

# *Love in the Time of Neoliberalism*

## *Grammars of Affect and Cultures of Capitalism*

*Sarah Lawrence College*

***Intermediate Seminar***

*Fall 2014*

***ANTH-3802-R-1***

*Meeting Time: Tuesday* 9:30-am 12:30 pm (normally meets at 10:30, exceptionally at 9:30 with prior notice)

*Location: PAC 2*

Fall Conferences on A weeks of: 09/15, 09/29, 10/13, 11/03, 11/17,12/08

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*Love locks spreading in NY*  
<http://www.repubblica.it/esteri/2013/07/29/foto/brooklyn-63933411/1/#1> (reuters)

## *Course description*

A defining feature of the contemporary moment has been a radicalization of market ideologies and corporate culture. A series of profound transformations, occurred in the last forty years, have produced a new configuration of the world's political-economic order, which is variously referred to as "globalized new economy", "late capitalism", or "neoliberalism".

Analyses of the neoliberal age usually focus on political, economic, and structural transformations, but often fail to consider the impact that these process have on the everyday and on our intimate modes of experience. This course suggests that there is great analytic promise in the study of how institutional transformations co-articulate with the affective and moral lives of individuals. Moving from the idea that all great transformations "must be affective in order to be effective", we will thus engage the languages and cultures of neoliberalism and explore how the relation between structures and sentiments has been impacted by capitalist rationality and neoliberal morality.

Rather than conceiving neoliberalism as a political and economic doctrine, our anthropological journey into the contemporary reorganization of affect, will promote an understanding of neoliberalism as a structure of action and as a form of practical conduct, that is, as a "way of doing things". Drawing on a series of hands on exercises and on a combination of theoretical and ethnographic readings from various cultural settings, we will discuss how global forces have been affecting public and private expressions of love, friendship, and sexuality. We will explore the novel aesthetics of desires and pleasures emerging in North America and in the Global South, the new romantic vocabularies originating from the digital transformations of love and companionship, and we will reflect on the forces underlying the contemporary commodification of emotions.

While learning about specific examples of the neoliberal political economy of intimacy, we will engage broader theoretical questions: How pervasive are neoliberal structures of practice? To what extent can neoliberalism be represented as an overarching and coherent global trend externally generated by the homogenizing forces of Late Western Capitalism? Is our moral and affective experience completely shaped by the extension of economic rationality to all areas of life? Or is there a way of looking at the current hypertrophic expansion of market logics that can reveal hidden fissures and unlock a potential for emancipatory expression?

## *Course prerequisites*

This course requires a background in anthropology and the social sciences.

## *Course objectives*

Through a series of readings and ethnographic exercises, this course aims at building a critical understanding of "the means by which power [...] is produced reproduced, and distributed when we seem to be doing nothing more than kissing our lovers goodbye as we leave for the day" (Povinelli 2006: 10).

In order to develop such an understanding students will be encouraged to ethnographically observe how they themselves speak, interact, and engage intimate relations.

These ethnographic exercises may be connected to the development of one's individual conference project or simply constitute single experiences. Conference projects will have an ethnographic focus.

The emphasis on ethnography entails a focus on developing an ability to listen and understanding without jumping to conclusions and without imposing our pre-conceived ideas and values on the ethnographic materials that we will gather or examine. This ethnographic structure of attention is aimed at understanding the subtleties and complexities of human experience, which may also lead to new discoveries about ourselves.

## *Assignments and Writing Requirements*

### **1) Response pieces on each week's readings.**

- a) **Due dates:** Every week on **Saturday at 11 pm.**

- b) **Prompt:** For each class, I would like you to write **200 words ca.** on the assigned readings. In these short responses, you are not supposed to summarize the reading, but to note down the most salient thoughts and questions triggered by the reading. What interested/annoyed/stimulated you? Responses should identify main arguments; key words, links to class discussion, as well as your own reflections. You will be evaluated on comprehension of texts and the depth of your engagement with these materials. You are welcome to make direct reference and quote the author's words, but please make sure you provide the exact page number.
- c) **Submission:** You will need to **upload** your texts on the **course discussion board**. You are also expected to bring a printed version of your response to each class where response pieces will be required, as your interventions in seminar will in part drawn on your written responses.

