

The Meditation Ethic and the Spirit of “Inclusive” Capitalism

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Abstract

This article provides a Marxian explanation of the functionality of employer-sponsored employee meditation programs (EMP) within the capitalist modes and social relations of production within the finance, technology, and electronics sector (FTE) of finance-monopoly capitalism (FMC). While employing “hard-core” concepts within the Marxian critique, it also relies upon Paul A. Baran’s, Paul M. Sweezy’s, and John Bellamy Foster’s explication of FMC to motivate its macroeconomic orientation. It also relies on the work of Thorstein Veblen to demonstrate how EMPs manifest an interpenetration of production and marketing that typifies FMC. The work of Max Weber influences its account of the social relations of production, as it relies heavily upon demographic data regarding worker socialization. The fields of social anthropology, human physiology and psychology, accounting science, and business analysis, engineering, and ergonomics provide relevant evidence for claims made in this study.

Its methodology applies Peter Corning’s concept of “synergy” within the functional explanatory schema of Robert Cummins, both of which having significant implications within the social sciences. It also seeks to satisfy Peter Achinstein’s requirement for “positive evidentiary relevance,” as evidence is employed in the formulation and testing of scientific hypotheses; and to gain explanatory value by realizing characteristics of “good” scientific theories developed by Thomas S. Kuhn. Its broad scope provides a fruitfulness that encourages further research. Areas for further study include the implications of EMPs regarding David Harvey’s analysis of capitalist accumulation by dispossession, and emerging operational aspects of FMC. It encourages further research centering on the “wellness” and “self-care” industries, and the ethical values the FTE sector exploits to market products and to transform the social consciousness within the capitalist superstructure.

EMPs represent a functional thread that connects worker socialization to production and marketing, and more broadly to the advance of FMC. Synergies between the productive base and the social superstructure serve the systemic tendency of capitalism to expand into new resource and market externalities. EMPs assist capitalist productive, organizational, and marketing requirements by exploiting one such externality: the cognitive abilities and dispositions of workers.

Introduction

In the United States, capitalism is becoming "mindful." Meditating corporate CEOs, capitalist think tanks, research institutions, and government ally to champion a burgeoning "mindfulness" industry and a new social conception of what it means to live and work under finance-monopoly capitalism (FMC). Increasingly, large domestic and globalized businesses, mainly in the finance, technology, and electronics (FTE) sector of the "Knowledge Economy" (KE) are introducing employer-sponsored employee meditation programs (EMPs) in order to establish putatively healthful and productive work environments within the wider social context of an emerging "socially conscious" capitalist regime.¹

These synergies serve the systemic tendency of capitalism to expand into new resource and market externalities, unexploited or underexploited. EMPs intend to assist productive and organizational requirements by exploiting one such externality: the cognitive abilities and dispositions of workers. However, the business plans of individual enterprises as well of the EMP industry extend beyond the microeconomic to the entire FTE sector and society as a whole.

The institutional network within the capitalist social "superstructure" supports these efforts, and thereby the profitability of businesses, markets, and the mindfulness industry. For example, innovative technology developed within universities fosters start-ups that establish deep penetration into related markets. Walter W. Powell and Kaisa Snellman indicate that

This trend repeats itself on a global scale, as the founding of new firms occurs in a limited number of regions with access to leading research institutions, venture capital, and an abundant pool of educated labor (Owen-Smith et al. 2002). In the intensely competitive realms of basic science and technology transfer, positive feedback and increasing returns are enjoyed by early entrants, while institutions and regions that did not have a hand in the initial discoveries struggle to catch up.²

¹ The terms "socially conscious" and "inclusive" are used synonymously within the theory, practice, and marketing of the new capitalist social consciousness. This study will use "inclusive," as used by supporters participating in the "Embankment Project for Inclusive Capitalism," which is examined below.

² Walter W. Powell and Kaisa Snellman, "The Knowledge Economy," *Annual Review of Sociology* 30 (2004): 17.

Combined, these institutions work to help businesses most profitably apply EMPs. They also help identify specific and favored set of cognitive skills that can be used a “metrics” for recruiting, maintaining, and advancing the most valuable group of workers who labor within an increasingly information-based capitalism.

EMPs represent a functional thread that connects worker socialization, business “success,” and the advance of the capitalist system itself. EMPs provide workers with cognitive skills that enhance business performance, and serve to both attract and retain valuable labor power. If management enables these worker skills to become capacities, business owners expect their businesses to flourish. In addition, large companies enjoy a millennial market and global reach that welcomes an “inclusive” branding. With this in mind, organizations like the Coalition for Inclusive Capitalism (CIC)³ and Stanford University's Center for Compassion and Altruism Research and Education (CCARE)⁴ assist large market players in coordinating their business metrics with aspects of a millennial ethical semantic.⁵

Powell and Snellman explain a fundamental problem inherent in instituting an operationally mindful capitalist workplace within the KE.

The true value of a general purpose technology comes from a series of complementary innovations rather than directly from the original technology. Thus, the gains from a general purpose technology are limited more by managers’ ability to invent new organizational processes and structures than by technological capacity (David 1990, Brynjolfsson & Hitt 2000). Indeed, introducing a novel technology without appropriate organizational changes can lead to significant productivity losses, as any benefits of the new technology are offset by negative interactions with existing organizational practices. For example, Brynjolfsson et al. (1997) describe how the introduction of computer-based manufacturing

³ "Coalition for Inclusive Capitalism," <https://www.inc-cap.com>. (accessed April 17, 2019). This study will later describe how capitalist consortiums fabricate marketing metrics to indicate the extent to which a business participates in the FTE economy, and how these metrics become growing and significant classes of intangible capital.

⁴ Dr. James Doty envisioned CCARE. He is its current director and is a recognized Stanford University "neurosurgeon, entrepreneur and philanthropist." See: <http://ccare.stanford.edu>.

⁵ The “Millennial Generation” is further partitioned by social marketing think tanks, such as The W.J. Schroer Company, into Generations "X," "Y," and "Z." For our purposes, this partitioning is not relevant as the central aspects of the worker socialization we explore, as those characteristics are largely common among the three sub-generations. For our purposes, we note that Schroer claims "the traditional marketer’s tools may be used to influence changes in behavior and lifestyles for the betterment of society and the achievement of ethical organizational goals. And, we have found that too often, attempts are made to change behavior without providing the changes in the perceptual and attitudinal landscape necessary for people to feel they have either permission or encouragement to make those changes." Schroer's business vision maps well onto the productivity, management, ethical, intangible capital considerations that motivate meditation programs. See: "About Us," *WJSchroer*, <http://socialmarketing.org/about-us/>. (accessed April 17, 2019).

equipment failed because workers continued to work according to time-tested practices. The disjuncture between old and new sets of work practices made the transition impossible and resulted in productivity losses. Similarly, Baily & Gordon (1988) describe how venerable paper-based procedures still remained in an office after computers were introduced. Similar kinds of mismatches between a new technology and preexisting organizational practices and structures have characterized many of the shifts to earlier general purpose technologies.... Seen in the light of historical research on the adoption of technology, the long-expected gains in productivity from investments in information technology are not fully realized until complementary institutional arrangements are developed.⁶

Measures implemented to address these operational dysfunctions have capital and marketing correlates. Powell and Snellman point out that

...production and services based on knowledge-intensive activities that contribute to an accelerated pace of technological and scientific advance as well as equally rapid obsolescence. The key components of a knowledge economy include a greater reliance on intellectual capabilities than on physical inputs or natural resources, combined with efforts to integrate improvements in every stage of the production process, from the R&D lab to the factory floor to the interface with customers. These changes are reflected in the increasing relative share of the gross domestic product that is attributable to “intangible” capital (Abramovitz & David 1996). Of course, many alternative labels and definitions are more expansive than ours, but we choose to keep the focus on the production of novel ideas that subsequently lead to new or improved goods and services and organizational practices.⁷

FTE workers who think effectively in fast-paced production environments, remain intellectually flexible and innovative, adapt to change, and seek skill and process improvement; contribute significantly to a company’s intangible human capital. EMPs not only intend to provide training in cognitive skills that develop and enhance these abilities, but also to address pathological workplace conditions that introduce costly health, productivity, and social risks. As we shall see later, since business owners increasingly recognize intangible capital as a metric of business success, implementing EMPs and advocating for their adoption will help advertise a well-managed company.

This study reviews research regarding causal claims connecting meditation with the development of valued cognitive skills. There is sufficient evidence supporting claims involving the benefits of meditation. Sara W. Lazar, et al.⁸ provide results regarding the effect of meditation on cortical

⁶ Powell and Snellman 208.

⁷ Ibid., 201.

⁸ W. Lazar, et al., “*Meditation experience is associated with increased cortical thickness*” *Neuroreport*, 16, no. 17 (2005): 1893–1897.

thickness, while Leung M.K, et al.⁹ investigate changes in amygdala activity during negative affective processing.

Nevertheless, some research suggests that the favored worker behaviors associated with meditation reflect more about the type of person practicing, rather than the practice itself.¹⁰ Nevertheless, even if employers are wrong about the causality, EMP participation can represent a metric that serves to select workers for retention and promotion; just those who are naturally more likely to display the favored behavior. In this regard, the demographic domain looms large. For people who do not behave in ways indicating a possession of favored skills, those abilities may simply be dormant, awaiting exploitation through an innovative and inclusive workplace management. There is no necessity that workers realize valued abilities through meditation. On the contrary, businesses can rely upon the appeal EMPs to attract and retain just those employees who display those abilities. For workers, participation in an EMP can send just the right message about job commitment and loyalty to an employer.

Those familiar with Karl Marx's scientific research program into the historical evolution of the productive and social mechanics of industrial capitalism will recognize in this study a familiar perspective and causal modeling of capitalism's fundamental teleology: achieving a persistent and maximized accumulation of capital. This modeling centers on five functional considerations:

- 1) The dynamic relationship between technological development and the evolution of specific modes of capitalist production
- 2) The synergizing and maximization of the effectiveness of productive and operational skills throughout the enterprise in relation with existing and emerging technologies
- 3) The productive function of organizational structures, management, and divisions of labor, and the need to align these with the means of production
- 4) The function of innovation to expand productivity
- 5) The need to attract investment capital

These and other aspects of Marxian explanation provide the central ontological and epistemological framework upon which this study's orientation is determined. It is from this perspective that this article intends to explain how a growing number of large businesses within

⁹ Mei-Kei Leung, Way K.W. Lau, Chetwyn C.H. Chan, Samuel S.Y. Wong, Annis L.C. Fung, and Tatia M.C. Lee, "Meditation-induced neuroplastic changes in amygdala activity during negative affective processing," *Social Neuroscience*, 13, no. 3 (2018): 277 - 288.

¹⁰ National Center for Complementary Health and Integrative Health, *Meditators and Nonmeditators Differ on Demographic Factors, Health Behaviors, Health Status, and Health Care Access, New Analysis Shows*, July 25, 2018, <https://nccih.nih.gov/research/results/spotlight/three-types-of-meditation>. (accessed February 23, 2019).

the KE sector attempt to mitigate production problems engendered by mismatches within the modes of production through the introduction of EMPs.¹¹ In doing so, it adopts the traditional Marxian holistic methodology. Sober, Levine, and Wright provide a useful summary of this methodological attitude.

The Marxist tradition, because of its stress on the “totality”, has perhaps been particularly susceptible to such ideas. Three examples are worth mentioning: teleological reasoning in the theory of history, extreme formulations in arguments for structural causality, and what can be termed “collective agency” arguments.¹²

Nevertheless, this study does not adopt what Sober et al. take as a “radical” holistic posture, one that explains the teleology of social change independent of the “subjective goals of human actors.”¹³ As we shall see, the subjective attitudes, dispositions, politics, and business philosophies of major actors within the KE, the EMP industry, and the capitalist superstructure significantly animate the advent of EMPs. This methodological stance reflects not only a Marxian tradition that appreciates that within capitalist society, “everything is related to everything else,” but also that that “everything” involves actors, conceptualizations, mechanisms, and resources that are both internal and external to the prevailing productive modality.

