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### Orphan love in the age of capital

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# Orphan love in the age of capital

**Hans Skott-Myhre, Kathleen S.G. Skott-Myhre, Scott Kouri & Jeff Smith**

## **Abstract**

As we enter the second decade of the twenty-first century, who is to be served by institutions of care and to what ends becomes a pressing matter of concern. Foucault has suggested that the capitalist regime of rule in the twentieth century deployed residential settings as disciplinary apparatuses for shaping subjects to its colonial and industrial interests. However, in the twenty-first century, Deleuze has proposed that it is no longer discipline that is of primary concern for capitalism, but control through an ever-proliferating system of abstract code. It is within this context that terms, such as care within institutional residential encounters, open themselves to the necessity of interrogation. This paper will argue that residential care is a field of encounter saturated with a complex and intricate array of affects. If the rule of capitalism is designed to abstract lived experience, then any affirmation of the corporeal experience of encounter as lived experience might well constitute an alternative affirmation of life and hence a revolutionary set of possibilities. This paper will argue that it is love as creative desire that holds the most powerful possibilities for affirming the lived encounter to be found in residential care.

## **Keywords**

Love, capitalism, deleuze, child and youth care

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## Introduction

Our collective heart beats against the new peoplemaking that endorses firm leadership and house managers who masquerade as friendly, to deter us from our inherent evil and tendency toward corruption. We don't need you standing in for the priest and psychiatrist to guide us toward the right kind of life. Our collective heartbeat is inclusive of both reason and passion. Our love is connected to that which is greater than the walls that close in on our rat race. My God is the thunder that chased after the lightening the night my best friend died, the roar in my head after a shot of something pure, and the rats that swarmed the backstreets in her name. I read about a doctor who built "rat parks" that helped rats get off cocaine. If I could move into that park I would. The parks I've lived in didn't help me. Maybe we could get in touch with that doctor to figure out what I missed? I'd like to talk with him about Orphan Love, the kind of love that escapes the family tree and its sexist, racist, homophobic roots. My community is vibrant: dancing, stealing, fucking, singing, wailing. Our main problem... nope it's not drugs, mental illness, or childhood trauma... it's the fact that we are all too broke and can't build the park the way we'd like to. So we do crime to buy the drugs we use to make it through the world you impose on us. We get busted. We end up in correctional facilities and halfway homes like this one. Stinky walls. Let's tear them down and build us a rat park instead... (Anonymous Composite)

## Contemporary Capitalism

In the middle of the twentieth century, the Frankfurt School of critical theory introduced the concept of 'late capitalism' to signal an end to capitalism and the possibility of life after it (Jameson, 1991). By the end of that century, neo-Marxist thinkers, such as Fredric Jameson (1991), Gilles Deleuze (1992), along with Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri (2001) began tracking the changes, disruptions, appropriations, and contradictions in the evolution and devolution of capitalism that might signal its transformations and possible demise. In this paper, we follow the workings of capitalism and its impacts on residential youth work, emphasising love as a point of both exploitation and revolt within the emergent forms of sociality in the 21st century. We make the proposal that re-thinking and re-envisioning love may point towards a post-capitalist world to come.

As we emerge from the twentieth century into the twenty-first, the world of production, both social and economic, has begun to transform our lives in substantive and disturbing ways. For those of us born and raised in the twentieth century, these changes can be somewhat disconcerting and unsettling. For the young people we are beginning to encounter in residential care, those coming into this world now, the world of late capitalism is all they have known; a

capitalism unambiguously composed of global networks of information, culture, finance, and bodily flows (Hardt & Negri, 2001).

Antonio Negri (1996) advises us that if we are to understand ourselves within the new forms of society and subjectivity that are proliferating as we move into the new century, we need to understand the ways that capitalism, as a virtual global force, is transforming the world. First and foremost, it is essential that we come to a full apprehension of the fact that we have left the world of industrial capitalism behind. This doesn't mean that there aren't still factories. It does mean that they are increasingly robotised with fewer and fewer human workers involved in the production process. Indeed, the robotisation of labour is now extending into all forms of work from agriculture to fast food (Ford, 2016). Secondly, according to Hardt and Negri (2005), although quantitatively agriculture and industrial labour still reign globally, there has been a qualitative shift towards forms of labour that are affective, that is labour that produces relationships, emotional responses, knowledge, information and communication. Care work, among other forms of affective labour, are slowly coming to shape labour in general, creating a 'tendency for employers to highlight education, attitude, character, and "prosocial" behaviour as the primary skills employees need' (p.108).