## 2) Conference journaling.

- a) **Due dates: Midnight** of the day of every conference meeting.
- b) **Prompt:** Write a note on our discussion and your thoughts on the meeting, provide a summary of what we worked on for conference in the form of short answers to the following questions: What did we discuss? What have I encouraged you to look at? What work will you complete for our next conference meeting? I will not assess the quality of your writing so please feel comfortable writing in a drafty and unsystematic manner, but bear in mind that timeliness of your submission will be of paramount importance.
- c) **Submission:** Via email to my email address. Specify in the subject heading your name\_Conference\_journal\_date.

## 3) Conference Papers Abstracts

- a) **Due dates: 09/28, at 11 am.**
- b) **Prompt:** the purpose of this assignment is twofold: help you formulate ideas for conference and train you in writing abstracts. Write 3 short abstracts (200 words each, **600 words** in total, **Max.**) on three possible different topics on which you could imagine yourself working for this Semester. These abstracts will not be binding. Since you will have to decide the topic of your research project by 10/10. This assignment is designed to help you think through possible lines of research you would like to pursue in the course of the semester/year.

## 4) Conference papers First Drafts and Outlines

- a) **Due dates: 11/14 at 5pm for Group 1** (drafts to be discussed on 11/18) and **11/21 at 11am for Group 2** (drafts to be discussed on 11/25).
- b) **Prompt:** This is a preliminary version of your final conference paper. It will contain a draft of some of the paper's key sections and an outline of how you are planning on articulating the paper's section (generally 6 or 7).
  - Keep always in mind that this is a draft aimed at a workshop where you will receive feedback without being evaluated: Only your final drafts will and even those will not be "graded". Do not approach this assignment with anxiety.
  - The goal of this assignment is to be able to share with your peers and instructor your work in progress. Therefore the main principle that should orient your draft submission should be: "what is it that I would most need feedback on?" This may include the presentation of your theoretical or methodological framework, the way you introduce the relevance of your ethnographic topic, a review of the relevant literature you are planning on including in your final draft, descriptions of your ethnographic setting, the analysis of some of your ethnographic findings, etc.
  - The more specific/articulated/candid you are going to be now, the better feedback you will receive for the final drafts.

## 5) Conference papers Final Drafts

- a) **Due dates: 12/9 with no exception.**
- b) **Prompt:** Conference papers are not review articles, nor annotated bibliographies. They are research papers. Students will need to work consistently on their conference project throughout the semester. We will talk about the nature and progressive development of these projects in our bi-weekly "conference" meetings.
- Students are expected to make original claims, provide ethnographic evidence for their argument and show deference to the work of other scholars by referring to the relevant existing literature. In spite of the fact that this is a yearlong seminar, students will have to turn in a conference paper at the end of the fall semester. In the spring semester, they may expand and develop their first semester's paper or work on a different topic.
  - Your paper (16-20 page 5-7000 word long) should identify a key research question and a unifying theme that you will explore in relationship to the existing relevant bodies of academic literature and to your own original ethnographic investigation.
  - In your writing, you will need to discuss the relevant literature, describe your data and the methodology through which you collected them, advance your own interpretation of both the literature and your own data. Your own interpretation will be advanced in an introduction, articulated in the body of the paper, and clinched in your conclusion I expect your papers to be carefully polished.
  - You should present work of a quality that you would be willing to submit to a scholarly journal for consideration.
  - Consequently, you must pay close attention to professional standards in your writing and citations. You should write for an imagined audience of fellow anthropologists who have not necessarily read the particular essays and books. Therefore, you should illustrate and explain your points carefully.
  - The paper must be proofread and spellchecked, in proper AAA formatting for all footnotes, citations within text, and references, see the AAA style guide [http://www.aaanet.org/pubs/style\\_guide.htm](http://www.aaanet.org/pubs/style_guide.htm), as well as the additional guidelines I uploaded on the handout tab under the heading how to format your texts.
  - The final paper will need to have a:
    - Title
    - Subtitle
    - Abstract of no more than 250 words
    - A list of 6 keywords
    - A list of references cited at the end, following AAA format
    - It should be divided in number sections (and subsections if you deem it necessary) each bearing its own heading (and subheading)
    - Length may vary, but it will need to be at least 16 pages long, 1.5 spaced, with 1-inch margins.
    - You must **number your pages.**

## 6) Mini Ethnography/late Mid-term Paper on “Neoliberal SLC”

- a) **Due dates: 11/30, at 11 am.**
- **Prompt:** US higher education has undergone a pervasive neoliberal reorganization. The neoliberal view of higher education is grounded in a market-driven paradigm aimed at promoting temporary and flexible labor for faculty, while turning the transmission of knowledge into a job preparation service pivoted on the notion of “skill”. How are these processes, discourses, and practices affecting SLC? From the introduction of new metrics of evaluation, to the implementation of protocols for regimenting student life and conduct, from the ideology of skills to the rhetorical appeals to “excellence” and “diversity”, SLC presents a compelling case to study the neoliberal reorganization of North American liberal arts education.