It is in this regard that this study introduces an additional explanatory orientation influenced by the work of Max Weber. This study examines millennial socialization as a driver of the engineering and marketing of EMPs.¹⁴ In this regard, Max Weber's seminal work *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* not only inspires the title of this study, but also orients its explanatory method.¹⁵ Because socialization informs use values appealing to millennial workers and capitalist needs, this study examines the cultural context of EMPs relative to both prevailing modes of production and the personal goals and worldviews of workers within the KE. This analysis remains agnostic regarding whether culture primarily shapes the current mode and conception of the economic system, or vice versa, as Marx explains; and makes no claims

¹¹ This study uses the terms "meditation" and "mindfulness" to refer to the EMP industry's market and products, specific worker cognitive skills and behaviors, or to aspects of worker socialization, inside or outside of the workplace (as in, "a culture of mindfulness"). Similarly, "wellness" can refer to worker socialization, or type of workplace health program; which may include meditation.

¹² E. O. Wright, A. Levine, and E. Sober, *Reconstructing Marx: Essays on Explanation and the Theory of History* (New York: Verso, 1992), 113.

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Among central intersections is that between worker cognitive dispositions as a function of Millennial demographics. This study benefits from Liam Kofi Bright, Daniel Malinsky, and Morgan Thompson, "Causally Interpreting Intersectionality Theory" *Philosophy of Science* 83, no. 1 (January 2016): 60-81. This study cannot examine the implications of causal intersectionality theory for empirical verification with respect to the capitalist functionalities of EMPs. Nevertheless, it appreciates that causal graphical models and causal Bayesian networks can provide "representational tools for making causal inferences from data" (p. 66) regarding the functional outcomes of workplace meditation programs.

¹⁵ Max Weber, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* (London: Routledge, 1992).

regarding relative causal symmetry or potency. It is beyond the scope of this paper to tackle that question, but it will later take up matters centering upon the “value-ladenness” of economic conceptions and policy.

The central goal of this study is to employ Marxian theory to demonstrate how EMPs and the forces of production participate synergistically within an encompassing FMC regime. Additionally, it proposes to demonstrate the explanatory value of a functional representation of capitalist production and its social relations.

In this regard, the work of Robert Cummins¹⁶ deeply instructs the explanatory methodology. Cummins provides a "programming" representation of functional explanation that captures two central intuitions. First, a "functional characterization in science is to explain the presence of the item (organ, mechanism, process or whatever) that is functionally characterized."¹⁷ Second, "For something to perform its function is for it to have certain effects on a containing system, which effects contribute to the performance of some activity of, or the maintenance of some condition in, that containing system."¹⁸ In this analysis, workers and meditation programs represent functional items. A business system in “good working order” will provide workers with the capacity to expend an enhanced labor power provided by meditation training. Thus, this study "rolls up," so to speak, its account of the functionality of meditation from improving worker's individual cognitive systems, to the business system's forces of production, and beyond to capitalist society as a whole.

Theoretical Background

While this study employs a Marxian explanatory approach, it avoids its more controversial theoretical aspects while focusing on fundamental conceptions such as class, alienation, labor power and value, and the capitalist modes and social relations of production among others. This set of conceptions represents what Imre Lakatos¹⁹ would characterize as Marxian theory's hard core. While it is beyond the scope of this study to review Lakatos's account of scientific research programs in detail, we can turn to Michael Burawoy for a helpful synopsis of theoretical hard cores.

¹⁶ Robert Cummins, "Functional Analysis" *The Journal of Philosophy* 72, no. 20 (November 1975): 741-765. It is beyond the scope of this study to provide a comprehensive review of Cummins's functional theory, or even a brief review of the application of various accounts of functional explanation found within Marxian theory. For those interested in exploring this research, please see: G.A. Cohen, *Karl Marx's Theory of History: A Defense* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987) and E. O. Wright, A. Levine, and E. Sober, op cit.

¹⁷ Ibid., 741.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Imre Lakatos, *The Methodology of Scientific Research Programmes: Philosophical Papers Volume 1*, ed. John Worrall and Gregory Curie, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978).

According to Lakatos, each research program is governed by its own principles of development, or what he called its heuristics. According to the negative heuristic of the program the hard core should be defended at all costs. The hard core encompasses not only theories but also the assumptions and questions that define the program. The positive heuristic, on the other hand, indicates the tools with which the hard core should be defended. These are the exemplars and models that are drawn upon to build auxiliary theories and turn an apparent refutation into a corroboration of the core theory. The positive heuristic also guides the scientist toward those anomalies that are the most important to solve.²⁰

In addition, this study's central hypotheses are fashioned with respect to the sociological work of Max Weber, the synergistic evolutionary theory of Peter Corning,²¹ and Paul A. Baran's, Paul M. Sweezy's, and John Bellamy Foster's explication of FMC. (The latter provides this study's macroeconomic orientation.) Robert Cummins's account of functional explanation offers an appropriate methodology. These theoretical and methodological foundations are complemented by a range of information coming largely from capitalist sources concerning ethical, social, and operational aspects of EMPs. For practical reasons, the many complexities introduced by this theoretical background motivate prudent constraints on the application of Marxian theory, and especially within this preliminary investigation.

Before moving to the explanation itself, we should provide some additional detail concerning this background that further orients the study's theory and methodology. We begin with Max Weber.

Weber explains the rise of the "spirit" of capitalism as a socioeconomic manifestation of the emergence of a Protestant, particularly Calvinist, "work ethic." That ethic characterizes labor as a divine "calling." A calling requires that virtuous laborers, especially those possessing valuable technical skills, manifest a personal faith and devotion to God's will and plan. Workers do this by assiduously applying their labor to the task of creating economic profit. This ethic provides five bases upon which capitalists identify the characteristics of the preferred capitalist worker.

- 1) A disposition to hard work
- 2) A personal dedication to one's divine calling to advance profit
- 3) Self-confidence born of a faith in the ultimate good of God's plan for humanity
- 4) Viewing profit as a function of labor time ("Time is money.")

²⁰ Michael Burawoy, "Marxism as Science: Historical Challenges and Theoretical Growth," *American Sociological Review*, 55 (1990), 775-793.

²¹ Peter A. Corning, "Synergy and Self-organization in the Evolution of Complex Systems," *Systems Research* 12, 2 (1995), 92.

5) Recognizing the ethical, social, economic value of saving and investing capital over capital consumption as a function of a Calvinist religious asceticism (frugality as an overt demonstration of self-control)

Weber appreciates the evidentiary significance of facts concerning the historical interplay between the economic system and other aspects of human society as inputs into his explanation of capitalist ethics, social relations, and production.

Thus the capitalism of today, which has come to dominate economic life, *educates* and *selects* the economic subjects which it needs through a process of economic survival of the fittest. But here one can easily see the limits of the concept of selection as a means of historical explanation. *In order that a manner of life so well adapted to the peculiarities of capitalism could be selected at all, i.e. should come to dominate others, it had to originate somewhere, and not in isolated individuals alone, but as a way of life common to whole groups of men.* This origin is what really needs explanation.²² [My italics]

Weber goes on to trace a process of “rationalization” that removed the Protestant ethic from the economic and social aspects of an emerging capitalism.²³ Work conceived as a spiritual calling evolves into labor as a function of profit.

At present under our individualistic political, legal, and economic institutions, with the forms of organization and general structure which are particular to our economic order, this spirit of capitalism might be understandable,...purely as a result of adaptation. The capitalistic system so needs this devotion to the calling of making money, it is an attitude toward material goods which is so well suited to that system, so intimately bound up with the conditions of survival in the economic struggle for existence, that there can to-day no longer be any question of a necessary connection of that acquisitive manner of life with any single Weltanschauung. In fact, it no longer needs the support of any religious forces, and feels the attempts of religion to influence economic life...to be as much an unjustified interference as its regulation by the State. In such circumstances men’s commercial and social interests do tend to determine their opinions and attitudes.²⁴

We will see that EMPs significantly circumscribe the meditation training offered to workers in ways that not only maximize their effect within an encompassing system of capitalist production, but also appeal to a secular millennial worldview. EMP meditation practice does not center on expanding the spirituality of workers. Rather, it aims to calm and focus the mind, a goal that

²² Weber 55. Here, Weber claims that systemic characteristics of capitalism function as selection mechanisms for the survival of workers. As we shall see, EMPs can function as a worker selection mechanism, and as such, serve the ultimate accumulative goals of capital.

²³ We shall see later that both the ethical orientation and meditation practices of EMPs are divorce mindfulness from traditional religious contexts.

²⁴ Weber 72.

aligns with the millennial wellness and self-fulfillment ethos. It also reflects the millennial appreciation of the value of mental focus to work success, a recognition gained from their high educational attainments relative to workers within industrial capitalism. Meditating workers generally testify that they feel a greater sense of “empowerment,” by acquiring mental tools to help relieve anxiety, stress, and disinterestedness. For many workers, EMPs provide a healthful and appreciated use value, as part of their company wellness program.

Following Marx, this study recognizes that within any prevailing capitalist mode of production, businesses can introduce mechanisms that can enhance the productive capabilities of the existing labor power. Skill training enhances labor power, and, with that, its value to the business owner, who owns the means of production and its operational control. The generation of surplus value by workers, and ultimately the profitability that emerges from commodity exchange within markets, is systemically a function of the creation of surplus labor. As such, the enhancement of labor power through skill training connects with the process of valorization explained by Marx.²⁵ For example, computer programmers might redesign an application to access today's high-volume data ("big data") environment. This would expand the power and value of that application's technology within the productive process. Analysts with additional training in big data modeling and mining would provide greater analytical capabilities, as enhanced labor power, that expand the value of those capabilities to the business. By extension, EMPs presumably improve those cognitive capabilities of workers that, when applied to the production process, boost labor power and labor value.

We can think of those means that multiply labor power as synergistic functions that work within the prevailing mode of production to advance profit. The term “synergy,” and its cognates, carries the ordinary sense of cooperative action. The Cambridge Dictionary provides a helpful constraint: “[T]he combined power of a *group* of things when they are *working together* that is *greater than the total power* achieved by each working separately.”²⁶ [My italics] Understood in this way, the function of scientific management is to synergistically operationalize force multipliers in manner that enhances the capabilities of the programmed interaction of individual productive processes (like data analysis).

Peter A. Corning sums up the synergistic perspective.

In the social sciences, synergy can be found in many of the phenomena studied by economists -- from market dynamics (demand-supply relationships) to economies of scale, the division of labor and, of course, the influence of technology. Psychologists also deal with synergistic effects, ranging from gestalt phenomena to social facilitation, group "syntality," mob psychology and cult behavior. And political scientists observe synergistic effects in voting processes, interest group

²⁵ Karl Marx, *Capital* I, 3, 7 (London: Penguin Classics, 1990), 293-306. Since the concept of valorization is part of the Marxian theoretical hard core and is well understood, it needs no extended review here.

²⁶ "Synergy," *Cambridge Dictionary*, <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/us/dictionary/english/synergy>. (accessed April 17, 2019).

activity, coalition behavior, and a host of organizational phenomena, among other things.²⁷

Furthermore, Corning's synergy hypothesis is explicitly functionalist.

“...the synergism hypothesis asserts that it was the *functional* (selective) advantages associated with various forms of synergy that facilitated the evolution of complex, *functionally-organized biological and social systems*. In other words, underlying each of the many particular steps in the *complexification* process, a common functional principle has been at work.”²⁸ [My italics]

We paraphrase Corning to provide the EMP Synergism Hypothesis (ESH), which asserts that

The functional (selective) advantages associated with various forms of synergies within the forces and social relations of KE production facilitate the evolution of complex, functionally-organized business systems. Underlying each of the many particular steps in the complexification [additive sophistication] process, a common functional principle has been at work.”

