *re*-modernization occurring—and if so, how to prove it?" *Theory, Culture & Society* 20 (2): 35–48.

Law, A., and Mooney G. 2006. "We've never had it so good": The "problem" of the working class in devolved Scotland. *Critical Social Policy* 26 (3): 523–42.

Law, J., and J. Urry. 2004. Enacting the social. *Economy and Society* 33 (3): 390–410.

Leisering, L., and S. Liebfried. 1999. *Time and poverty in western welfare states*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Lesthaeghe, R. 1995. The second demographic transition in western countries: An interpretation. In *Gender and family change in industrialized countries*, ed. K. O. Mason and A. Jensen, 17–62. New York: Oxford University Press.

Levesque, M. 2005. *Social capital, reducing poverty, and public policy*. Available at http://www.policyresearch.gc.ca. Accessed October 2005.

Lister, R. 2004. *Poverty*. Cambridge: Polity.

Loewald, H. W. 1973. On internalization. *The International Journal of Psychoanalysis* 54 (1): 9–17.

Luhmann, N. 1977. Differentiation of society. *Canadian Journal of Sociology* 2 (1): 29–53.

———. 1990. *Essays on self-reference*. New York: Columbia University Press.

Lukes, S. 1973. *Individualism*. New York: Harper and Row.

Lupton, D. 1999. *Risk and sociocultural theory: New directions and perspectives*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

MacIntyre, A. C. 1984. *After virtue: A study in moral theory*. Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press.

Maffesoli, M. 1996. *The time of the tribes: The decline of individualism in mass society*. London: Sage.

Marshall, G. 1997. *Repositioning class: Social inequality in industrial societies*. London: Sage.

Marshall, V. W., and M. M. Mueller. 2003. Theoretical roots of the life-course perspective. In *Social dynamics of the life course: Transitions, institutions, and interrelations*, ed. W. R. Heinz and V. W. Marshall, 3–32. New York: Aldine.

Martin, B. 1981. *A sociology of contemporary cultural change*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell.

Maslow, A. H. 1943. A theory of human motivation. *Psychological Review* 50:370–96.

Mason, J. 2004. Personal narratives, relational selves: Residential histories in the living and telling. *The Sociological Review* 52 (2): 162–79.

Massey, D. 1999. Imagining globalization: Power-geometries of time-space. In *Global futures: Migration, environment and globalization*, ed. A. Brah, M. J. Hickman, and M. Mac an Ghaill, 27–44. Basingstoke, UK: Macmillan Press.

Mayer, K. U. 1986. Structural constraints on the life course. *Human Development* 29 (3): 163–70.

———. 1991. Lebensverlauf und bildung. Ergebnisse aus dem forschungsprojekt "lebensverläufe und gesellschaftlicher wandel" des Max-Planck-Instituts für Bildungsforschung. *Unterrichtswissenschaft* 19:313–32.

———. 2001. The paradox of global social change and national path dependencies: Life course patterns in advanced societies. In *Inclusions and exclusions in European societies*, ed. A. Woodward and M. Kohli, 89–110. New York: Routledge.

———. 2004. Whose lives? How history, societies, and institutions define and shape life courses. *Research in Human Development* 1 (3): 161–87.

Mayer, K. U., and H. Blossfeld. 1990. Die gesellschaftliche konstruktion sozialer ungleichheit im lebensverlauf. In *Lebenslagen, lebensläufe, lebensstile*, ed. P. A. Berger and S. Hradil, 297–318. Göttingen: Schwartz.

Mayer, M., S. Dufour, C. Lavergne, M. Girard, and N. Trocme. 2003. Comparing parental characteristics regarding child neglect: An analysis of cases retained by child protection services in Quebec. Paper presented at Child and Youth Health, 3rd World Congress, Vancouver, May 11–14.