In the place of factory and other forms of labour that appropriated and exploited our bodies, we now have new forms of labour that strip-mine our intellect, emotions, social skills and ability to form and sustain relationships. As Baudrillard (1981) points out, capitalism takes our living desires and translates them into a realm of abstract signification. He argues, along with Michael Hardt (1995), that the social forms we have produced for our own use, such as the church, the family, governments, and relationships have been emptied of any original function related to living force and replaced with the dollar sign. Instead of living in a society composed of actual material sets of relations, we are now trained to accept virtual copies.

We would argue that one of the most powerful forms now produced as almost purely virtual is the family. We are told in school, through the media, and in our communities, how important family is to the emotional and physical health of our children and the stability and coherence of our society (Weima, 2012). Indeed, the concept of the family is at the centre of many of our concepts of care in residential work with children (Garfat, 2003). But the family, as we live and imagine it now, is not premised in actual families, but families modelled on media portrayals of families; a copy of a copy or, what Baudrillard (1981) calls, simulacrum. Korinne Weima (2012) points out that this abstract ideal form of the family is an unobtainable virtual construction that none of us can actually produce in our daily lives. In every attempt to match the ideal form of the nuclear family we fail, and in that failure come to doubt our capacities to shape the world. When the world is presented to us in a blizzard of signs and codes

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that signal, but don't deliver the living material satisfaction of struggling together to create the world, abstraction moves beyond simply signifying the world and morphs into a comprehensive system of domination and control or what Hardt and Negri call Empire (2001).

Deleuze (1992) tells us that under this regime of abstraction, we are no longer disciplined through containment and observation, but through the manipulation of the codes that increasingly define us, such as our governmental social insurance numbers or credit ratings. Under such conditions, our relationships with each other, and particularly relationships of care, have been transformed decisively. We will argue that in this emerging world, love, once the force that brought people together and produced living worlds, is now subsumed within capitalism as a code. This is love as a code that paradoxically prevents any real connection between us through its infinite deferral.

Within the world of working with young people, the cascade of neoliberal subjectivity, premised in the abstractions of capital, flows from manager, to worker, to youth. At each level we are promised and promise each other a place in society if we conform to capitalism. We are taught to emulate a particular mode of being and relating modelled on a copy of a time past, evaluated on our relational qualities against an abstract code of behaviour or standard (Hughes, Cooper, Gormally, & Ripplingale, 2014). We learn to develop an online presence, set up an online bank account, and wait for 'friends' to 'like' our page. New forms of life skills are now synonymous with mastering the codes of the internet and the management of finance (Oblinger and Oblinger, 2005). Over time, both workers and youth sleep, exercise and eat less for the sake of the body, and more to be more marketable and ready for another day of work (Ayo, 2012). The contradiction, however, is that class and status no longer exist as real positions that one can actually occupy. There is always further training, another lesson to be taught and learned, perpetual deferral of an identity (Deleuze, 1992).

In previous iterations of the capitalist society, Foucault (1977) notes, the family, school, barracks and factory were in the service of managing bodies through containment and discipline. Such disciplinary enclosures, such as a residential facility, ensured the smooth running of factories through a well-trained worker. With the recent turn towards signs, affects, and images, as the primary product of capitalism, human bodies and material products are only a means to the proliferation of abstract code which is immanent to itself, requiring less and less connection to material existence (Luhmann, 2012). Capitalism, however, can never reach a fully abstract or immanent level because it requires material life off which to feed. We cannot afford to lose sight of the fact that life is what produces the actual world we live in, not capital (Negri, 1996). Nor should we be duped into believing that money, status, or any other abstract code within capitalism can provide the subsistence for continued life on this planet.

The kind of abstract coding produced by capitalism works at all levels: youth files are coded, behaviours are coded, and even genetics and parental attachment patterns are now coded. One code always indicates another code in a never-ending proliferation of codes. We speak of young people as a DSM code and psychiatric referent, which are funding codes in and of themselves (Woolford and Curran, 2013). These codes are then taken up by workers and by the youth themselves as forms of social capital that are used to accomplish various forms of social labour. Codes are endlessly relayed from one to another, always organising material life, only for it to be decoded and recoded again, always with the aim of extracting some bit of life (Deleuze, 2012).