EMP vendors and visionary CEOs celebrate synergies between “servant leadership,” management, and workers. Owner's, through EMPs, enable workers to gain labor-force multiplying cognitive skills, and to apply them to their specific productive roles. Scientific management practices create synergies between workers and managers, intending to amplify their capabilities to enhance production, and thus business success. This study specifies the capabilities of owners, management, workers, government, academia, research institutions, and meditation vendors, which represent the basic phenomenology of its functional explanation.

Since functional explanation is teleological, part of its explanatory interest resides in demonstrating how functional items contribute to potential goal states of systems, and how those goal states are coordinated among various levels of sophistication. Here, it concerns explaining how the favored goal state of a business system supports the goal state of capitalism as a “higher-level” system, which itself aims to persistently maximize the accumulation of capital. Marx identifies this state with “Moses and the Prophets!” and we designate such a system as being in “good working order.”

A central feature of Cummins's representation is its “Analytical Strategy.” This strategy involves ascribing dispositions to functional items. A capitalist company is, in a functional sense, a system in good working order if evidence verifies that it displays a disposition toward accumulating capital. Individual businesses in good working order combine to create the more systemically sophisticated goal state of a thriving national economy. At this level, when each individual business manifests a capacity for and a disposition toward maximizing its capital accumulation, that collective accumulation takes on the status as a higher level, in this case a

²⁷ Peter A. Corning, “Synergy and Self-organization in the Evolution of Complex Systems,” *Systems Research* 12, no. 2 (1995): 92.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 92.

national, goal. At this highest level of sophistication, national economies join together in multi-national economic regimes, like NAFTA and the EU, to advance the collective goal of maximizing the accumulative power of a globalized FMC.

Cummins's provides an account of "explanatory interest" in functional explanation. Such interest is

...roughly proportional to (i) the extent to which the *analyzing capacities are less sophisticated than the analyzed capacities*, (ii) the extent to which the *analyzing capacities are different in type from the analyzed capacities*, and (iii) the *relative sophistication of the program appealed to*, i.e., the relative complexity of the organization of component parts/processes that is attributed to the system. (iii) is correlative with (i) and (ii): the greater the gap in sophistication and type between analyzing capacities and analyzed capacities, the more sophisticated the program must be to close the gap.²⁹ [My italics]

This study's explanatory interest resides in its account of how worker abilities (skills), dispositions, and behaviors, acquired through EMPs, are transformed by prevailing scientific management processes into capacities, within the more sophisticated level of the business's combined forces of production. Requirement (ii) is satisfied as individual worker behavior, while less sophisticated than the social and programmed behavior within the business system, is also of a different evidentiary type. Requirement (iii) allows the methodology to close analytical gaps.

Marx's partitions capitalist society, the highest level of sophistication, into its productive base and its superstructure. He divides the productive base, which represents capitalism's prevailing mode of production, into its forces of production and its relations of production. The forces of production are comprised of its means of production (its tools and equipment), and its labor power (workers, and their skills and knowledge), at the next-lowest level of sophistication. The worker, as an individual human system, represents the lowest level of sophistication. Capitalism's relations of production contain their social formations and contending social classes. These famously include business owners and workers, and as we shall see later within the "Dual Economy," high-tech versus service-industry workers. Society's superstructure is comprised of its established legal, political, religious, moral, artistic, and culture systems.³⁰ This study treats functioning items with respect to Marx's parsing of capitalist societal systems and subsystems, and establishes methodological domain limits on levels of sophistication for functional explanation based upon Cummins's three explanatory requirements.

In order to explain how the encompassing capitalist social system functions, "lower level" systems are reinterpreted as items within the next higher level of systemic explanation; determined with respect to increasing sophistication between levels. This represents Cummins's

²⁹ Cummins 764.

³⁰ Cohen 216. Cohen examines the capitalist societal superstructure, functionally accounting for its synergistic behavior with the economic system. Cohen summarizes: "The superstructure = those non-economic institutions whose character is explained by the nature of the economic structure."

second methodological rule (Corning's "complexification"). Adhering to these rules helps us avoid confusion regarding which phenomena are functional at various levels in the explanation's logical structure, and a potential infinite regress and circularity in the justification of functional claims.³¹ The application of Cummins's rules "resets" the observational domain (both the *explanandum* and *explanans*) at each level of Marx's partitioning of capitalist society. A lower-level goal state (like a worker's cognitive system's possessing the cognitive ability to remain calm and focused) can become a functional item at the next higher level of explanation ("calm" behavior functioning to create accommodating meeting behavior). By doing so, this study suggests how functional claims can consistently interconnect items within and among all levels of capitalist society.

Functional items synergize "programmatically" within organized business systems, and are identified within the ubiquitous flow charts and spreadsheets used to create project management task schedules, business process and enterprise models, and information system and data analyses. Within this study, "items" are "mechanisms" that perform a function. Business process modeling identifies and operationally integrates these mechanisms as human (labor power) and technology (means of production) behaviors. Functional items are such just because they are mechanisms that have capacities, the explanatory interest of which is how they operate within encompassing and programmatically organized systems.

Since this study focuses upon meditation in the workplace, it centers upon the forces of production (technology, workers, and managers), the analysis of which requires that that system come with explicit boundaries. Not to do so would lead to violations in one or all of Cummins's explanatory rules. Thus, we add the constraint that the lowest and highest levels of sophistication within the forces of production must involve the performance of functions by human actors (workers and managers) for which they receives wages and benefits; what Marx's calls "variable capital" payments. Our explanation will not only involve functioning items within the forces of production, but also the manner by which business owners pay variable capital to workers. This is appropriate because EMPs are an investment in employee skills and wellness, and not in the means of production. Adding the variable capital requirement to the other explanatory constraints allows us to specify the functional system of interest, based upon Marx's fundamental theoretical distinction between variable and constant capital. We shall see later how the salary method of wage payment, the lengthy working day, as well as "labor market flexibility," contribute to the success of the meditation programs.

The central empirical domain of this study is comprised of large FTE businesses as they represent now-familiar modes of production within the KE. Its teleological orientation focuses on business functionalities intended to mitigate production problems engendered by productive modalities of FTE businesses through the introduction of EMPs. These dysfunctions involve a labor process within which workers wield a complex, highly integrated, and rapidly developing technology. This labor occurs within the extended working days demanded by highly

³¹ For a treatment of these aspects of functional explanation as they relate to law-like statements, like those concerning dispositions, see: Adam M. Goldstein, "A Defense of Achinstein's Pragmatism about Explanation" in *Philosophy of Science Matters: The Philosophy of Peter Achinstein*, ed. Gregory J. Morgan (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), 72-83.

sophisticated scientific management protocols. Market demands translate into labor demands overnight, with the need for new technologies and new skill sets following closely behind. Under such conditions, work can quickly become physically and mentally debilitating.³² The resulting weakening of labor power contributes to an existential "torment" among workers; what Marx calls "alienation." When work appears as nothing more than the operation of productive technology for the purposes of creating commodities, workers experience little, if any, enjoyment or self-fulfillment in their productive activity. Since the technology they employ in production is the business owner's private property, workers experience a lack of control over their work, and view their labor as simply a meaningless job.

This study primarily focuses on business processes, including their productive modes, the commodities produced, and marketing practices. The businesses under consideration employ advanced productive, organizational, and managerial technology; and significantly participate in the KE. They are examples of FMC,³³ and fall within the FTE sector. They include such companies as Google, Amazon, Aetna, and Raytheon; all leaders in implementing mindfulness programs.³⁴

Limiting the scope of this analysis to a few large capitalist businesses selects the most productively and operationally mature examples of EMPs, the best funded, and the most deeply integrated with the superstructure and the mindfulness industry. The companies share central and persistent worker afflictions that diminish the productive process. They are also prominent in the transformation, during the latter half of the 20th century, from a primarily "Fordist" manufacturing to increasingly FTE mode of production.³⁵ Indeed, these businesses are typical examples of the current monopoly-finance form of capitalism. Placing the rise of EMPs within the context of productive evolution toward the FMC form can help us better understand their function. These companies share human capital management³⁶ problems that evidence suggests may emerge from worker anxiety or dissatisfaction. CEOs and senior management who champion EMPs³⁷ believe that wellness and mindfulness programs can help reduce worker

³² Frederick W. Taylor, *Scientific Management* (New York: Routledge, 2004).

³³ Paul A. Baran and Paul M. Sweezy, *Monopoly Capital* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1966).

³⁴ Pandit Dasa and David Brendel, "Does Mindfulness Training Have Business Benefits?," *Society for Human Resource Management*, March 32, 2017, <https://www.shrm.org/hr-today/news/hr-magazine/0417/pages/does-mindfulness-training-have-business-benefits.aspx>. (accessed November 11, 2018).

³⁵ It is beyond the scope of this study to treat in detail implications of EMPs within the wider global capitalist FMC regime. For those interested in such a research project, see: R. Jamil Jonna and John Bellamy Foster, "Beyond the Degradation of Labor: Braverman and the Structure of the U.S. Working Class," *Monthly Review*, 66/5, October 2014, 1-23, Christian Fuchs, "Digital Workers and Imperialism," *Monthly Review*, 67/8, January 2016, 14-24, and Powell and Snellman 199-220.

³⁶ Gartner IT Glossary, "Human Capital Management (HCM)," <https://www.gartner.com/it-glossary/hcm-human-capital-management>. (accessed March 14, 2019).

³⁷ This study relies upon the description of the large businesses under consideration provided by Powell and Snellman, op. cit. These companies employ "post-industrial" (or "Post-Fordist")

stress, and therewith improve the retention and development of its skilled workforce. Finally, these businesses are typical examples within the current FTE sector. While this study largely centers on the business microeconomics, it nevertheless provides insights regarding how EMPs reflect the historical transformation during the latter half of the 20th century from a primarily manufacturing global to an increasingly information- and knowledge-based economy.³⁸

Much of the commentary and analysis of EMPs, both pro and con, centers on putative business advantages and hazards, psychological evidence, operational issues, ethical motivations, worker demographics and socialization, and the rise of the meditating capitalist servant leader. Yet, supporters and critics largely cast their analyses within the semantics, theory, and ethics of capitalist political economy. As such, the resulting bias offers not only explanatory deficiencies, but also a neglect of significant issues of special interest to Marxians, especially for those who take methodological holism, synergism, and functionalism as central explanatory commitments. For example, both Marxists and capitalists appreciate the value of worker skills as they enhance labor power, and therewith labor value. However, Marxians wish to view the cognitive skills afforded by EMPs, not only as they address worker afflictions and promote accumulation, but also as they reflect fundamental structural changes resulting from the evolution of capitalism from its industrial to its FMC form, and from Taylorism, or “Fordism,” to less hierarchical and more synergistic modes of production organization and management. The significantly increased need for technically accomplished workers within the FTE sector is satisfied through myriad skill-enhancement efforts, which include complimentary cognitive abilities.

In contrast to the “deskilling” typical of the industrial assembly line, profitability within the KE is deeply connected with sophisticated skill training that enhances labor power, operational, and management effectiveness; and, significantly within FMC, marketing. As we shall see, these skill-enhancement practices have wide implications regarding 1) the emergence of novel social relations within FMC, 2) what Thorstein Veblen identifies as a typical interpenetration of production and marketing,³⁹ 3) the co-respective relationship of businesses within monopolized markets, and 4) the emergence of new forms of worker oppression and exploitation. In this latter regard, Peter Temin’s hypothesis regarding the rise of a global “Dual Economy” as a manifestation of the emergence of the FTE sector provides a rich source of theoretical and empirical⁴⁰ considerations regarding evolving and emerging sub-class distinctions within the working class.

modes of production, within science-based commodity markets, employing “information rich” production, organization, and management practices. The mode and social relations of production emphasize synergy, flexibility, worker autonomy, accountability, and empowerment.