McDermott, E., and H. Graham. 2005. Resilient young mothering: Social inequalities, late modernity and the "problem" of "teenage" motherhood. *Journal of Youth Studies* 8 (1): 59–79.

Mcdonald, C., and G. Marston. 2005. Workfare as welfare: Governing unemployment in the advanced liberal state. *Critical Social Policy* 25 (3): 374–401.

McDonald, C., G. Marston, and A. Buckley. 2003. Risk technology in Australia: The role of the job seeker classification instrument in employment services. *Critical Social Policy* 23 (4): 498–525.

McKay, S. 1998. *Sophia's story*. Dublin: Gill and Macmillan.

Mendus, S. 2000. *Feminism and emotion: Readings in moral and political philosophy*. Basingstoke, UK: Macmillan.

Mills, C. W. 1959. *The sociological imagination*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Mills, M. 2000. Providing space for time: The impact of temporality on life course research. *Time & Society* 9 (1): 91–127.

———. 2004. Demand for flexibility or generation of insecurity? The individualization of risk, irregular work shifts and Canadian youth. *Journal of Youth Studies* 7 (2): 115–39.

———. 2004. Stability and change: The structuration of partnership histories in Canada, the Netherlands, and the Russian federation. *European Journal of Population* 20 (2): 141–75.

Mills, M., and H. P. Blossfeld. 2005. Globalization, uncertainty and the early life course: A theoretical framework. In *Globalization, uncertainty and youth in society*, ed. H. Blossfeld, M. Mills, E. Klijzing and K. Kurz, 1–24. London: Routledge.

Mills, M., H. P. Blossfeld, and F. Bernardi. 2006. Globalization, uncertainty and men's employment careers: A theoretical framework. In *Globalization, uncertainty and men's careers: An international comparison*, ed. H. P. Blossfeld, M. Mills, and F. Bernardi, 3–37. Cheltenham, UK: Edward Elgar.

Mitchell, J. 2000. *Mad men and Medusas: Reclaiming hysteria and the effect of sibling relationships on the human condition*. London: Penguin.

Mitchell, S. A. 2000. *Relationality: From attachment to intersubjectivity*. Hillsdale, NJ: Analytic Press

Mitchell, S. A., and L. Aron. 1999. *Relational psychoanalysis: The emergence of a tradition*. Hillsdale, NJ: Analytic Press.

Murphy, E. 2003. Expertise and forms of knowledge in the government of families. *The Sociological Review* 51 (4): 433–62.

Mythen, G. 2005. Employment, individualization and insecurity: Rethinking the risk society perspective. *The Sociological Review* 53 (1): 129–49.

Nardi, P. 1992. That's what friends are for: Friends as family in the gay and lesbian community. In *Modern homosexualities: Fragments of lesbian and gay experience*, ed. K. Plummer, 108–20. London: Routledge.

———. 1999. *Gay men's friendships: Invincible communities*. Chicago: Chicago University Press.

Newcomb, M. D. 1997. Psychosocial predictors and consequences of drug use: A developmental perspective within a prospective study. *Journal of Addictive Diseases* 16 (1): 51–89.

Newman, J. 2001. *Modernizing governance: New labour, policy, and society*. London: Sage.

Nollmann, G., and H. Strasser. 2002. Individualization as interpretative scheme of social inequality: On the problem of understanding in inequality research. *Osterreichische Zeitschrift fur Soziologie* 27 (3): 3–36.

———. Forthcoming. The twofold class concept: Traditional limitations and new perspectives of class research. *Canadian Journal of Sociology*.

Office for National Statistics. 2007. Social Trends No. 37. Available at http://www.statistics.gov.uk/downloads/theme_social/Social_Trends37/Social_Trends_37.pdf.

O'Malley, P. 1996. Risk and responsibility. In *Foucault and political reason*, ed. A. Barry, T. Osborne, and N. Rose, 189–208. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Osborne, T. 1996. Security and vitality: Drains, liberalism and power in the nineteenth century. In *Foucault and political reason*, ed. A. Barry, T. Osborne, and N. Rose, 99–121. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Oxford English Dictionary. 2006. Available at http://www.oed.com. Accessed November 2006.