We would argue, that in a confused state, we as youth workers continue to groom generations of young people, particularly those who are at greatest odds with the signifying regime of contemporary capitalism, into a lost search for value in the form of dollars. We would propose that we are inclined professionally to perpetually inculcate young people into an abstract system of code that is precisely the cover-up that obscures the reality of youth and adults as the actual set of relations that produces all real value.

## **Residential Care in Late Capitalism**

In contemporary residential care, we would suggest that we are often held between our conception of the world founded in the capitalism of the twentieth century and the emerging world of capitalism today. In this, we might note how Foucault (1977) goes to considerable lengths to argue that forms of civil society such as the prison, psychiatric hospitals and schools are historically produced within the logic and subsequent practices of the modes of production in a particular historical period. We would assert that this is also true of residential programmes as we enter the emerging world of global virtual capitalism as the new mode of production. However, it appears to us as though many youth workers behave as if we were still operating under the logic of the previous century and that it is a young person's body that needs to be disciplined and shaped for the workplace more pertinent to the modes of industrial capitalism. In our experience, youth workers in residential programming still expend considerable energy surveilling young people and subjecting them to regimes of order and structure in the belief that this is what will prepare them for the job market and 'real world'. Young people, however, already know that there is no real job market in the traditional twentieth century sense and that the skills they need to excel in the world of global capitalism lie outside the expertise of the staff (Katz, 2014).

For those residential programmes beginning to understand the implications of twenty-first century society, there may well be a gradual shift away from disciplining bodies and onto systems that monitor and attempt to control access

to the world of virtual communications. We can imagine such programmes being paid to invent and produce new forms of control that respond to threats that youth pose as programmers, hackers and code breakers. The fact that young people outpace adults in virtually all dimensions of information and computer technology poses a threat to the current order of adult/youth relations (Oblinger and Oblinger, 2005). Residential facilities, as the twenty first century progresses, may be tasked with surveying digital youth, their web activity (whether deployed through sexual content, video games, social media), while simultaneously reorganising their capacities towards professional social networks, the management of finance and job opportunities, and the development of marketing strategies.

Of course, it is important to note the proliferating shut down of youth programming of all types, including residential programming (Hughes et al., 2014). We would argue that this is due to the fact that most of our programming is quickly losing relevance within the new forms of global capitalism. The necessity to contain and observe has given way to systems of control premised in virtual overcoding of daily life through the manipulation of intellectual creativity and social skills (Negri, 1996). To succeed in this environment, the residential care institution needs to adopt an increasingly corporatised model. Programmes interested in surviving with the blessing and support of global capitalism, may well want to consider following McDonald's lead and use their programming to develop soft skills like smiling, making eye contact, and speaking in a friendly manner, rather than being punctual, responsible and honest.

In this, young people, as future workers, could learn how their affects might be modulated according to the forms of company care that are exchanged for pay. Programmes could build systems of care built out of reward systems that entice young people into late capitalist modes of being, prepared for the world of affective labour in all sectors of the economy. Young people could be subjected to endless training that organises their body language and emotions to produce affects, not for their own sake, but to sell the programme. Looking good and sounding right would no longer be tied to relationships with other people, but would signify a product value which, in turn, signifies status, class, and virility, as absent material constitutions. Over time our use would come from our ability to produce, in ourselves and in youth, ways of talking, interacting and behaving. Ways of being are what the institution would buy from us, translatable into profit.

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## Who is served?

In the emerging practices of residential care as affective labour and virtual code, we would point to what might be called a new form of neoliberal prevention work. This is a type of programming that prevents the organisation of non-conforming young people and workers from connecting too deeply. Such work operates by assuring that actual material living relations do not allow for powerful collective alterations of their personal and collective environments. Instead, these kinds of prevention efforts would assure that affects are dampened and that individuation produces an ever-improving neoliberal self that will triumph or be held individually responsible for failure. We would argue that this logic of prevention lingers under the auspices of suicide risk prevention, health and safety protocol, violence prevention, mental health care, and recovery from addiction.

We would also contend that these forms of neoliberal prevention have no interest in the living capacity of young people to change the world. Instead, they would allow facility managers, boards, funders, and other functionaries of the institution, to be able to capitalise on the precarity of the lives of young people and, to a growing extent, workers. Funding, in these money-centred agencies is directed to the perpetuation of the institution itself, rather than being distributed within the community in which the agency is situated (Basaglia, 1987). Resource allocation has little relation to the lived actualities of young people and their families, much less to the communities where young people originate and to whom they will very likely return. Instead, in these highly capitalistic neoliberal programmes, youth would be paraded through the community on outings and given small tokens and gifts on holidays or birthdays. Neoliberal administrators could use these gestures of generosity symbolically, to promote the marketing of the programme and its funders/boards as altruistic and caring. This copy of a copy of caring could then be used to further institutional stability and expansion (with ambiguous outcomes for the professionals who do the affective work).