The aim of this paper is to allow students to combine a concrete discussion of how neoliberalism has impacted SLC daily experience with a theoretical engagement with the scholarly literature read in the first part of the semester. Drawing on the readings done during the fall, your paper (4 page/1500-2000 ca. word long) will identify and provide a brief ethnographic description of a specific aspect of the neoliberal processes currently unfolding at SLC.

- Please bear in mind that this paper requires a *discussion of the literature you read for class* as well as an analysis of concrete examples from the empirical data you gathered for this project. **One of the main goals of the essay is to prompt you to establish connections between the different readings done this semester.** So the more connections you will be able to make in your reflections, the better. *This will entail quoting the literature covered in this course (Please follow the detailed guidelines provided on MySLC handout tab in the document entitled "How to format your texts").* You are free to refer to other sources if you want, but you will need to prioritize the readings and discussions done for this course.
  - You will give a 5-8 minutes multimedia presentation of your mini-ethnographies during the last class of the semester, on 12/16. Your Multimedia presentations may include creative use of power-point, video-clips, audio or video recorded material (edited audio-interviews or footage), digital pictures, etc.
  - In case there were thematic overlaps and congruencies, you may, if you wish, utilize some of the work (theoretical and/or empirical) done for your mid-term essay for your conference paper and project.
- b) **Submission:** You will **upload** your essay on **MySLC** Assignment tab (naming it YourName\_Midterm\_Paper) by the due date and bring a hardcopy to class on **12/09**.

**7) Ethnographic exercises.** During the course of the semester, you may be asked to turn in short ethnographic tasks (1 page long max). You will have to submit them through MySLC and email them to the rest of the class by the due date and bring a hardcopy to class on the designated workshop date. These pieces are evaluated on the basis of your capacity to respond to the prompt, on your writing skills and ethnographic creativity, and proper formatting. Additional details on the due dates and prompts will be provided during the course of the year.

*NOTE : Syllabus is subject to slight changes depending on the progresses and interests of the class.*

## 1. B Week                      Introduction-political economies of love

*September 9*

### ***Film Screening***

- *Chain of Love*. Dir. Marije Meerman. First Run/Icarus Films, 2001.  
<http://icarusfilms.com/new2002/chain.html>
- Read the essay on **Filming the Care Chain: A Review Essay** by Wendy Kozol  
[http://sfonline.barnard.edu/work/print\\_kozol.htm](http://sfonline.barnard.edu/work/print_kozol.htm)
- Hochschild, Arlie Russell. 2000. The nanny chain. *American Prospect* 11(4): 32-36.

- Harvey, David. 2005. *A brief history of neoliberalism*: Oxford University Press. Introduction, Chpt 1, Chpt, 2.
- Padilla Mark B. et. al. 2007. "Introduction: Cross-Cultural Reflections on an Intimate Intersection". In *Love and globalization: Transformations of intimacy in the contemporary world*. Mark Padilla et. al (eds.). Vanderbilt University Press: pp. ix-xxix. [book]
- Raymond Williams. 1977. "Structures of Feeling". In *Marxism and Literature*. Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press. Pp. 128-35.
- Chaput, Catherine. 2010. Rhetorical circulation in late capitalism: Neoliberalism and the overdetermination of affective energy. *Philosophy and Rhetoric* 43(1):1-25.

**NB**

No web post required for this week, but you are encouraged to read (or re-read) Harvey's selected chapters where you will find a clear historical outline of neoliberalism as well as the other introductory readings by Williams, Chaput, and Padilla.