Pahl, R., and L. Spencer. 2004. Personal communities: Not simply families of "fate" or "choice." *Current Sociology* 52 (2): 199–221.

Pakulski, J., and M. Waters. 1996 *The death of class*. London: Sage.

Parton, N. 2006. *Safeguarding childhood: Early intervention and surveillance in a late modern society*. Basingstoke, UK: Palgrave Macmillan.

Pateman, C. 1988. *The sexual contract*. Cambridge: Polity.

Peck, J. 2001. *Workfare states*. New York: Guilford Press.

Pedersen, P. P. 2000. Our present: Postmodern. In *Classical and modern social theory*, ed. H. Andersen and L. B. Kaspersen, 412–31. Malden, MA: Blackwell.

Pfadenhauer, M. 2006. Crisis or decline? Problems of legitimation and loss of trust in modern professionalism. *Current Sociology* 54 (4): 565–78.

Polanyi, K., and American Council of Learned Societies. 1957. *The great transformation*. 1st ed. Boston: Beacon Press.

Policy Research Initiative. 2005. *Social capital as a public policy tool*. Ottawa: Policy Research Initiative.

———. 2006. Policy Research Initiative. Available at http://www.policyresearch.gc.ca. Accessed July 1, 2006.

Pollack, D., and G. Pickel. 1999. Individualisierung und religiöser wandel in der bundesrepublik Deutschland. *Zeitschrift für Soziologie* 28 (6): 465–83.

Porter, D., and D. Craig. 2004. The third way and the third world: Poverty reduction and social inclusion in the rise of "inclusive" liberalism. *Review of International Political Economy* 11 (2): 387–423.

Preston, J. 1996. *Friends and lovers: Gay men write about the families they create*. New York: Plume.

Putnam, R. D. 1995. Bowling alone: America's declining social capital. *Journal of Democracy* 6 (1): 65–78.

———. 2000. *Bowling alone: The collapse and revival of American community*. New York: Simon and Schuster.

Raftery, M., and E. O'Sullivan. 1999. *Suffer the little children: The inside story of Ireland's industrial schools*. Dublin: New Island Books.

Raymond, J. 1987. *Bringing up children alone: Policies for sole parents*. Social Security review. Canberra: Australian Government.

Raz, J. 2003. *The practice of value*. Oxford: Clarendon.

Reisman, D. 1950. *The lonely crowd*. New Haven, CT: Double Day.

Ribbens McCarthy, J., and R. Edwards. 2002. The individual in public and private life: The significance of mothers and children. In *Analysing families: Morality and rationality in policy and practice*, ed. S. Carling, S. Duncan, and R. Edwards, 199–217. London: Routledge.

Ribbens McCarthy, J., R. Edwards, and V. Gillies. 2003. *Making families: Moral tales of parenting and step-parenting*. Durham, UK: Sociology Press.