To promote the well-being of the institution while scissioning young people from their communities, and to act as if their issues could be separated from the struggles of their people, is a particularly pernicious form of institutional abuse. With deep roots in the genocidal colonial projects of the residential schools of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries (Grant, 2015), the removal of youth produces what Basaglia (1987) references as deep holes of grief and loss in their communities of origin. To attempt to found healing in the individual young person, while leaving their community to the ravages of social and cultural devastation, is a truly mad idea. To imagine that we, as workers, are exempt from the social forces impacting on the communities of the youth we serve is to whistle past the graveyard.



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Any denial of our deep affiliation and inextricable ecological relation to the network of people and communities of the young people with whom we engage every day, is founded in a mistaken understanding of our class positioning in the broader society. In the world of twenty-first century global capitalism, anxiety, related to the ever-present possibility of losing our economic edge and falling into poverty, is a driving force in the production of our daily consciousness and understanding of who we are (Deleuze, 1992). To maintain our status as bourgeois or even working class, we rely on the lumpen proletariat to maintain even some semblance of class stability and denial about the imminent death of our limited and provisional privilege. We know from our induction into the realm of provisional bourgeois status, that what capitalism requires is a betrayal of our communities and their struggles. The practices involved in becoming a good capitalist subject require recruitment into roles and identities that are foreign to our histories and material reality (Basaglia, 1987).

For workers to be able to initiate the young into capitalism today, as we have described it, their home-grown knowledge and sets of affective relations must be reconfigured through the programmes we offer. Membership in the world of employment and survival under twenty-first century capitalism requires that we instil a particular neoliberal way of being, through the perverse forms of neoliberal prevention we have identified above. Failure to do so might well be viewed as unprofessional and irresponsible. For ourselves as workers, by re-enacting subjectivities and relations that perpetuate capitalism, we defer the very possibilities of revolutionary relationships that exist in the form of, what we will discuss as, orphan love, articulated in the opening passage above as 'the kind of love that escapes the family tree and its sexist, racist, homophobic roots'.

## **What is Love in contemporary capital?**

We have thus far argued that residential care does not escape the exploitative grasp of capital. Care and love, the most fundamental of attracting and producing affects, are regularly turned into the empty signifier of the dollar sign, leaving the immanent material relationships bereft of their constituting force. Residential care, we argue, is thereby at risk of being increasingly usurped of its potential to provide an alternative to demoralising and disenfranchising life. Such exploitations are primarily accomplished by separating love from the real and material conditions through which adults and youth in residential care produce actual lives together. However, before we explore potential routes for reclaiming love as an immanent force, it behoves us to answer how love has been betrayed in the first place.

Hardt and Negri (2005) write, '[w]hen our ideas and our affects, or emotions, are put to work, for instance, and when they thus become subject in a new way

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to the command of the boss, we often experience new and intense forms of violation or alienation' (p.66). When care becomes work and subject to the dictates of institutional command we lose any semblance of its living force. Love, as defined and constrained by the standards and boundaries of the workplace, becomes unrecognisable. Love and care, as social labour defined by the value of the dollar, is subjected to the dictates of time as a measure of what we are worth to capital. We lose control of our time to love and care as it is gradually subsumed within the job (Casarino, 2003).

It is important to distinguish the implicit difference noted above between love and care. Although, as we will show, love and care are often intertwined and entangled in modes of practice, they function differently. Love, we would propose as a liminal function that opens passages for the flow of force that allows for the expression of anybody to act. It is oddly impersonal while, at the same time, opening the singular capacities of any given body to act. Care, on the other hand, is that set of practices that is attentive to the ecological conditions of any given assemblage of bodies in such a way as to maximise the diversity of capacity of expression. In another term, care is attentive to the particular integrity of the material elements of any given set of bodies in relation to each other. In this sense, care is always personal while at the same time being sensitive to the overall well-being of a given social ecology.