³⁸ In this regard, see: Christian Fuchs, “Digital Workers and Imperialism” *Monthly Review* 67, no. 8 (January 2016): 14-24 and Powell and Snellman, op. cit.

³⁹ See John Bellamy Foster, “The Ecology of Marxian Political Economy,” *Monthly Review*, 63, no. 4 (September 2011): 1 - 16.

⁴⁰ See Peter Temin, “The American Dual Economy: Race, Globalization, and the Politics of Exclusion.” *Institute for New Economic Thinking: Working Papers* 26 (November 2015), <https://www.ineteconomics.org/uploads/papers/The-American-Dual-Economy-Race-Globalization-and-the-Politics-of-Exclusion.pdf>. (accessed August 9 2019).

Taking a Marxian stance, this study is concerned with explicating how innovative scientific management processes within FTE businesses operationally synergize worker cognitive skills, enhanced by mindfulness training, to achieve maximal profit. As we shall see, among the cognitive skills presumably developed through meditation are those that are central to major post-Fordist production methodologies. In addition, Marxians are interested in understanding how the capitalist superstructure and private capitalist consortiums support the expansion of the mindfulness industry, socialize workers to the application of new productive and managerial technologies, and employs accounting “metrics” as a marketing mechanism. This study suggests that businesses implement EMPs because they can attract valued millennial workers⁴¹ and offer an inclusive branding that provides significant value to businesses. Finally, we are concerned with how to best contextualize the inclusive business ethos within both the productive and social relations of FMC. This will be done in a manner that reveals how EMPs provide workers with the capacity to represent their participation in workplace meditation as an overt demonstration of their commitment to working under FMC. This explanatory orientation provides a link to the theoretical background of Weber’s sociology.

Evidence and Relevance

This study proposes hypotheses concerning the functionality of EMPs with respect to 1) the maximization and enhancement of production, 2) employee selection and retention, 3) class and class divisions, 4) marketing and social engineering, 5) the social reproduction of labor power, and 6) the co-respective (synergistic) relationship between the capitalist social superstructure and business. These hypotheses (and the theories through which they are represented) provide explanations of EMP functionality that are informed by myriad and complex evidence. In each case, evidence must be shown to be “positively relevant” to the hypotheses under consideration.⁴²

⁴¹ We will use the term “millennial” in the demographic sense of those workers coming of working age during the first two decades of the twenty-first century. We avoid broad brushing the millennial worldview, as “The Millennial Worldview” comes in various flavors, largely depending upon the methods and source of the demographics. We also wish to avoid cherry-picking millennial traits to fit some preexisting conception of how EMPs function. Instead, we will employ mappings from favored worker skills to supporting cognitive abilities as identified by experts in relevant fields of study. Then, we connect cognitive ability with corresponding millennial worker worldview, again as identified in the literature on EMPs. Together, these mappings provide a basis to explain functionally the engineering, practice, and marketing of EMPs.

⁴² This study cannot review the rich and complex epistemological matters and controversies relevant to whether and how evidence might contribute to the explanatory value of scientific hypotheses. Our concept of positive relevance appreciates Peter Achinstein’s account that evaluations of scientific hypothesis, both in theory and practice, are deeply informed by the way some evidence x warrants a hypothesis h . As Deborah G. Mayo explains, “...Achinstein is to be credited as being one of the only philosophers of science to explicitly incorporate the need for empirical checks of in his account....if data x do little to warrant H , then to infer H is

To this end, let us list the sources and types of evidence of interest.

- 1) Social anthropology: Demographics capturing worker socialization, including attitudes concerning work, “self-actualization,” self-esteem, and the wellness culture.
- 2) Physiology: Data concerning various physical benefits and pathologies in the FTE workplace
- 3) Cognitive science: Data concerning those cognitive capabilities that specifically affect productive performance, and especially those putatively provided by meditation
- 4) Behavioral psychology: Data that confirms or disconfirms claims concerning the productive impact of meditation and behavioral and social engineering for workers, management, owners, and infrastructure actors
- 5) Accounting science: Cost/benefit data
- 6) Business analysis and engineering: Data regarding capitalist business processes and their positive and negative outcomes, both micro- and macroeconomic
- 7) Related contingent evidence: The positive and negative impacts (personal, social, and environmental) of the commodity production and marketing of products by companies that implement EMPs

Because this study appreciates Max Weber’s methodology, it needs to be explicit concerning what counts as relevant sociological evidence that remains consistent with its Marxian theoretical hard core. Thus, this study does not employ the term “millennial” in a manner that objectifies and essentializes⁴³ the entire group of individuals who fall within the Schroer generational partitioning. Rather, it establishes positive relevancy of demographic evidence with respect to specific functional explanatory mechanisms. It does not engage in a Procrustean effort to stretch

unwarranted, by dint of H.” Deborah G. Mayo, “The Objective Epistemic Probabilist and the Severe Tester,” in *Philosophy of Science Matters: The Philosophy of Peter Achinstein*, ed. Gregory J. Morgan (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), 135. This study expects that the set of positively relevant evidentiary types and the evidence itself are accessible and verifiable through standard empirical instrumentalities. In addition, because we demand that evidence is positively relevant to an analytical and functional account of the FTE production process, this study seeks evidence that is value-free, and reflects Weber’s *weltfrei* account of sociological evidence.

⁴³ In this regard, this study benefits from insights offered in Andrew Hart, "Against Generational Politics: Generational Politics is a Socialism of Fools," *Jacobin*, February 28, 2018, <https://jacobinmag.com/2018/02/generational-theory-millennials-boomers-age-history>. (accessed May 23, 2019).

pre-established characterizations of millennials to fit hypotheses. Instead, the term refers to a positively relevant subset of the millennial worker population that obtains functional significance within the productive regimes of FTE enterprises. Temporal variables, such as the ages of workers who enter the workforce during the period when the mode of capitalist production transforms from manufacturing to the FMC form in part define this subset. In addition, functional characteristics germane to worker and owner socialization that obtain statistical prominence within Shroer's generational partition membership also determine the target demographic group.

We will see later that these variables provide the basis for companies to successfully select for hiring some millennials over others, that is those who display both the technical skills and a socialization that are productively aligned with the goal of capital accumulation. Additionally, we shall see that businesses employ these defining variables as metrics to demonstrate the viability of their enterprises, not only to prospective workers, but also to customers, government, and investors as part of their marketing programs. Thus, when explicating aspects of FTE production, this study employs the term "millennial" in a restricted functional sense.

These data also help to circumscribe the systematic scope of the explanation. For example, we do not consider neurological evidence regarding meditation because it is not relevant to our Marxian functional explanation of EMPs within the system of capitalist production. (Neurons are uninteresting in this regard, but are within an explanation founded upon evolutionary psychology.) Certainly, there is an extensive and growing body of neurological evidence corroborating the effectiveness of meditation in the acquisition of various positive cognitive abilities.⁴⁴ There is counterevidence as well. Nevertheless, the abilities putatively gained from EMPs represent only primitive evidentiary inputs of cognitive and productive significance. The explanation centers in this regard only upon how favored cognitive abilities, presumably gained through EMPs, are engineered into the production process as profitable capabilities through the application of scientific management methods.

This evidence reflects a holistic, synergistic, and functional attitude toward explanation. It explicitly restricts evidence to that which provides constraints on data types and degrees of sophistication upon which Cummins explanatory methodology depends. Business analysis, as well as ergonomic and social engineering, empirically actualize functional items or *mechanisms* within a business *system*, each of which possesses an *ability* to do something. Abilities need not become manifest as *behaviors* due to the presence of intrinsic or extrinsic constraints. When management removes constraints on behaviors, they can become behavioral *dispositions*, and take on an evidentiary status. A disposition involves an item's regular (law-like) tendency to do something under similar conditions. An item's *capacity* to exhibit a disposition involves the extent to which dispositions are enabled through the engineering of the forces of production, and therewith become *functional*; in the sense that they *regularly contribute to the good operation of the business system*. An item's *capabilities* are just the set of its behaviors, abilities, capacities, and dispositions, each of which is liable to quantitative expression as marketing metrics.

⁴⁴ Roger Walsh and Shauna Shapiro, "The meeting of meditative disciplines and Western psychology: A mutually enriching dialogue" *American Psychologist* 61 no.3 (April 2006): 227-239.

Abilities and capacities are not necessarily manifest, but must be if they are to take on evidentiary significance. A worker might gain the ability to remain serene within a stressful work environment through meditation training, but not be able to bring order to chaos in especially toxic situations. Nevertheless, abilities gain evidentiary relevance, and in business value, only if the worker reveals 1) abilities that manifest as behaviors (calm and steadfast negotiation) that can become 2) capacities (enabled through effective management methods) that can in turn become 3) dispositions (for example, through enterprise-level Capability Maturity Integration).⁴⁵As will be explained later, these distinctions carry evidentiary significance for business planners who, supported by organizations like the CIC, organize and strengthen their forces of production accordingly. These distinctions also inform the creation of those metrics that most accurately reflect their relative productive performance and investment appeal within their market.

The Teleology of Workplace Meditation

Today, workers endure increasingly afflictive work environments created by the modes of production FTE businesses. These businesses need to respond to competition resulting from the rapid introduction of new products, and technological innovation; so work is fast paced. Profitability demands feed heavy productivity goals, translating into workers working harder, and over longer periods. They do so while accepting increasing responsibilities driven by workforce consolidations and reductions. Peter S. Goodman, Executive Business and Global News Editor at *The Huffington Post*, points out that flexible work hours create an environment where, "No one counts how many hours people sit at their desks." At Google, some workers enjoy 80-hour workweeks.⁴⁶ At Amazon, "They overwork you and you're like a number to them. During peak season and Prime season, they give you 60 hours a week. In July, I had Prime week and worked 60 hours. The same day I worked overtime, I got into a bad car accident because I was falling asleep behind the wheel."⁴⁷

Productive work is intense, its volume considerable, and occurs within an array of complex and confusing technical tasks and management processes. A lack of personal control over the workflow is evident in constant work interruptions, text and instant messages, phone calls, meetings, and emails. The large amount of technical and business information communicated requires considerable, sophisticated, continual, and rapid cognitive processing. Workers must productively and efficiently manage this information as they interact with multiple actors, with

⁴⁵ Concerning the Capability Maturity Model Institute (CMMI), see <https://cmminstitute.com>. (accessed August 11, 2019).

⁴⁶ Peter S. Goodman, "Why Companies Are Turning To Meditation And Yoga To Boost The Bottom Line," *Huffpost*, April 1, 2015, https://www.huffingtonpost.com/2013/07/11/mindfulness-capitalism_n_3572952.html. (accessed February 11, 2019).

⁴⁷ Michael Sainato, "'We are not Robots': Amazon warehouse employees push to unionize," *The Guardian*, January 1, 2019, <https://www.theguardian.com/technology/2019/jan/01/amazon-fulfillment-center-warehouse-employees-union-new-york-minnesota>. (accessed April 27, 2019).

different roles and interests, involved in the production process. Managers and owners expect workers to efficiently accomplish their work, while remaining vigilant of uncertain and changing business requirements, processes, and technology.

Research correlates persistent physical, psychological, and social worker problems with debilitating workplace environments. Stress-related physical impacts include chronic pain, accidents, and immune, digestive cardiovascular, neuroendocrine, and central nervous system disorders. Psychological problems involve depression, weakened mental focus, distraction, indecision, irritability, feelings of fear, self doubt, anxiety, a lack of resilience, insomnia, weak problem solving and memory, an inability to rapidly assimilate large amounts of information, and to prioritize problems and work tasks.

These environments create psychological and behavioral dispositions that negatively affect productivity. Workers exhibit behaviors including a lack of empathy, impatience, emotional control, and task engagement, as well as a commitment to business goals and loyalty to the employer. Low worker morale can lead to behaviors that weaken collaboration, communication, leadership, creativity, accountability, and situational awareness. They can also increase absenteeism, employee turnover, while corrupting business and ethical judgments. The federal government's Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reports that "productivity losses related to personal and family health problems cost U.S. employers \$1,685 per employee per year, or \$225.8 billion annually."