Rosanvallon, P. 2000. *The new social question*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
Rose, N. 1990. *Governing the soul: The shaping of the private self*. London: Routledge.
———. 1996a. The death of the social? Re-figuring the territory of government. *Economy and Society* 25 (3): 327–56.
———. 1996b. Identity, genealogy, history. In *Questions of cultural identity*, ed. S. Hall and P. du Gay, 128–50. London: Sage.
———. 1996c. *Inventing our selves: Psychology, power, and personhood*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
———. 1999. *Powers of freedom: Reframing political thought*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Rose, N., and P. Miller. 1992. Political power beyond the state: Problematics of government. *The British Journal of Sociology* 43 (2): 173–205.
Rosenbaum, J. 1984. *Career mobility in a corporate hierarchy*. Orlando: Academic Press.
Roseneil, S. 2000a. *Common women, uncommon practices: The queer feminisms of Greenham*. London: Cassell.
———. 2000b. Queer frameworks and queer tendencies: Towards an understanding of postmodern transformations of sexuality. *Sociological Research Online* 5 (3): n.p.
———. 2002. The heterosexual/homosexual binary: Past, present and future. In *The lesbian and gay studies handbook*, ed. D. Richardson and S. Seidman, 27–44. London: Sage.
———. 2005. Living and loving beyond the boundaries of the heteronorm: Personal relationships in the 21st century. In *Families in society: Boundaries and relationships*, ed. L. Mackie, S. Cunningham-Burley, and J. McKendrick, 241–258. Bristol, UK: Policy Press.
———. 2006a. On not living with a partner: Unpicking coupledom and cohabitation. *Sociological Research Online* 11 (3): 1–21.
———. 2006b. The ambivalences of angel's "arrangement": A psycho-social lens on the contemporary condition of personal life. *The Sociological Review* 54 (4): 847–69.
———. 2008. *Sociability, sexuality, self: Relationality and individualization*. London: Routledge.
Roseneil, S., and S. Budgeon. 2004. Cultures of intimacy and care beyond the family: Personal life and social change in the early twenty-first century. *Current Sociology* 52 (2): 135–59.
Rustin, M. 1991. *The good society and the inner world: Psychoanalysis, politics, and culture*. London: Verso.
Sackmann, R., and M. Wingens. 2003. From transitions to trajectories: Sequence types. In *Social dynamics of the life course: Transitions, institutions and interrelations*, ed. W. R. Heinz and V. W. Marshall, 93–115. New York: Aldine.
Sander, L. W. 2002. Thinking differently: Principle of process in living systems and specificity of being known. *Psychoanalytic Dialogues* 12:11–42.

Savage, M. 2000. *Class analysis and social transformation*. Buckingham, UK: Open University.

Sawaki, J. 2004. Desexualizing queer politics. In *Feminism and the final Foucault*, ed. D. Taylor and K. Vintges, 163–82. Urbana: University of Illinois Press.

Schroer, M. 2000. *Das individuum der gesellschaft: Synchrone und diachrone theorieperspektiven*. Frankfurt: Suhrkamp Verlag.

Scott, J. 1992. Experience. In *Feminists theorize the political,* ed. J. Butler and J. W. Scott, 22–44. New York: Routledge.

Scourfield, J., and I. Welsh. 2003. Risk, reflexivity and social control in child protection: New times or same old story? *Critical Social Policy* 23 (3): 398–420.

Sedgwick, E. K. 1991. *Epistemology of the closet*. Hemel Hempstead: Harvester Wheatsheaf.

Segal, H. 1988. *Introduction to the work of Melanie Klein*. London: Karnac Books.

Seidman, S. 1991. *Romantic longings: Love in America, 1830–1980*. New York: Routledge.

———. 1992. *Embattled Eros: Sexual politics and ethics in contemporary America*. New York: Routledge.

Sennett, R. 1998. *The corrosion of character: The personal consequences of work in the new capitalism*. 1st ed. New York: Norton.

Sennett, R., and J. Cobb. 1977. *The hidden injuries of class*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Sharp, D. E. 2003. *Customer relationship management systems handbook*. Boca Raton, FL: Auerbach.

Shaver, S. 2002. Australian welfare reform: From citizenship to supervision. *Social Policy and Administration* 36 (4): 331–45.

Shavit, Y., and H. P. Blossfeld, eds. 1993. Persistent inequality: Changing educational attainment in thirteen countries. Boulder, CO: Westview.

Shavit, Y., and W. Müller, ed. 1998. *From school to work: A comparative study of educational qualifications and occupational destinations*. Oxford: Clarendon.

Sheller, M., and J. Urry. 2003. Mobile transformations of "public" and "private" life. *Theory, Culture & Society* 20 (3): 107–25.