The importance of the relationship between love and care becomes increasingly clear when we see the ways that the ecology of our lived experience, as workers, is perverted and corrupted under the current regime of global capitalism. Take for example the way that lines are blurred between our work time and private time, as when we continue to 'love and care' for those we work with, even when we are not at the residence. The rules and constraints as to how to love and care dictated to us by our work in the form of fulfilling the proper codes, begins to subtly fill every aspect of our lives. Paradoxically, this distribution or de-territorialisation of work at first often feels like a blessing, a sign of the congruity between our work and our lives. However, we've come to realise that it comes at a price when we find ourselves working all the time either directly or indirectly with youth via continuously checking emails, texts, and messages regarding those we care for, or thinking about how we might do a better job at caring the next day. Many 'private' nights are also spent imagining the boundaries of love, pondering transgressions and the consequences of those transgressions. As time goes on questions of love are replaced by new training, professional development, supervisory and team conversations, and we spend our time at home and with our friends talking through our experiences of the day's work (Kouri & Smith, 2016). Perhaps this mode of eternal work has its most pernicious effects in the ways in which our training at work to do appropriate caring and loving, begins to affect how we express care and love for those in our homes and in our community.

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In performing love and care as work, we argue that we have been tricked into believing that love is a commodity, one that we must sell in order to achieve a minimal degree of safety and comfort in our own lives. This complex relation between our human service work as both something we already do as lived encounter and as something we do as labour in exchange for money is rooted in deep contradictions and antagonisms. Love is both individual and scarce in this picture: individual in the sense that the worker is an individual with a particular form of love to give, and scarce in the sense that youths in residential care lack sufficient love. Love today is severed from its material context obscuring the possibility of youth and adults interacting to create a worthwhile and liveable life together. Instead, we constitute the logic of work as love and love as work. Both adult worker and deficient youth require the investments of the institution to provide the platform in which one can state: 'I've got love for sale' (Porter, 1930) and thus welcome youth as consumer into the parasitic system of love as representation of value in the money form. Reminiscent of Spinoza's (2000) question of why we fight for our servitude as though it were a form of liberation, residential youth work must question why we inculcate those for whom we care into a system that is determined to leave nothing for them to live by.

## **What image of love are we working with here?**

### **Familial and Residential Love**

We have argued that contemporary capital seeks to extract a surplus from the production of life and affect that we produce with youth in being together. We have also argued that the transposition of the image of the family onto residential care, noting that there is perhaps no more powerful form of love that is over-coded by capital than the family. We would agree with Deleuze and Guattari (1977) when they argue that the traditional nuclear family unit, what they call 'daddy-mommy-me', forestalls our creative desires and attempts to make young people docile and ready for incorporation into capitalism. In this way the family acts as an agent of psychological repression in order to curtail any capacity for explosive love and creativity (Weima, 2012). We would agree with Marx that the family holds the origins of future forms of slavery in its inherent structures as gender driven divisions of labour (Skott-Myhre, 2015). The role of the family, defined this way, works carefully to constrain and redirect the powerful living force of a multifaceted and multidirectional love; a love that is productive, uncoded, and in excess of both family and capital. If young people could access this prohibited and occluded, but powerful, form of loving force through their interactions with adults and the world around them, they might well have the capacity to create living worlds beyond the imagination of capital.

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We would argue that love conceived as a passage to worlds beyond capital, or any other regime of domination, is worthy of examination for anyone interested in youth work as a practice of liberation. Passage, as an act of moving through a territory on the way to somewhere else, always begs the question of the difficulty of the terrain and the viability of access. In short, passage requires a viable space-between, where one can move with relative ease. Obviously, passage is impeded if one attempts to transit directly through an impediment. When looking for a way across a mountain range, it is wise to seek the lowest point that affords a pathway to the other side. In terms of the social, we would argue that such passage is best found at the margins of a given regime of domination rather than at the centre where it is strongest. Unlike our colleagues who would speak truth to power or go directly at the centres of power, we would advocate for seeking the liminal spaces between power. Or, in another term, relationships to those territories and peoples abandoned or neglected by the system of dominant force.

To think of love as a form of passage is to re-think the concept as comprehended in more conventional understandings. We are proposing, following Deleuze and Guattari (1987), love as a kind of affect, not simply an emotion. An affect, in the work of Deleuze (2004), following Spinoza (2000), constitutes the ability to affect and be affected. It is the vehicle that allows for the opening of the capacity for each body to express and creatively act. The ability to act is premised in the affective capacities to be found in the relationship between bodies. It is what allows for bodies to impact each other in ways that open an infinitude of possible actions and expressions. Love, as affect, opens flows between bodies of speeds and slownesses as well as intensities and extensivities that combine to give us our sense of space and time. That is to say, love gives us our sense of possibility and capacity, which is always premised in an apprehension of duration as it intersects with the limitations or extensive elements of the material realm in any given moment. Love, written this way, is never an abstraction or a limitation. It cannot be found in the abilities of language to describe the world or in the constructions of truth. It is far too dynamic to constitute any regime of domination that relies on lack or limitation. Love, then, is always to be found at the edges or margins of any given social system. It is the driving force that works from the edges in, undoing taxonomies and hierarchies of either/or and opening instead, fields of connectivity as both/and.

