

Thoughts on Postscript on the Societies of Control

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I must confess I have read this paper before, and it is one of my favorites. I have written a great deal about this for other classes and projects so I will take a slightly different approach here. First, I want to note the depth of the content referenced. There is just so much to unpack in every sentence, so much meaning and previous thought on the matter. But the one thing that really stood out to me on this readthrough was the very last lines: "Many young people strangely boast of being "motivated"; they re-request apprenticeships and permanent training. It's up to them to discover what they're being made to serve, just as their elders discovered, not without difficulty, the telos of the disciplines. The coils of a serpent are even more complex than the burrows of a molehill."

This struck a cord with me. Being a CS major, the majority of my friends (and the major as a whole) desire to go into 'industry'. To be completely frank, this is something I have never understood. I understand the desire for a stable well paying career, but there are so many things that provide that besides working for a massive tech company. THere is such a strong desire to get internships with Microsoft and Google and whatnot, these huge multibillion dollar tech giants. Ignoring the ethical qualms I have with these corporations, simply the desire to become but a cog in some giant machine seems to elude me. Perhaps this is just a special case on my views of 'work'/'labor' as a whole. However, I am beginning to wonder whether humanity really does want to be simply cogs? Rather than accepting our condemnation to freedom and embracing this terrifying thought we seek to hide from it, create artificial structures and systems that induce stress and this sense of 'having' to do something.

Regardless, much of what Deleuze mentions in the paper is as relevant now as when he said it, often scarily so. It seems odd how technology has changed so much, but humanity so little.