Silva, E., and C. Smart, eds. 1999. *The new family*. London: Sage.

Simmel, G. 1897. Eine soziale Hypothese. In *Schriften zur soziologie: Eine auswahl*, ed. G. Simmel, 169–72. Suhrkamp: Frankfurt. Reprinted, 1983.

Simmel, G. 1900. *The philosophy of money*. 2nd ed. Trans. Tom Bottomore and David Frisby. London: Routledge. Reprinted, 1990.

Simmel, G. 1971. *On individuality and social forms: Selected writings*. Ed. D. N. Levine. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Skeggs, B. 2003. *Class, self and culture*. London: Routledge.

Smart, C. 2000. Stories of family life: Cohabitation, marriage and social change. *Canadian Journal of Family Law* 17 (1): 20–53.

Smart, C., and B. Neale. 1999. *Family Fragments*. Cambridge: Polity.

Smart, C., and B. Shipman. 2004. Visions in monochrome: Families, marriage and the individualization thesis. *British Journal of Sociology* 55 (4): 491–509.

Social Research Centre. 2004. *Personal adviser evaluation: Better assessment at risk customer group—qualitative evaluation—final*. Melbourne: The Social Research Centre.

Sørensen, A. B. 2000. Toward a sounder basis for class analysis. *American Journal of Sociology* 106:1523–58.

Source Watch. 2006a. Computer assisted passenger prescreening system II. Available at http://www.sourcewatch.org. Accessed June 19, 2006.

Source Watch. 2006b. Secure flight. Available at http://www.sourcewatch.org. Accessed June 19, 2006.

Stein, A., and K. Plummer. 1996. "I can't even think straight": "Queer" theory and the missing sexual revolution in sociology. In *Queer theory/sociology*, ed. S. Seidman, 129–44. Oxford: Blackwell.

Stiglitz, J. 2006. *Making globalization work*. New York: W. W. Norton.

Strathern, M. 1992. *After nature: English kinship in the late twentieth century*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Sussman, S., C. W. Dent, A. W. Stacy, D. Burton, and B. R. Flay. 1995. Psychosocial predictors of health risk factors in adolescents. *Journal of Pediatric Psychology* 20 (1): 91–108.

Taylor, C. 1989. *Sources of the self: The making of the modern identity*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Taylor, C. 2004. *Modern social imaginaries.* Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Thoreau, H. D. 1854. *Walden, or, Life in the woods*. New York: Signet. Reprinted, 1960.

Titmuss, R. 1974. *Social policy: An introduction*. London: George Allen and Unwin.

Tobias, S. 2005. Foucault on freedom and capabilities. *Theory, Culture & Society* 22 (4): 65–85.

Turner, S. P., and R. A. Factor. 1994. *Max Weber: The lawyer as social thinker*. London: Routledge.

Urry, J. 2000. *Sociology beyond societies: Mobilities for the twenty first century*. London: Routledge.

Valverde, M. 1998. *Diseases of the will: Alcohol and the dilemmas of freedom*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Valverde, M. and M. Mopas. 2004 Insecurity and the dream of targeted governance. In *Global governmentality*, ed. W. Larner and W. Walters, 233–50. London: Routledge.

Vanstone, A. 2002. *Personal advisers start today: More help for the most vulnerable*. Canberra, Department of Family and Community Services, Media Release, September 20.

Veblen, T. 1904. *The theory of business enterprise*. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons.

Veyne, P. 1997. Michel Foucault and Noam Chomsky: Foucault revolutionizes history. In *Foucault and his interlocutors*, ed. A. I. Davidson. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Voyer, J. P. 2004. Poverty and exclusion: New perspectives, new approaches. *Horizons* 7 (2): 1–2.