Love, as we are proposing it, resides in what Gloria Anzaldua (1987) refers to as a borderland. Love as a borderland is the province of subjects who are constitutively incapable of belonging to any normatively defined space. For those of us working in residential care, it may be just those young people we encounter who are defined as deviant or delinquent and requiring care, that might well exist in the borderland at the edge of social control. As those unruly subjects who defy proper instruction they may have a particular capacity for love

as revolt. Their experience of trauma, pain and struggle, is what Eve Tuck (2010) defines as desire, or the ability to persist in the face of almost certain obliteration. This kind of desire is rooted in an ontological experience of the failings of the system of rule to deliver on its promises of reward and care and is potentially quite dangerous to the existing structure of society. That may be why there is a long history of delinquents fomenting revolutions.

One antidote to such a threat to the existing order posed by love as desiring force is to overcode loss and struggle with a compensatory stand in for what has been lost. In the case of those young people who have lost family and who have struggled to define love or trust, traditional forms of residential care might be seen to supply simulacrum of both. That is to say, a creation of copies of family structures and familial relationships through the production of love as rule, prevention, or inculcation into capital - what we would term residential love.

Residential love is a truly peculiar formulation that is founded on trust through boundaries and emotional re-attachment through a shifting array of paid working staff who either live in or work eight to 12 hour shifts before going home. Youth are told to think of this as family and to invest trust in a group of workers paid to care for them. The workers themselves are told to keep an emotional distance from the young people and establish firm boundaries while building strong and caring relations (while boundaries between work and home are less robust than ever) (Parsons, 2015).

Of course, everyone knows that the ghost in the machine is the institution where all this takes place. And it is the institution that makes it clear to all those involved, either covertly or overtly, that if either the young person or the worker betrays the facility or its management, the façade of loving familial relations will slip and the subject in question will be immediately abandoned. Residential love extends the simulacrum of familialism as a way of overcoding residential settings and masking their function in the machinery of domination that is capitalism.

## **Orphan Love**

As we have suggested above, the alternative to residential love is rooted in the ways that young people, in their interactions with adults and the world around them, have the capacity to create living worlds beyond the imagination of capital. However we would propose that, to see this capacity as youth workers requires us to relinquish a number of cherished beliefs and perceptions. Among these is the valorisation of the family, work, and compliance. For example, we need to re-think the ways that we see a young person who is living on the streets. Franco Basaglia (1987), the father of de-institutionalisation, remarked that those freed from the asylums who remained on the streets, rather than allow themselves to be inducted into the asylums-without-walls of the newly emerging mental health system, held the true potential for reconfiguring society.

His argument was that in avoiding induction into the machinery of diagnosis and treatment, even if it meant living in the streets, was a powerful statement of refusal. It is Antonio Negri (1996) and the autonomist Marxists of Italy (Hardt & Virno, 2006) who cite refusal as a central element in creating new forms of society. As long as we are willing to participate in the systems that subjugate and exploit our capacities, they will exist as the predominant social form.

Of course as Foucault (1977) and Butler (2011) point out, there are many ways to refuse, both large and small. Indeed, the young people who refuse to participate in traditional family structures, modes of institutional confinement, and the world of work, may not be in need of us in the ways we imagine. In their wilful refusal to participate and to put themselves at risk, they may be using their bodies to constitute a politics of non-compliance that is indicative of another set of social relations. Certainly, those of us who have worked with street youth are well aware of their capacity to form living networks of support they call family. But their families are all composed of voluntary orphans who are working together to create a set of relations that works for them. We have a tendency to think of such relations and modes of life as pathological, but perhaps it is us who carry the disease?