Aetna CEO Mark Bertolini reported that his company's EMP led to a 7 percent reduction in health care costs.⁴⁸ He adds that

More than one-quarter of the company's work force of 50,000 has participated in at least one class, and those who have report, on average, a 28 percent reduction in their stress levels, a 20 percent improvement in sleep quality and a 19 percent reduction in pain. They also become more effective on the job, gaining an average of 62 minutes per week of productivity each, which Aetna estimates is worth \$3,000 per employee per year. Demand for the programs continues to rise; every class is overbooked.⁴⁹

Billionaire Marc Benioff, a cofounder of Salesforce promotes workplace "spirituality." He describes how Buddhist monks

...came down to our office and led a session at our auditorium. They told me they'd been at Facebook and Google teaching mindfulness, relieving their suffering. Our level of stress was much better. ... The monks also told me "we want to have a quiet floor." I'm not sure about that — I'm negotiating with them,

⁴⁸ Goodman, op. cit.

⁴⁹ David Gelles, "At Aetna, a CEO's Management Mantra," *The New York Times*, February 27, 2015, https://www.nytimes.com/2015/03/01/business/at-aetna-a-ceos-management-by-mantra.html?_r=1. (accessed February 15, 2019).

but we're going to have mindfulness zones on the floors of our building, places where you can put your phone in a basket.⁵⁰

Worker problems stemming from the unhealthful workplace motivates government and private research interest in and support for mindfulness programs. The National Center for Complementary and Integrative Health, a unit of the National Institutes of Health, pursues research on the health benefits of meditation. In a 2016 report, the Center provides findings that employers use to justify investments in employee meditation programs.

Many studies have been conducted to look at how meditation may be helpful for a variety of conditions, such as high blood pressure, certain psychological disorders, and pain.

Some research suggests that practicing meditation may reduce blood pressure, symptoms of irritable bowel syndrome, anxiety and depression, and insomnia.... Meditation is generally considered to be safe for healthy people.

Many studies have investigated meditation for different conditions, and there's evidence that it may reduce blood pressure as well as symptoms of irritable bowel syndrome and flare-ups in people who have had ulcerative colitis. It may ease symptoms of anxiety and depression, and may help people with insomnia.⁵¹

Given market pressures from businesses, meditation advocates, government, and private interests, it is not surprising that the mindfulness industry expects increasing investment and an expanding market over the next decade.

"Don't Just Do Something, Sit There"

Don't Just Do Something, Sit There: A Mindfulness Retreat with Sylvia Boorstein celebrates a familiar Buddhist admonition.⁵² For EMP advocates, Boorstein offers an irony: Productivity is not advanced when workers to sit and do nothing. Nevertheless, the EMP industry claims that the cognitive abilities and dispositions provided through meditation can advance a business's bottom

⁵⁰ Julie Bort, "Salesforce billionaire Marc Benioff has a bunch of Buddhist monks living at his house," *Business Insider*, November 2, 2015, <https://www.businessinsider.com/marc-benioff-and-his-buddhist-monks-2015-11>. (accessed, February 15 2019).

⁵¹ The National Center for Complementary and Integrative Health. (2016). *Meditation: In Depth*, (NCCIH Pub No.: D308). <https://nccih.nih.gov/health/meditation/overview.htm#hed1>. (accessed August 11, 2019).

⁵² Sylvia Boorstein, *Don't Just Do Something, Sit There* (New York: HarperSanFrancisco, 1996). This study's explication of traditional meditation centers upon Buddhist practice. This is because commentators and business owners who offer EMPs generally refer to Buddhist practice as historical and inspirational precedents.

line, and that compatible productive business practices can transform the worker's ability to "sit there" into a capacity to "doing something."

Consider life "coach" and "licensed" therapist Matthew Jones,⁵³ who is "passionate about self-development in the modern world." Jones intends to train people to transform sitting there into productivity by first "deconstructing" cultural messages.

The challenge that most people face in discovering and then embracing their true selves has to do with their conditioning--the messages they receive from society. Because society wants you to move as quickly as possible. To keep your head down. To work yourself to the bone without critically examining yourself.

Part of real self-growth is deconstructing these cultural messages and then getting back in touch with reality--prior to thoughts, mind games, and measures of productivity.⁵⁴

Accordingly, Jones offers meditation services, including the "5-Day Workplace Meditation Challenge." This product is supported by a free "app" available to individuals on his website. It also acts as a marketing tickler aimed at executives and entrepreneurs who might find meditation's benefits consistent with their management and human capital needs. Experienced meditators will recognize what Buddhists describe as *samatha* meditation, which promotes mental serenity and includes various methods of breathing, eating, walking, and mindfulness techniques. Jones's Challenge helps people align their personal with professional lives to maximize success. It unleashes their "true potential" as they discover their "true selves." By doing so, they advance "self-growth," gain a greater "presence" during social interactions, and create a "self-awareness" and "happiness" that strengthens a mental focus that fosters "efficient productivity." Jones's clinical experience, as well as results from the cognitive science of meditation, suggests that as these results are gradually achieved, practitioners become better able to cope with stress, anxiety, physical pain and illness. They will exercise greater emotional control, mental focus, and flexibility, while becoming more creative and efficient in their interactions with others.

Jones summarizes the millennial ethos of the mindfulness commodity, capturing the central ethical semantics that guides its marketing. This semantic suggests a lineage to traditional meditation doctrine, at least because meditation practices share common purposes, including helping people achieve wholesome mental and physical states ("awareness," "presence," "serenity").

⁵³ All quotations are taken from Matthew Jones website, *Presence, Power, Potential*, <http://presencepowerpotential.com>. (accessed April 17 2019).

⁵⁴ "Getting back to reality" is a common theme played during mindfulness marketing. Like Buddhism, Jones's soteriology requires transcendence from an existentially and morally inhibiting cultural language. Through the 5-Day Challenge, one's true self will be "embraced," as one's thinking is freed from disabling cultural language.

Nevertheless, secular versus traditional accounts of meditation's function in human life differ with regard to the content of their ethical claims. Jones appeals exclusively to the millennial worldview, especially prioritizing the satisfaction of personal needs (self-actualization), independence, success, happiness, and "efficient productivity." In contrast, Buddhists introduce an extensive psycho-ethical foundation⁵⁵ that offers a fundamentally altruistic perspective. While traditional meditation does help people as Jones claims, its conceptual and practical hard core centers upon a higher-level process of moral reclamation. Meditation's purpose is to maintain one's personal moral integrity, and that integrity is fundamental to personal happiness and "enlightenment." While secular and traditional meditation can serve personal and business interests, traditional religious practices, like the Buddhists, prioritize a collective responsibility to "Right Action."

Buddhists, for example, view *samatha* meditation as one of two functionally distinct, yet complementary subdivisions of meditative practice.⁵⁶ The other is *vipassana* meditation, literally meaning, "to see clearly," but generally referred to as "insight" meditation. *Samatha* techniques stabilize and calm the mind, body, and emotions. In contrast, *vipassana* meditation seeks insights through an analysis that elucidates the impermanence, contingency, and lack of a willful "self" of phenomena and mental states. Practiced together, these two types of meditation help practitioners achieve an enlightened worldview, and free them from an existential "unsatisfactoriness," which is inherent in human existence.

The pursuit of an enlightened mind has a necessary ethical core, which motivates meditative practice. This is because the doctrine of "The Four Noble Truths"⁵⁷ instructs practitioners that they can only attain enlightenment if they recognize their current state of unsatisfactoriness, and understand the "true nature" of physical and mental phenomena as the cause. In addition, they must appreciate the ethical value of meditation's capacity to remove mental "attachments" to those phenomena, irreversibly achieving serenity and higher states of consciousness.

The attainment of the enlightened mind lies at the center of Buddhist ethics. The DharmaMind Buddhist Group explains the connection between meditation and ethics, with respect to meditating on the "Perfection of Ethics."

"This practice of *ethical conduct is the very foundation* for progressing in any practice of meditation and for attaining all higher realisations on the path. Our ...We should perfect our conduct by eliminating harmful behaviour. *We abstain from killing, stealing, sexual misconduct, lying, divisive speech, harsh speech, gossip, greed, malice and wrong views...*We follow these precepts so we can enjoy greater freedom, happiness and security in our lives, because through our virtuous behaviour we are no longer creating suffering for ourselves and others... When our commitment is strong in the practice of ethics we are at ease, naturally

⁵⁵ "Abhidhamma Pitaka," *Pali Canon Online*, <http://palicanon.org/index.php/abhidhamma-pitaka>. (accessed April 29, 2019).

⁵⁶ See: Matthew Flickstein, *The Meditator's Atlas: A Roadmap of the Inner World* (Somerville, MA: Wisdom Publications, 2007).

⁵⁷ The Dalai Lama, *The Four Noble Truths* (London: Thorsons, 1997).

confident, without stress and happy because we are not carrying any underlying sense of guilt or remorse for our actions; we have nothing to hide. Maintaining our personal honour and integrity, our moral impeccability, this is the cause of all goodness, happiness and even the attainment of enlightenment.⁵⁸ [My italics]

For Buddhists, *samatha* and *vipassana* meditation work synergistically to help the meditator understand and appreciate the ethical dimensions of their practice. This practice transforms their consciousness of the world and moral dispositions into behavioral capacities that can engender an enlightened mind, and by extension provide a basis for a more peaceful and compassionate world.

Since meditation promotes fundamental ethical precepts, Jones is keen to deconstruct workers' ethical socialization in order to remove afflictive attitudes and dispositions, and reconstruct it in a manner that is consistent with his brand of meditative ethics. Jones's breakthrough in meditation practice involves a reengineering that is compatible with both the desire for self-actualization and personal achievement, as well as with capitalist productive designs. In this regard, Jones's Challenge represents an exercise in both engineering psychology and social engineering.⁵⁹

Thus, a meditation ethic becomes an engineering ethos with an inclusive branding. The functional synergies between psychological engineering and socialization that Jones's Challenge advances reflect those widely held within the engineering community. As Ian Macleod, Professor Emeritus of Structural Engineering of the University of Strathclyde explains.

A central plank of professional behaviour is to work to a code of ethics. Unethical behaviour by professional people has a very negative effect on society. The Statement of Ethical Principles drawn up by the Royal Academy of Engineering and the Engineering Council and adopted by IESIS lists 'four fundamental principles that should guide an engineer in achieving the high ideals of professional life': Accuracy and rigour; Honesty and integrity; Respect for life, law and the public good; Responsible leadership. Consideration of the natural environment, the social environment and sustainability are pervasive ethical issues in engineering practice. Some ethical issues are passive: there are things that one should not do such as not taking bribes or not compromising public safety on the basis of client requirements. There is also an active component - e.g.

⁵⁸ "The 6 Paramitas," *DharmaMind Buddhist Group*, <http://dharmamind.net/teachings/the-6-parimitas/>. (accessed August 20, 2019).

⁵⁹ N. Stanton, "Engineering Psychology: Another Science of Common Sense?," *The Psychologist*, 9 no. 7 (1996): 300-303. This study relies on a functional distinction between two scientific management mechanisms: *social engineering* and *psychological engineering*. Social engineering involves "the artificial controlling or changing of the groups within society." Because this account is both functional and Marxian, it treats both the productive functions of workers and managers, as well as their class-determined social relations. (See: "Social Engineering," *Cambridge Dictionary*, <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/social-engineering>. (accessed April 17, 2019).

a responsibility to seek to improve the quality of life and to limit negative effects on the environment.⁶⁰

With this in mind, let us now examine how the inclusive capitalism as manifested in the FTE workplace synergizes the capitalist ethos with emerging scientific modes of production within KE.