Warde, A. 2000. Series editor's preface. In *Class analysis and social transformation*. Milton Keynes, UK: Open University Press.
Warner, M. 2000. Sex in public. In *Intimacy*, ed. L. Berlant, 311–30. Chicago: Chicago University Press.
Webb, S. A. 2006. *Social work in a risk society: Social and political perspectives*. Basingstoke, UK: Palgrave Macmillan.
Weber, E. J. 1971. *A modern history of Europe*. New York: Norton.
Weber, M. 1905a. Objective possibility and adequate causation in historical explanation. In *The methodology of the social sciences*, trans. E. A. Shils and H. A. Finch, 164–88. New York: Free Press. Reprinted, 1949.
———. 1905b. *The protestant ethic and the spirit of capitalism*. Trans. Talcott Parsons. Reprinted, London: George Allen and Unwin, 1930.
———. 1968. *Economy and society*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
———. 1981. Some categories of interpretive sociology. *The Sociological Quarterly* 22 (2): 151–80.
Weedon, C. 1997. *Feminist practice & poststructuralist theory*. New York: Blackwell.
———. 1999. *Feminism, theory, and the politics of difference*. Oxford: Blackwell.
Weeks, J. 1995. *Invented moralities: Sexual values in an age of uncertainty*. Cambridge: Polity.
Weeks, J., B. Heaphy, and C. Donovan. 2001. *Same sex intimacies: Families of choice and other life experiments*. London: Routledge.
Weinstock, J. S., and E. D. Rothblum, eds. 1996. *Lesbian friendships: For ourselves and each other*. New York: New York University Press.
———. 2004. *Lesbian ex-lovers: The really long term relationships*. Binghampton, NY: Haworth Press.
Weston, K. 1991. *Families we choose: Lesbians, gay men and kinship*. New York: Columbia University Press.
Widmer, E., R. Levy, A. Pollien, R. Hammer, and J. Gauthier. 2003. Entre standarisation, individualisation et sexuation: Une analyse des trajectoires personnelles en Suisse. *Schweizerische Zeitschrift für Soziologie/Revue Suisse de sociologie* 29 (1): 35–67.
Williams, F. 2004. *Rethinking families*. London: Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation.
Williams, B. A. O. 1973. *Problems of the self: Philosophical papers, 1956–1972*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
———. 1981. *Moral luck: Philosophical papers 1973–1980*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Winnicott, D. W. 1965. *Studies in the theory of emotional development*. London: Hogarth Press.
———. 1967. The location of cultural experience. *The International Journal of Psycho-analysis* 48 (3) 368–72.
Wohlrab-Sahr, M. 2003. Individualisierung: Differnzierungsprozess und zurechnungsmodus. In *Individualisierung und integration: Neue konfliktlinien und neuer integrationsmodus*? ed. U. Beck and P. Sopp, 23–36. Opladen: Leske + Budrich.

Wright, E. O. 2000. Class, exploitation, and economic rents: Reflections on Sørensen's "Sounder Basis." *American Journal of Sociology* 105 (6): 1559–71.
Yeatman, A. 1994. *Postmodern revisionings of the political*. New York: Routledge.
———. 1997. Contract, status and personhood. In *The new contractualism*, ed. G. Davis, B. Sullivan, and A. Yeatman, 39–56. Melbourne: Macmillan.
Yeatman, A. 2000a. The politics of postpatrimonial governance. In *Beyond nostalgia: Reshaping Australian education*, ed. T. Seddon and L. Angus, 170–86. Victoria: Australian Council for Educational Research.
———. 2000b. Social democracy and the challenges of post-liberal democracy. *Southern Review* 33 (2): 178–96.
———. 2007. The subject of citizenship. *Citizenship Studies* 11 (1): 105–15.
———. Forthcoming. *The politics of individuality*. London: Routledge.
Zinn, J. 2002. Conceptional considerations and an empirical approach to research on processes of individualization. *Forum: Qualitative Social Research* 3 (1): n.p. Available at http://www.qualitative-research.net/fqs-texte/1-02/1-02zinn-e.htm.

Index