## 2. A Week *The emotional nuances of neoliberalism*

*September 16*

- Ganti, Tejaswini. 2014. Neoliberalism. *Annual Review of Anthropology* 43.1
- Hardt, Michael. 1999. Affective labor. *Boundary 2* 26(2):89-100.
- Muehlebach, Andrea. 2011. On Affective Labor In Post-Fordist Italy. *Cultural Anthropology* 26(1):59-82.
- Graham, Mark. 2002. "Emotional Bureaucracies: Emotions Civil Servants, and Immigrants in the Swedish Welfare State." *Ethos* 30(3): 199-226.
- Adams V. et al. 2009. Anticipation: technoscience, life, affect, temporality. *Subjectivity* 28:246–65

**Optional**

- Pedwell, Carolyn. 2010. Economies of empathy: Obama, neoliberalism, and social justice. *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 30(2):280-297.
- Muehlebach, Andrea. "Ethical Citizenship" (pp. 31-53) and "Aftereffects of Utopian Practice" (pp. 165-200). In *The Moral Neoliberal: Welfare and Citizenship in Italy*: University of Chicago Press.

## 3. B Week *Neoliberal governmentalities*

*September 23*

- Richard, Analiese, and Daromir Rudnycky. 2009. Economies of affect. *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* 15(1):57-77.
- Rose, Nikolas, Pat O'Malley, and Mariana Valverde. 2006. "Governmentality." *Annu. Rev. Law Soc. Sci.* 2: 83-104.
- Constable, Nicole. 1997. Sexuality and discipline among Filipina domestic workers in Hong Kong. *American Ethnologist* 24(3):539-558.
- Rudnycky, Daromir. 2004. Technologies of servitude: governmentality and Indonesian transnational

labor migration. *Anthropological quarterly* 77(3):407-434.

**Optional on migrant workers**

- Ong, Aihwa. 2006. "A Biocartography: Maids, Neoslavery, and NGOs". *Neoliberalism as Exception: Mutations in Citizenship and Sovereignty*: 195-218.
- Constable, Nicole. 1999. At home but not at home: Filipina narratives of ambivalent returns. *Cultural Anthropology* 14(2): 203-228.

**Optional on Governmentality**

- Foucault, M. 2006. "Governmentality" *The Anthropology of the State: A Reader*, Aradhana Sharma and Akhil Gupta (eds.), Blackwell, Malden, MA, (2006), pp. 131-143.
- Li, Tania Murray. 2007. Governmentality. *Anthropologica* 49(2):275-281.

## 4. A Week

## *De-romanticizing love?*

### *September 30*

- Padilla, M. 2007. "Tourism and Tigueraje: the structures of love and silence among Dominican male sex workers". In *Love and globalization: Transformations of intimacy in the contemporary world*. Mark Padilla et. al (eds.). Vanderbilt University Press: pp. 38-70. [book]
- Rebhun, Linda-Anne. 2007. "The strange marriage of love and interest: economic change and emotional intimacy in Northeast Brasil" In *Love and globalization: Transformations of intimacy in the contemporary world*. Mark Padilla et. al (eds.). Vanderbilt University Press: pp. 107-120. [book]
- Bernstein, Elizabeth. 2007. Buying and selling the "girlfriend experience": The social and subjective contours of market intimacy. In *Love and globalization: Transformations of intimacy in the contemporary world*. Mark Padilla et. al (eds.). Vanderbilt University Press: pp. 186-202. [book]
- Cheng, Sealing. 2007. "Romancing the club: love dynamics between Filipina entertainers and GIs in US military camp towns in South Korea". In *Love and globalization: Transformations of intimacy in the contemporary world*. Mark Padilla et. al (eds.). Vanderbilt University Press: pp. 226-251. [book]

**Optional**

- Erik, Cohen. 1986. Lovelorn Farangs: The Correspondence between Foreign Men and Thai Girls. *Anthropological Quarterly* 59:115-127.

## 5. B Week

## *Technologies of the inner self*

### *October 7*

- Matza, Tomas. 2009. Moscow's Echo: Technologies of the Self, Publics, and Politics on the Russian Talk Show. *Cultural Anthropology* 24(3): 489-522.
- Cruikshank, Barbara. "Revolutions within: self-government and self-esteem." *Economy and Society* 22.3 (1993): 327-344.
- Mahmood, Saba. 2001. "Feminist theory, embodiment, and the docile agent: Some reflections on the Egyptian Islamic revival." *Cultural anthropology* 16 (2): 202-236.

- Brotherton, P. Sean. 2008. "'We have to think like capitalists but continue being socialists': Medicalized subjectivities, emergent capital, and socialist entrepreneurs in post-Soviet Cuba." *American ethnologist* 35 (2): 259-274.
- Jones, Carla. 2004. Whose stress? Emotion work in middle-class Javanese homes. *Ethnos* 69(4):509-528.