The Workplace: Inclusive Capitalist Ethics and Scientific Management

Although the EMP industry excludes specific religious orientations from their mindfulness programs, it does not come without an ethos. That ethos informs EMP designs and marketing that exploits affective and moral triggers associated with selected millennial ethical concerns, and just those that map to valued worker cognitive skill sets (e.g. innovation, adaptable). Owner control over the ethical narrative at the workplace is significant because of its potential for reducing worker anxiety over the negative impacts of their productive work to humanity. For example, meditating on human conflict and political repression might disturb employees who work for arms manufacturers. Meditating on the death of a Yemeni child killed by one of Raytheon's missiles, or the treatment of women and journalists by a customer like the Saudi Arabian government⁶¹ might lead to unanticipated workplace anxiety and class conflict.⁶² Any reduction in the effectiveness of Raytheon's EMP risks a corresponding reduction in productivity.

To this end, America's business schools, think tanks, and scientific research institutions promote putative ethical and practical values of EMPs. For example, Denise Linda Parris, Assistant Professor of Entrepreneurship, University of Oklahoma, pursues work on the development of the servant leadership management style. To achieve this, Parris suggests a reengineering of the social relations of production in order to improve managerial effectiveness and, with that, productivity.

⁶⁰ Iain Macleod, "The ethos of professional engineering," *Transactions*, Institution of Engineers and Shipbuilders in Scotland, 154 no. 1665 (September 2012): 7-12.

⁶¹ Cassie Werber, "All the countries that Raytheon now supplies with its Patriot missile-defense system," *Quartz*, January 31, 2019, <https://qz.com/1539125/all-the-countries-that-raytheon-now-supplies-with-its-patriot-missile-defense-system/>. (accessed March 26, 2019).

⁶² David Wichner, "Raytheon will weather any disruption in Saudi arms sales," *Arizona Daily Star*, October 25, 2018, https://tucson.com/business/raytheon-will-weather-any-disruption-in-saudi-arms-sales-ceo/article_c3e00346-b5fe-5305-9f07-4ff9c8b3ef0f.html. (accessed March 27 2019). When asked about Jamal Khashoggi at the Saudi consulate in Istanbul, Raytheon CEO Thomas Kennedy comforted customers, shareholders, and meditating employees. "We are a global company providing technology and security solutions for over 80 countries and we have numerous global franchises....So I'm pretty confident that we will weather this complexity, this kind of a geopolitical environment we have right now."

Servant leadership is a leadership philosophy in which an individual interacts with others – either in a management or fellow employee capacity – with the aim of achieving authority rather than power. The authority figure intends to promote the well-being of those around him or her. Servant leadership involves the individual demonstrating the characteristics of empathy, listening, stewardship and commitment to personal growth toward others.⁶³ [My italics]

This effort is sensitive to the socialization of millennial workers and aligns with the goals and methodology of workplace wellness and mindfulness programs. Parris's work ethic recognizes that "...helping others is not self-sacrifice but self-fulfillment."⁶⁴ Parris wishes business leaders to appreciate the productive value of servant leadership, and motivate them to implement EMPs.

Parris's work finds its way into America's business schools. For example, Parris and Cecilia McInnis-Bowers, Professor of Social Entrepreneurship at Rollins College, offer an "...introductory business course that would encourage and enable students to understand that business can be a force for good (sustainability and social impact) and to practice collaborative innovation (human-centered design thinking)."⁶⁵ Interest in the science of compassion, altruism and empathy, and business applications of meditation, inspires academic institutions like Stanford University's Center for Compassion and Altruism Research and Education (CCARE)⁶⁶, to pursue related scientific research programs. CCARE conducts wide ranging interdisciplinary research, offering programs drawing from "neuroscience, psychology, economics and contemplative traditions." CCARE studies "the neural correlates, biological bases and antecedents of compassion," "the effects of compassion on brain and behavior," and "methods for cultivating compassion and promoting altruism within individuals and society-wide." Among its research projects is a study of "Neural Correlates of Compassion in Buddhist Adepts and Novices," led by Stanford psychologist and neuroscientist Brian Knutson, in collaboration with the Tibetan monk and philosopher Thupten Jinpa. The goal of this research is to "build bridges between Buddhist theory and neuroscientific findings."⁶⁷

⁶³ "Servant Leadership," *Investopedia*, <https://www.investopedia.com/terms/s/servant-leadership.asp>. (accessed April 17, 2019).

⁶⁴ "Denise Parrish," *Price College of Business*, <http://www.ou.edu/price/entecdev/people/denise-parris>. (accessed April 17, 2019).

⁶⁵ Denise Linda Paris and Cecilia McInnis-Bowers, "Business Not as Usual: Developing Inclusive Entrepreneurs and Intrapreneurs" *Journal of Management Education*, 41, no. 5 (2017): 687-726.

⁶⁶ "Mission and Vision," *Stanford Center for Compassion and Altruism Research and Education*, <http://ccare.stanford.edu/about/mission-vision/>. (accessed August 20, 2019).

⁶⁷ "Neural Correlates of Compassion in Buddhist Adepts and Novices," *CCARE*, <http://ccare.stanford.edu/?s=Brian+Knutson#firsttab>. (accessed August 20, 2019). CCARE also builds bridges to capitalism, offering research and training programs that "benefit" businesses and corporations. For example, among CCARE's research is the study "Neural affective mechanisms predict market-level microlending." This work studies loan approval outcomes

...based on the elicitation of positive affect by applicant's photographs in two separate studies: one internet and the other a neuroimaging study. The internet

CCARE's educational outreach advocates for workplace meditation, offering a website link to Laurie J. Cameron's article "Meditation Makes You Better at Everything—including Work."⁶⁸ Cameron recommends that workers practice mindfulness: "As you begin to strengthen your mind, grow your skills, and cultivate positive mindsets, you will lay the foundation for increased engagement, meaning, and flourishing in your work."

The EMP industry and business owners use this research, and the ethos and management technologies that emerge from it to reframe the social and ethical context within which programmed work and management processes function. In doing so, they largely mask the class and functional distinctions between workers and management. It accomplishes this in part by semantically reframing the production process ("meetings" become "scrums"), and its social relations ("managers" become "Scrum Masters" and business "owners" servant leaders), in a way that exploits many millennial affective and ethical triggers that inform EMPs.

The goal of these research efforts is to help workers flourish in their work, and significantly so because they enjoy the ethos that justifies the mechanics and goals of emerging modes of production. The ability of workers and managers to profitably wield and govern this technology requires them to develop considerable "soft" skills. Sometimes called "people" skills, these include behaviors such as effective communication, collaboration, and compassionate leadership. For business owners who are convinced that meditation provides workers with cognitive abilities that support these skills, EMPs offer owners potential synergies within production between their cognitive skills, emotional intelligence, and within marketing as they support sales and lobbying.

Reengineering the Mode of Production

These productive synergies are significant for Marxian analyses of EMPs. Business owners claim the means of production as private property, so the social relations of production exhibit a power asymmetry. Business owners exercise absolute control over managers, who themselves are granted absolute control over workers within the productive process. As Marx explains, these social relations are factors that cause a worker's sense of alienation, expressed as feelings of

study showed that positive affect in applicant photographs promoted loan success...Implications for the role of affective neuroscience in microlending success and market-level behaviors are discussed.

- CCARE, <http://ccare.stanford.edu/article/neural-affective-mechanisms-predict-market-level-microlending/>. (accessed August 20, 2019). See also: A. Genevsky and B. Knutson (2015), "Neural affective mechanisms predict market-level microlending" *Psychological Science*, 26, no. 9 (2015): 1411-1422

⁶⁸ Laurie J. Cameron, "Meditation Makes You Better at Everything—including Work," *Observer*, February 7, 2018, <https://observer.com/2018/02/mindfulness-and-meditation-will-improve-your-performance-at-work/>. (accessed February 17 2019).

powerlessness, dissatisfaction with work, and an estrangement from the products of their labor. In this regard, reframing the social relations of production looms large.

As we have seen, technologically advanced and highly integrated productive processes offer significant business challenges. Business owners appreciate the productivity and financial risks inherent in a mode of production that engenders the physically and mentally debilitation of their workforce. They also understand that alienation can diminish employee morale, their commitment to work and to the company, and the business's branding. Business owners who offer EMPs do so because they believe that workplace meditation can provide health and lifestyle benefits to employees, advance profitability, and, if widely implemented, promote an altruistic capitalist economic system within society as a whole. These owners are devoted capitalists who unabashedly claim that capitalism promotes human progress and cooperation, while offering an inclusive business branding in language rich in millennial affective triggers.

The central problem for business owners is how to scientifically engineer new modes of production that maximally exploit existing technology, ameliorate persistent and unprofitable worker afflictions and inefficiencies, yet do so in a manner that advances a profitable and inclusive branding. Taken together, these three concerns not only suggest the extent to which EMPs might function within both the capitalist productive base and its supporting superstructure, but also how closely production and marketing are functionally interconnected. We will return to this topic later regarding FMC's routine interpenetration of production and sales.

In order to explain the function of EMPs within production, let us turn to an analysis of how companies use ergonomics to synergize mindfulness programs with advanced production and human capital management practices. We begin with some definitions.

The International Ergonomic Association (IEA) defines ergonomics as

...the scientific discipline concerned with the understanding of interactions among humans and other elements of a system, and the profession that applies theory, principles, data and methods to design in order to optimize human well-being and overall system performance.

Practitioners of ergonomics and ergonomists contribute to the design and evaluation of tasks, jobs, products, environments and systems in order to make them compatible with the needs, abilities and limitations of people.

Ergonomics helps harmonize things that interact with people in terms of people's needs, abilities and limitations.⁶⁹ [My italics]

In addition to its work in physical ergonomics, the IEA partitions research and practical application into cognitive and organizational ergonomics. Cognitive ergonomics involves

⁶⁹ "Definition and Domains of Ergonomics," *International Ergonomics Association*, <https://www.iea.cc/whats/index.html>. (accessed August 20, 2019).

...*mental processes*, such as perception, memory, reasoning, and motor response, as they *affect interactions among humans and other elements of a system*. (Relevant topics include mental workload, decision-making, skilled performance, human-computer interaction, human reliability, work stress and training as these may relate to human-system design.)⁷⁰ [My italics]

Organizational ergonomics investigates

...the optimization of *sociotechnical systems*, including their organizational structures, policies, and processes. (Relevant topics include communication, crew resource management, work design, design of working times, teamwork, participatory design, community ergonomics, cooperative work, new work paradigms, virtual organizations, telework, and quality management.)⁷¹ [My italics]

Ergonomics is an interdisciplinary partner with the field of engineering psychology. Engineering psychology is a professionalized and credentialed field within the academic community. For example, Georgia Tech's School of Psychology offers graduate degrees in engineering psychology.

Engineering psychology operates at the intersection of experimental psychology and human factors by engaging in research that can best be described as "*practically relevant*". As a science, the field of engineering psychology focuses on understanding the capabilities and limitations of human performance from the perspective of perception, cognition, and movement control. Engineering psychologists apply that basic knowledge to the design of systems and environments that accommodate those *capabilities* and limitations.⁷² [My italics]

The workplace problems revealed in this study are well known to engineering psychologists who seek to create positive cognitive and organizational ergonomics in the workplace by optimizing system performance as well as human well-being. As Professor Neville Stanton, University of Southampton, explains, those

...who design [work] tasks that either stretch people beyond their physical and/or mental capacities or tasks that are physically and/or mentally constrictive. Both ends of the spectrum result in a dissatisfactory outcome for the individual, as well as poor performance of the system. So we end up paying for poor design in terms of discomfort, errors, dissatisfaction and poor performance. Some times the price can be counted in terms of human life.

⁷⁰ Ibid.

⁷¹ Ibid.

⁷² "Engineering," *Georgia Tech School of Psychology*, <http://www.psychology.gatech.edu/graduate/engineering>. (accessed August 20, 2019).