In the encounter with orphan love, we, as youth workers, are continually faced with communities of young people who, generation after generation, create alternative sub and counter cultural communities that refuse adult rule. As professionals within our disciplinary enclosures such as psychiatry, psychology, social work, child and youth care, and human services, we have our own generational productions of explanatory frameworks for deviance and refusal by young people; e.g. oppositional defiant disorder, family dysfunction, lack of social cohesion, trauma, mental illness, genetic abnormality, lack of attachment, neuro-sciences of lack and so on. What we fail to see is that, in spite of our best explanations and intervention, the very young people that we are most assiduously targeting continue to refuse induction into the world we are offering. We might well argue that such revolt and refusal has a developmental end point at which we all join up. However, we all know that any number of us is only faking it.

Perhaps then, the power of orphan love lies in its insistence on the refusal of involuntary parentage by families or institutions and the insistence on networks of voluntary affiliation. Let us be clear that orphan love does not mean the absolute scission between those associated with you by birth or legal contract. It means the refusal of association determined from the outside. In this sense, one is orphaned in order to open new possibilities of relationship not constrained by the overtones of, what Foucault (1977) called, fascist living. Fascist living, Foucault tells us, is composed of 'the fascism in us all, in our heads and in our everyday behaviour, the fascism that causes us to love power, to desire the very thing that dominates and exploits us' (p. xiii).

Orphan love is something we encounter everyday in our work with young people. We would argue that it has significant capacities to open our work in important ways to the living force of relationship. We would propose that orphan love could work to open flows of creative force drawing workers out of their work and reliance on residential love. This makes orphan love, as the love that lets go of simulacrum, quite dangerous to existing systems of social organisation.

To work in an arena saturated with orphan love is to open spaces of possibility where immanent youth/adult relations produce new social possibilities; e.g. to squat, to refuse work. Quite possibly then, to the degree we join in the process of orphaning ourselves, perhaps we might begin to see how residential love constrains our relations to specific forms of emotional connection in order to perpetuate the logic of capitalism. This is a betrayal of capitalist logic at its core. After all, it is residential love that ties us to the logic of a system of value premised in an abstract system that valorises symbolic sets of relations over actual living forms. It whispers in our ears that this is the only way to organise a society and that refusal is madness and social suicide.

The vehicle used to transmit this message is what R.D. Laing (1971) calls the family trance. That is a state of consciousness that causes us to mistake the dream world of abstract value that is capitalism, for the actual material world of living things. In such a state we actually come to believe that there is a limitation of money available for the needs of real life human beings while there is more than enough for weapons and yachts and that the stock market has moods and corporations are individuals. This is the world that residential love asks us to pass on to the young people we encounter in our systems of care. It is because familialism is transposed onto residential love, as its justification and logic, that we must now become orphans. In sharing the status of orphan with the young people in our care, we stand to refuse residential love as both a requirement and a prohibition, a conditional love of profit and control.

In this we must be ever mindful that young people who escape the family triangle are particularly open to the brutality of capitalism. As we have noted above, these are specifically the youth who have been placed in, and who often escape from, residential forms of care. We would argue that is a failure of integrity to ignore the risks and dangers these young people take on in their challenges to the existing system we represent as staff. Indeed, for our programmes to claim to protect youth by inducting them into residential love is inherently contradictory. After all, it is precisely the same logic, evident in the parasitic nature of capitalism, which produces the catastrophes of child poverty, environmental destitution, and war that we claim we are attempting to shield young people from.

Indeed, we might contend that orphan love cannot be fully engaged without an acknowledgement of loss and sorrow. In this, orphan love is a variation of what Hardt and Negri (2005) propose as revolutionary or political love. For Hardt and

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Negri, political love is sheer affirmation of the capacity to act creatively and in collaboration with all bodies towards common purpose. Such purpose is contingent on the historical circumstances in which we find ourselves and acts are stochastically emergent in an ever-shifting array of coalitions and assemblages. Orphan love is very much founded as precisely the augmentation of the capacity to act, but it also is derived from the necessity of separation.

In this there is loss and sorrow, but not in the sense of regret or what Spinoza (2000) would term the sad passions. Instead, this sorrow is closer to what bell hooks (2015) defines, (when talking about anger) as compost or 'energy that can be recycled [as] an empowering force'. In her book *Appalachian Elegy* (2012) hooks defines the process of lamentation as central to freeing creative force or what we have been terming love. She notes the ways in which desires are deferred and silenced through mechanisms of oppression or injustice and she suggests that lamentation allows for the engagement with 'the power of ways of knowing beyond human will and human reason that allow us to re-create, to reimagine'. We would contend that any definition of love that will hold full utility for those of us struggling to separate ourselves from the all profoundly powerful grip of twenty-first century capitalism must acknowledge what has been lost as well as what is gained. While the family is a profoundly ambivalent aspect of civil society, the loss of its promise of affiliation and succour is still profound.