## 6. A Week *Scripted presentations of the outer self*

*October 14*

- Cameron, Deborah. 2000. Styling the worker: Gender and the commodification of language in the globalized service economy. *Journal of Sociolinguistics* 4(3):323-347.
- Christine Yano. 2013. "'Flying Geisha': Japanese Stewardesses with Pan American World Airways," in Alisa Freedman, Laura Miller, Christine Yano, eds., *Modern Girls on the Go: Gender, Mobility, Globalism, and Labor in Contemporary Japan*. Stanford University Press, pp.85-107.
- Inoue, Miyako. 2007. Language and gender in an age of neoliberalism. *Gender and Language* 1(1):79-91.
- Yang, Jie. 2008 "'Re-employment stars': Language, gender and neoliberal restructuring in China." In *Words, worlds, and material girls: Language, gender, globalization*. Vol. 19. Bonnie S. McElhinny (ed.) Walter de Gruyter, 2008. Pp. 77-105.
- Hochschild, Arlie. 1983. "Exploring the Managed Heart" In *The Managed Heart: Commercialization of Human Feeling*. Berkeley: Univ. of California Press. Pp. 3-23.

### **Optional**

- Goffman, Erving 1955 On face-work: an analysis of ritual elements in social interaction. *Psychiatry: Journal for the Study of Interpersonal Processes*. Reprinted in *Reflections*, volume 4, number 3
- Hochschild, Arlie Russell. 1979. "Emotion work, feeling rules, and social structure." *American journal of sociology* (1979): 551-575.
- Hochschild, Arlie Russell. The Presentation of Emotion [http://www.sagepub.com/upm-data/13293\\_Chapter4\\_Web\\_Byte\\_Arlie\\_Russell\\_Hochschild.pdf](http://www.sagepub.com/upm-data/13293_Chapter4_Web_Byte_Arlie_Russell_Hochschild.pdf)

## 7. October Study Days *No class*

*October 21*

## 8. B Week *Neoliberal linguistic markets*

*October 28*



- Urciuoli, Bonnie. "Excellence, leadership, skills, diversity: Marketing liberal arts education." *Language & communication* 23.3 (2003): 385-408.
- Constable, Nicole. 2007. "Love at First Site? Visual Images and Virtual Encounters With Bodies". In *Love and globalization: Transformations of intimacy in the contemporary world*. Mark Padilla et. al (eds.). Vanderbilt University Press: pp. 252-267
- Gershon, Ilana. 2011b. Un-friend my heart: Facebook, promiscuity, and heartbreak in a neoliberal age. *Anthropological quarterly* 84(4):865-894.
- Urciuoli, Bonnie, and Chaise LaDousa. "Language Management/Labor." *Annual Review of Anthropology* 42 (2013): 175-190.
- Zhang, Qing. 2008. "Cosmopolitanism and linguistic capital in China: Language, gender and the transition to a globalized market economy in Beijing." In *Words, worlds, and material girls: Language, gender, globalization*. Bonnie S. McElhinny (ed.) Walter de Gruyter, pp. 403- 422.

**Optional**

- Urciuoli, Bonnie. 2008. Skills and selves in the new workplace. *American Ethnologist* 35 (2): 211-228.
- Gershon, Ilana. 2013. Publish and be damned: New media publics and neoliberal risk. *Ethnography*:1466138113502514.

9. A Week                      *Ethnographies of neoliberal restructuring*

*November 4*

- Rofel, Lisa. 2007. "Introduction" (pp.1-31), "Yearnings" (pp. 31-65) and "Legislating Desire" (pp.135-157). In *Desiring China: Experiments in neoliberalism, sexuality, and public culture*: Duke University Press. [book]
- Kleinman, A., et al. 2011. "Introduction" (pp.1-36). In *Deep China: The Moral Life of the Person, What Anthropology and Psychiatry Tell Us about China Today*. Univ of California Pr.
- Yan, Yunxiang. 2011. "The Changing Moral Landscape" (pp. 36-78). In Kleinman, A., et al. (eds). *Deep China: The Moral Life of the Person, What Anthropology and Psychiatry Tell Us about China Today*. Univ of California Pr.