The objectives of Ergonomics...are shared by Engineering Psychology, which are to optimise the effectiveness and efficiency with which human activities are conducted as well as to improve the general quality of life through "increased safety, reduced fatigue and stress, increased comfort [and] ... satisfaction."⁷³

Clearly, Stanton's engineering psychology shares much with Ian Macleod's engineering ethos.

Establishing productive and healthful synergies between technologically advanced means of production and worker capabilities is challenging. For example, a modern information technology (IT) business integrates a vast, diverse, sophisticated, and highly professionalized body of technology, knowledge, and practice.⁷⁴ In order to better manage these complexities, business solutions for integrating these complex means of production with the appropriate form of skilled labor power come in the form of innovative production and management technologies. For example, the "Agile" methodology abandons the older sequential and hierarchically managed production process; for one centering upon distributed production tasks simultaneously performed by self-organizing cross-functional teams. EMPs putatively enhance the cognitive skills that support productivity in these modes of production. To do this, EMPs come with an array of custom designed products, from meditation rooms to complete mindfulness programs that integrate effectively with distributed and non-sequential production management practices. The marketing of EMPs softens class distinctions by employing an inclusive social semantic that stresses shared goals, such as "whole-person" actualization, and values, and respect for others. This language is compatible with a workplace culture within which managers are "servants" and CEOs are not only meditators, but also inclusive entrepreneurs.

The Agile Alliance markets a widely used production methodology that synergizes well with the force multipliers provided by EMPs. Agile is intended to synergize a complex technology with compatible productive and managerial processes for software development. This methodology focuses upon

...the people doing the work and how they work together. Solutions evolve through collaboration between self-organizing cross-functional teams utilizing the appropriate practices for their context. There's a big focus in the Agile software development community on collaboration and the self-organizing team.

⁷³ Neville Stanton, "Engineering Psychology: Another Science of Common Sense?" (1996), *The Psychologist*, 9, (7), 300-303.

⁷⁴ These technologies include: 1) business systems and processes (such as business and systems analysis, and the Unified Modeling Language (UML), 2) "Big Data" and other information collection and management (such as data warehousing and modeling), 3) product development and quality control (like the Computer-Aided Software Engineering (CASE) tools employed in Joint Application Design (JAD), 4) Volere business, scientific and software systems requirements methodology, and Six Sigma), 5) Project management (like PMI), and 6) business capability management (like CMMI). Each of these employ sophisticated logics, analytics, implementation protocols, operational capabilities, and practices.

That doesn't mean that there aren't managers. It means that teams have the ability to figure out how they're going to approach things on their own.

...Those teams don't have to have specific roles involved so much as that when you get the team together, you make sure that you have all the right skill sets on the team.

...Managers make sure team members have, or obtain, the right skill sets [and] provide the environment that allows the team to be successful. Managers mostly step back and let their team figure out how they are going to deliver products, but they step in when the teams try but are unable to resolve issues.⁷⁵

The Agile "Manifesto"⁷⁶ recognizes market demands, and the uncertainties and competition that drive the need for rapid innovation and production. Labor power managed under the Agile methodology is enhanced when workers have the capacity to "harness" change, maintain a constant pace, work collaboratively within self-organized teams, be self-motivated, support their coworkers, communicate effectively in face-to-face communication, and maximize their work efficiency. The Agile Scrum rapid development process requires worker commitment, courage, focus, openness, and mutual respect. If these required abilities become dispositions achieved by effectively applying the Agile methodology, the Scrum Team collectively and routinely "...tunes and adjusts its behavior accordingly"⁷⁷ in order to maximize its productivity. In this way, Agile seeks to empower workers in decision-making and production, encourage personal accountability, and promote teamwork and collaboration.⁷⁸

From the perspective of this study, Agile provides businesses with a number of productive advantages. First, business owners can better synergize labor and management functions, and align them with the requirements of production to expand the value of their productive forces.⁷⁹ Second, it merges productive and managerial functions, providing efficiencies and counteracting

⁷⁵ "Agile 101," *Agile Alliance*, <https://www.agilealliance.org/agile101/>. (accessed April 17, 2019).

⁷⁶ "Manifesto for Agile Software Development," *Agile Alliance*, <https://www.agilealliance.org/agile101/the-agile-manifesto/>. (accessed April 17, 2019).

⁷⁷ Ibid. Powell and Snellman point out that the jump in granted patents beginning in the mid-1990s "...reflects an increase in innovation, *driven by improvements in the management of innovation processes.*" (205) [My italics]

⁷⁸ Powell and Snellman: "Similarly, drawing on a survey of 4100 U.S. firms Black & Lynch (2001) found that productivity gains from technology investments were often associated with workplace changes, such as profit-sharing plans and employee participation in decision making." (208)

⁷⁹ "DFSS (Design for Six Sigma) Best Practices," *C2C Solutions*, <http://www.c2c-solutions.com/pdfs/C2CRoadmapNP.pdf>. (accessed April 21, 2019). Six Sigma employs a "Design For Six Sigma" (DFSS) product development "Flowchart." It exploits "Right Brain" and "Left Brain" strategies to create a "Concept to Customer (C2C)" product development methodology. This process "integrates leading Design For Six Sigma "tools," which accelerate product introduction and ensures profitable cycles."

the well-known tendency among large businesses toward a costly proliferation of the management corps. Third, in addition to streamlining production through self-management, Agile also provides a methodology that can merge business analysis and project management into a single role, the credentialed Scrum Master.⁸⁰ The enhanced cognitive abilities that EMPs presumably afford reinforce those soft-skills required by Agile's methodology that transforms workers cognitive abilities into capacities and dispositions within the productive system. When implemented along with a knowledge management and continuing improvement process, such as the Capability Maturity Model Integration (CMMI), EMPs can become an integral mechanism within an advanced FTE business.

EMPs exploit millennial socialization, providing a basis upon which a healthy, satisfying, inclusive, yet productive workplace culture can become institutionalized. This capability looms large as millennials increase their presence in the workforce. Jessica Rovello, writing for *Inc.*, reports that in 2018, millennials made up 35% of the US workforce and this demographic will reach 75% by 2025.⁸¹ Nevertheless, only "29% of millennials feel engaged at work." For companies to successfully compete in the skilled labor market, Rovello recommends that they rework their talent acquisition process with the millennial worldview and expectations in mind. "Millennials are just like the rest of us: passionate, hard-working, but unlike other generations, they're driven by much more than money. Tweak your approach to match their mindsets, and watch those applications pile up."

Pay attention to what people are saying about your company. Own the conversation as much as possible by establishing a social presence that shows more than your products. Millennials, like the workforce at large, want to feel a sense of purpose. They want to feel good about their work. They want to know that their personal values are aligned with their company's, and that their role is an extension of both. Create a digital persona that focuses on who your company is and what it stands for. In doing so, you'll instantly draw the appeal of candidates eager to step into your culture - and ones who will be motivated to produce because of it.⁸²

⁸⁰ The consolidation of production and managerial work seeks to reduce costs not only in operational management, but also in project management and business analysis. Business Times predicted in 2012 that "In 2009 we predicted that as the economy tightened, organizations would decrease their project budgets and combine the role of PM and BA." However, the Times predicted that in 2012, this trend would slow due to problems meeting product requirements. Nevertheless, they also reported that the Project Management Institute "has recognized the importance of the business analyst role. In 2010 they undertook a study to determine areas of overlap, handoffs, and how the two roles could collaborate." See: Elizabeth and Richard Larson, "7 Trends In Business Analysis And Project Management To Watch For In 2012," *Business Times*, January 10, 2012, <https://www.batimes.com/articles/7-trends-in-business-analysis-and-project-management-to-watch-for-in-2012.html>. (accessed February 21 2019).

⁸¹ Jessica Rovello, "Your Hiring Process Is Probably Obsolete. Here's what Millennials Are Looking For," *Inc.*, November 8, 2018, <https://www.inc.com/jessica-rovello/your-hiring-process-is-probably-obsolete-heres-what-millennials-are-looking-for.html>. (accessed March 18, 2019).

⁸² Ibid.

Demographic data, sociological studies, and business media analysis of the mindfulness market reveal those aspects of millennial socialization that are targeted by the meditation industry.⁸³ Highly valued skilled millennial workers generally possess college degrees.⁸⁴ Their education and familiarity and versatility with computers and electronic media support an appreciation of the positive value of science and technology, not only to their personal wellness but also to humanity. They tend to be less motivated by the attainment of wealth, or by traditional marketing and sales efforts than baby boomers. Millennials are health conscious and are attracted to trendy and alternative physical and mental self-care products and services. They expect that self-growth and self-realization activities will enable a sustainable work-life balance and healthy human relationships. They are inclined to seek compassionate solace and lifestyle advice, support, and training from recognized and accredited experts. Their spirituality is characterized by indifference to, or, in growing numbers, a rejection of traditional religion. As with their religious attitudes, they are generally dismissive of social convention and authoritative restrictions on moral behavior. Millennials exercise prudent ethical relativity. They are generally guided by an altruism that appreciates the suffering and vicissitudes of human existence.

Wellness, self-care, self-actualization, work satisfaction, and healthy human relationships carry millennial ethical dimensions that figure strongly in the marketing of EMPs. They are also prominent in the worldviews and business concerns of EMP advocates. For example, Richard Straub, who serves on the executive committee of the European Foundation for Management Development and is Secretary General of the European Learning Industry Group, heralds the advent of "management thinkers framing the greatest challenges of our time as human ones."

Smart machines can help us find answers more quickly, but cannot frame the questions to address. We must use these technologies to unleash human potential

⁸³ Information on millennial demographics and socialization are taken from: "Religion Among the Millennials." *PewResearchCenter*, February 2010, <http://www.pewresearch.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/7/2010/02/millennials-report.pdf>. (accessed December 12, 2018). Melissa H. Sandfort and Jennifer G. Haworth, "Whassup? A Glimpse Into the Attitudes and Beliefs of the Millennial Generation," *Journal of College and Character*, 3, no. 3 (2002); Shana Lebowitz, "6 ways millennials have it easier than their parents did," *Business Insider*, March 27, 2018, <https://www.businessinsider.com/millennials-lives-compared-to-gen-x-baby-boomers-2018-3>. (accessed February 18, 2019). Hillary Hoffower, "7 ways life is more expensive today for American millennials than previous generations," *Business Insider*, May 28, 2018, <https://www.businessinsider.com/millennials-cost-of-living-compared-to-gen-x-baby-boomers-2018-5>. (accessed February 18, 2019). "Generations X, Y, Z and the Others," *WJSchroer*, <http://socialmarketing.org/archives/generations-xy-z-and-the-others/>. (accessed February 16, 2019).

⁸⁴ Powell and Snellman: "More education translates into higher earnings, but this payoff is most pronounced at the highest educational levels." (213)

— undoubtedly the most underused resource on the planet — and bring greater purpose, meaning, and values to work.⁸⁵

Straub celebrates the missions of the Coalition for Inclusive Capitalism CIC and Conscious Capitalism, which "inspire, educate and empower companies to elevate humanity through business." Furthermore, Straub encourages everyone to join in a growing "movement" to transform capitalism into a socially enriching program.

Currently gaining force is a movement to focus for-profit enterprises more on the essential work of enriching societies — that is, benefiting not only those humans who are their owners as publicly traded companies but also those who work in them and who stand to benefit from more purpose-driven innovation. Like any social movement, this one has started with many people starting small fires.⁸⁶

The CIC's mission statement heralds a purposeful reengineering of human society that "engages leaders across business, government, and civil society in their efforts to make capitalism more dynamic, sustainable, and inclusive."⁸⁷ The *Credo* of Conscious Capitalism is jubilant about capitalism, and the organization's mission to advocate for a socially mindful consciousness, which deeply appeals to the millennials.