In this moment of familial transition, the act of transposing familial love onto residential care, a love of constrained desire, production, and behaviour is a contradiction that necessitates exposition. We live at a time when the traditional notion of the nuclear family has been exploded through sexual liberation, gay rights, unprecedented divorce and remarriage rates, blended families, adoptions, etc. (Coontz, 2015). While many of these movements and processes also suffer the transpositions of familialism over uncoded desire, they simultaneously disrupt, or at least make visible, the workings of familialism in its association with capitalism.

The capacities of love we have seen in orphan love as uncoded, dispersed, and productive desire, are funnelled into more docile channels through familial relations. Residential love, following familial love, is therefore already a false copy of desire as creative force. Transposing familial love onto residential care is a process of making copies of copies in order to sell them for profit in an abstract system. The love that is shown through residential care is one that is paid for by external capital. Its main direction is the immersion of young people's desire into a system that will perpetually defer its expression as creative force, turning the logic of love back on itself to produce loneliness, emptiness, and lack. Rather than explore the productive force of orphaned love on our collective relations, we set youth into an abstract world where an object



and subject of love is missing and hope is packaged as inclusion into an abstract and never ending syntagmatic.

In the end, we would propose that we as youth workers seriously consider love as a form of collective action that exceeds the capacities of any system of logic or organisation to contain its force. Love is not set between individuals as a system of emotional exchange, nor is it relegated to the realm of the divine as a form of perfect communion, or a type of affiliation premised in our common heritage as human beings. It is more than any of these things although it may give rise to all of them. We would contend affirmatively that love is a form of desire and desire we would define, following Deleuze and Guattari (1977), as that which connects one thing with another in an infinite proliferation of productive syntheses. It composes its relations as living flows of capacity that assemble bits and pieces of the world into constantly evolving dynamic compositions of pure production. This impersonal realm of the process of production exceeds all categorical distinction by including them all as possible worlds to come. In this, there is no goal, no pre-determination or perpetuation of the same. Instead there are infinite arrays of partial objects grafted onto one another and then breaking apart, coupling and uncoupling in an endless stream of productions producing themselves.

Imagine if we could apprehend our relations within a residential programme this way. Of course, we would all have a point of view from which to observe the proceedings. But our point of view would be constantly in motion as the world is created out of all the elements in any given moment. The material components of the building itself, the sounds and sights inside and outside, the bodies of young people and staff in motion, the cooking and cleaning and so on. What if we saw all of this not as necessitating order and control from the outside in service to an abstract regime of control? What if we were freed to engage our interactions as founded only in the necessities of the moment or, more simply, founded in the joy our interactions produced? What might happen if we saw our job as bringing forward the expressions of the maximum amount of capacity each of us brought to the interaction in any given moment?

Such reflections echo a remembrance of the work of Fernand Deligny (2015). In 1968, Deligny worked with non-verbal children diagnosed with autism in a residential context in rural France. He arranged the living environment so that these children lived alongside non-professional adults. He ascribed to these farmers, students and blue-collar workers the role of educator for the children. However, his version of education was premised in a mutuality of pedagogy. He allowed the children to wander freely within the home and the adjoining property. He asked that the adults map the movements of the children both in terms of gestures and in terms of movements through rooms and across the landscape. He arranged no activities outside of the preparations of meals and the accommodation of sleeping arrangements. He suggested to the workers that

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they not ascribe stereotypes to the young people, but to learn about them by mapping their movements and coming to understand the immanent logic of such movements. Over time, he collaborated with the workers to note where on the maps of movement there were points of consistent intersection. At such points he had the workers set up activities that the young people could engage in when they crossed paths. Over time the children and the workers began to set up modes of socialisation and play that had been previously foreclosed.

This brief and incomplete sketch of Deligny's ground breaking and still largely unacknowledged work points to the ways in which orphan love might function in a residential setting. Deligny's efforts might suggest that love could infer the possibility of radical experimentations with the environment premised, not on pre-existing templates of diagnosis or developmental understandings of deficit, or on imposed structures of normative family life. Rather, we might wonder if we could learn from the immediacy of relational encounter, the power of contingency as an organising element of living things. We could, in orphaning ourselves from the parentage of abstract capitalism, possibly learn to love life itself as love.

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