10. B Week                      *Hybrid encounters*

*November 11*

- Freeman, Carla. 2007. The "reputation" of neoliberalism. *American Ethnologist* 34(2):252-267.
- Kipnis, Andrew B. 2008. Audit cultures: Neoliberal governmentality, socialist legacy, or technologies of governing?. *American Ethnologist* 35 (2): 275-289.
- Kipnis, Andrew. 2007. "Neoliberalism reified: suzhi discourse and tropes of neoliberalism in the People's Republic of China." *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* 13 (2): 383-400.
- Rudnyckyj, Daromir. 2009. Spiritual economies: Islam and neoliberalism in contemporary Indonesia. *Cultural Anthropology* 24(1):104-141.
- Gershon, Ilana. 2011. Neoliberal agency. *Current Anthropology* 52(4):537-555.

***Optional***

Freeman, C. (2006). Neo-liberalism, respectability, and the romance of flexibility in Barbados.

*11. A Week* *Workshop on Conference Papers*

*November 18*

*12. Thx Giving Week* *Workshop Part II*

*November 25*

*13. B Week* *AAA meeting in DC-*

*December 2*

*No class* due to Instructor's participation in the Annual meeting of the American Anthropological Association

***Reading optional- wrapping up neoliberalism***

- Hilgers, Mathieu. 2010. The three anthropological approaches to neoliberalism. *International Social Science Journal* 61.202: 351-364.
- Kingfisher, Catherine, and Jeff Maskovsky. 2008. The Limits of Neoliberalism. *Critique of Anthropology* 28(2): 115-126.
- Ong, A. 2006. "Introduction: Neoliberalism as Exception, Exception as Neoliberalism" (pp.1-27). In *Neoliberalism as exception: Mutations in citizenship and sovereignty*. Duke University Press.
- Wacquant, Loïc. 2012. Three steps to a historical anthropology of actually existing neoliberalism. *Social Anthropology* 20(1):66-79.
- Hilgers, Mathieu. 2013. Embodying neoliberalism: thoughts and responses to critics. *Social Anthropology* 21(1):75-89.
- Collier, Stephen J. 2012. Neoliberalism as big Leviathan, or ... ? A response to Wacquant and Hilgers. *Social Anthropology* 20(2):186-195.
- Collier, Stephen J. and Aihwa Ong. 2005. Global assemblages, anthropological problems. In *Global assemblages: Technology, politics, and ethics as anthropological problems*. Aihwa Ong and Stephen J. Collier, eds. John Wiley & Sons, pp. 3-21.
- Greenhouse, Carol J. 2010. "Introduction". In *Ethnographies of neoliberalism*. Univ of Pennsylvania Press.
- Jessop, Bob. 2013. Putting neoliberalism in its time and place: a response to the debate. *Social*

***Film screening***  
***My perestroika***

***14. A Week***

***Guest Speaker***

*December 9*

***Conference papers due***

***Johanna Woydak***  
King's College London, United Kingdom

***"From upstairs to downstairs to the phone: the trajectory of a 'standardised' script in a multilingual call centre"***

Despite call centres' phenomenal expansion in the past fifteen years and their important role as an employment generator in many countries, the media and the majority of academic studies have characterized them as inherently problematic standardised and globalised workplaces. Pejorative metaphors have included, for instance, the sweatshop analogy. Other authors have emphasised the similarities between call centres and factory environments. A key criticism in most of this research is their heavy reliance on standardisation, in particular the widespread use and top-down imposition of standardized scripts. Agents are said to have to follow scripts they are given verbatim. Drawing on a 4 year-long ethnography, this research follows the trajectory of a standardised script, the symbol of standardization to explore how different participants experience and understand scripts and standardisation. Methodologically, participant observation was conducted at an outbound call centre in London that describes itself to speak "300 + languages" and contacts on behalf of clients' businesses worldwide in any language requested. Sixty interviews were also conducted with the staff (managers and agents). This paper problematises current theorisations of scripts and standardisation. These are shown i) to draw on a long tradition in social theory that views standardisation negatively – leading to homogenization and deskilling and as ii) restricted in their vision, focusing only on managements' official account of 'static scripts' that are enforced top-down through surveillance – the tendency that scripts unofficially take on different meanings whilst travelling down the hierarchy is overlooked. Official verbatim policy also sees it possible to 'make their own' within the set framework, and thus does not lead to homogenisation or deskilling. The trajectory of the script reveals that agents are supportive of scripts. In fact, they state they help them with, for instance, language learning. Keywords: new economy, standardisation, language commodification.

***15. B Week***

***Presentations***

*December 16*

***Presentations of ethnographies of SLC neoliberalism***