We believe that business is good because it creates value, it is ethical because it is based on voluntary exchange, it is noble because it can elevate our existence and it is heroic because it lifts people out of poverty and creates prosperity. Free enterprise capitalism is the most powerful system for social cooperation and human progress ever conceived. It is one of the most compelling ideas we humans have ever had. But we can aspire to even more.⁸⁸

Peter S. Goodman summarizes the attitudes of EMP advocates, which themselves reflect sensitivity for the millennial ethos.

Far from revolutionaries intent on waging Marxist struggle, such executives are card carrying capitalists who see free enterprise as a crucial artery of innovation and fortune. But they critique the role that capitalism has come to play in determining how we live. They assail the short-term thinking that has too often driven corporate strategies, sometimes sticking the public with unaccounted for costs in the form of pollution, joblessness and economic anxiety — often to the long-term detriment of the businesses themselves. In short, they want a new kind

⁸⁵ Richard Straub, "Socially Responsible Business Can Only Succeed If It Becomes a Movement," *Harvard Business Review*, March 16, 2018, <https://hbr.org/2018/03/socially-responsible-business-can-only-succeed-if-it-becomes-a-movement>. (accessed February 2, 2019).

⁸⁶ Ibid.

⁸⁷ "Coalition for Inclusive Capitalism," <https://www.inc-cap.com>. (accessed April 17, 2019).

⁸⁸ "Conscious Capitalist Credo," *Conscious Capitalism*, <https://www.consciouscapitalism.org/credo>. (accessed August 20, 2019).

of capitalism, one that places well-being alongside revenues and market share as objects of prime consideration.⁸⁹

“Revolutionary” Marxists are not required to set things straight in the workplace. Instead, capitalism requires a long-term movement among committed capitalists, workers, and the social superstructure championed by “accountable” “servant” “entrepreneurs,” who hold the “well-being” of humanity as a “prime consideration.” They are intent upon “unleashing” worker potential by placing worker “well-being alongside revenues and market share,” and implement EMPs as part of that project.

EMPs and the Workplace Environment

This section focuses upon environmental features of the FTE workplace for which Marxian analysis provides special insights. Together they involve five functionalities of capitalism identified by Marx: 1) skilled labor as a labor-power multiplier, 2) the length of the working day, 3) the salary system, 4) unorganized labor, and 5) scientific management and the division of labor power.

Marx recognizes that worker training qualitatively improves the workforce’s labor power, but it does so in conjunction with a necessary capitalist “discipline.”

The capitalist's fanatical insistence on economy in means of production is therefore quite understandable. That nothing is lost or wasted and the means of production are consumed only in the manner required by production itself, *depends partly on the skill and intelligence of the labourers* and partly on the discipline enforced by the capitalist for the combined labour.⁹⁰ [My italics]

In addition to the *qualitative* contribution of labor power, discipline contributes to production in the form of production management regimes and government labor laws, which determine the *quantity* of time during which workers are required to apply their skilled labor in production.

We see therefore that the addition of new value takes place not by virtue of his labour being spinning or joinery in particular, but because it is labour in general, abstract social labour; and we see also that the value added is of a certain definite amount, not because his labour has a particular useful content, but because it lasts for a *definite length of time*.⁹¹ [My italics]

One way that capital gains control over productive labor time of workers is to work in synergy with the legal superstructure to enforce profitable dimensions for the working day. Employers pay wages (variable capital) to skilled workers within large companies in the form of salaries.

⁸⁹ Goodman, op. cit.

⁹⁰ Marx, *Capital* I, 3, 53.

⁹¹ Marx, *Capital* I, 3, 308.

Due to the relatively high compensation required to attract and retain highly skilled workers, employers take advantage of government rules, within *The Fair Labor Standards Act* (FLSA), that "exempt" workers from eligibility to receive legally mandated overtime payments required for workweeks extending beyond 40 hours. Because FTE workforces are generally not organized and regardless of this fall under the FLSA, employers can benefit from wage negotiations with highly skilled FTE workers carried out on an individual basis.

Given the concerted and continuing resistance of neo-liberal capitalism to union organizing and its synergistic behavior with government (as manifested by the FLSA), it is not surprising that the FTE workforce exhibits the highest rates of worker retention. As the US Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics in 2018 reports "Among the major occupations, workers in management, professional, and related occupations had the highest median tenure (5.0 years) in January 2018. Within this group, employees with jobs in management occupations (6.4 years), in architecture and engineering occupations (5.7 years)...."⁹² These higher tenure rates, relative to service workers (below 3 years), are affected by the extent to which labor is organized, workers obtain valued technical skills, and the superstructure supports FTE businesses in their efforts to attract, retain, and compensate workers. This evidence on employee tenure also suggests that these three factors gain functional and class consequences with respect to the emergence of the dual economy.

As *Investopedia* explains, hourly and salary wage regimes differ with respect to their particular dimensions of time. For non-exempt workers, the time dimension governing wages is the hour.

As an hourly employee, you are paid for all of the hours you work. If an employer wants more of your time, they have to pay you more. Legal overtime is time and a half; some employers may pay double time for holidays, but that isn't mandatory unless it's part of a contract that covers your job.⁹³

For the exempt employees, time dimension is the length of an employment contract, one year.

Each time your paycheck arrives, it's the same. An annual wage is a term of your employment, and that's how much you will receive for as long as you hold the same job or until the terms are renegotiated.

There can be a downside, though. While salaried employees receive a fixed rate of pay, they also have specific responsibilities and tasks that must be met or completed—even if that means longer hours and occasional weekends. In some

⁹² U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, "USDL-18-1500: Employee Tenure in 2018," September 20, 2018.

⁹³ Tim Parker, "Salary vs. Hourly Pay: What's the Difference?," *Investopedia*, April 17, 2019, <https://www.investopedia.com/articles/personal-finance/031115/salary-vs-hourly-how-benefits-laws-differ.asp>. (accessed May 5, 2019).

circumstances, this can make it more difficult to separate work and personal time.⁹⁴

The distinction between non-exempt and exempt employment provides insights into why EMPs first emerged within large technologically advanced FMC companies. These businesses employ highly skilled millennial workers whose jobs qualify for exemption from minimum wage and overtime pay.⁹⁵ These exempt workers include business executives, operations administrators, “learned” or “creative” professionals, and computer employees, whose millennial socialization makes workplace mindfulness attractive. Employers do not pay workers who participate in workplace meditation based on the number of hours they spend in mindfulness training. Instead, if workers remain in tenure during their annual contract period, and meet production requirements, employers may pay a salary premium based upon participation metrics. Employers use a worker’s participation in an EMP as a performance metric for compensation and rehiring purposes, as that metric reflects an employee’s commitment to business goals.

Thus, the FLSA provides these businesses with a profitable mechanism by which owners can allow workers to meditate during the working day, without incurring a potential business risk involving overtime payments. Workers can meditate at work all they wish, as long as they meet production requirements, and manifest corresponding workforce performance dispositions. With exempt compensation, the functional significance of the length of the working day as a determinant of productivity is lost, and the concept of the “working day” itself removed from the capitalist lexicon of exempt labor. The result is that the range of potential solutions to the debilitating effects of expanding working days is constrained. For example, the range of potential improvements to the workplace environment identified by Mattke, Schnyer, and Van Busum include only those that require a modification of employee behavior, and not other aspects of the mode of production such as the length of the working day. Nowhere in the paper do the authors mention such concepts as “the working day,” “exempt,” “salaried,” or “hourly.” They employ the word “capital” exclusively with reference to human capital management: “Our senior management is committed to health promotion as an important investment in human capital.”⁹⁶ When identifying changes to the working environment, the study offers strategies that “range from changes to the working environment, such as providing healthy food options in the cafeteria, to comprehensive interventions that support employees in adopting and sustaining healthy lifestyles.”⁹⁷

⁹⁴ Ibid. FTE business production is not dominated by the Fordist assembly line (or its operational cognates). The functional relationship between the rate of movement of a central productive mechanism and the rate of production within manufacturing capitalism is severed within the FTE sector. With this change in the mode of production, comes a change in the metrics of working time and compensation.

⁹⁵ U.S. Department of Labor, Wage and Hour Division, “Fact Sheet #17A: Exemption for Executive, Administrative, Professional, Computer & Outside Sales Employees Under the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA),” July 2008, https://www.dol.gov/whd/overtime/fs17a_overview.pdf. (accessed May 5, 2019).

⁹⁶ Soeren Mattke, Christopher Schnyer, and Kristin R. Van Busum 30.

⁹⁷ Ibid., 3.

Thus, Mattke, Schnyer, and Van Busum offer a theoretically biased explanation of workplace toxicity and its potential remedies that places unjustified restrictions on potential solutions, stressing food and wellness, while ignoring those functional mechanics of production related to the FLSA salary system. The result is a significant weakening in explanatory force of their account of the toxic workplace, limiting its causal accuracy, scope, simplicity, and fruitfulness for further investigation into potential solutions.⁹⁸

Due to the general absence of unionization as well as the discipline imposed by the capitalist superstructure through laws that enable a labor market flexibility, workers have little say about their working conditions or how their compensation is structured. Thus, the satisfaction of the millennial worker's need for self-realization, empowerment, wellness, and work-life balance is attenuated as working days lengthen. To counter any emerging morale problems among workers, employers brand workplace meditation as healthful personal time, as well as a valuable skill development benefit. Businesses manage worker dissatisfaction by championing an ethos of servant leadership, providing workers with a sense of control and independence, while masking the distinction between work and recreation. In this way, employers blur the functional distinction between labor expended in production, and that spent in cognitive skills training. Worker needs are reoriented toward a new workplace consciousness favorable to the expanding productive needs of the business. This psychological engineering aligns the millennial worker's wish to enrich their personal lives and find meaning in their work, with the business technology of skill enhancement. This functional obfuscation in turn allows employers to brand the time allowed to meditate as inclusive employment, when it functionally represents an aspect of the employees training in skills that add value to the productive process.

Creating, Expanding, and Reengineering Markets

Meditation training is often included within employee wellness programs, complementing employee assistance programs (EAP) and absence management services. These business functions integrate meditation in a manner that sustains worker psychophysical wellbeing. The mindfulness industry packages meditation as a distinctive product, whose market differentiation is determined by the needs of specific types of workers. In addition, there is a growing need for "qualified" "trainers" and "counselors," a requirement driven by quality-control concerns of employee health insurers and regulatory mandates of government agencies.⁹⁹ These needs fuel a

⁹⁸ In these respects, the account of Mattke, Schnyer, and Van Busum does not meet the Kuhn's fundamental requirements for "good" scientific theories. See: Thomas S. Kuhn, "Objectivity, Value Judgment, and Theory Choice," from *The Essential Tension* (University of Chicago Press, 1972).

⁹⁹ Hannah H. Kim, "Will success turn it into 'McMindfulness'?" Some large insurance companies are considering providing coverage for mindfulness training for qualified patients. Vy V. Le, of In Wave Group, which "designs and offers mindfulness-based well-being and professional development programs for optimal performance;" believes "that credentialing will be required before health insurance companies will pay for meditation services. Although some insurance plans may cover the cost of mindfulness-based therapy, most insurers do not cover mindfulness

growing ancillary industry of professional certification that supports the rapidly expanding trajectory of the wellness market as a whole. In addition, properly "bundled" meditation products can fulfill business human-capital needs regarding highly skilled and technologically advanced workers, whose millennial socialization appreciates the wellness ethos and the career advantages of mindfulness practice.

A recent Grand View Research study anticipates that the global corporate wellness market will expand to \$84.9 billion by 2025,¹⁰⁰ enjoying a 6.8% compound annual growth rate. During 2017, North America commanded the largest geographic market share, with the Asia/Pacific region expected to expand significantly by 2025. Fortune IBISWorld estimates that the mindfulness industry generated nearly \$1 billion during 2015 alone.¹⁰¹ According to Hannah H. Kim,¹⁰² the mindfulness industry received \$260 million in investments during 2012. The market-dominating Headspace¹⁰³ application during 2017 garnered \$36.7 million in profit.

Bartie Scott of *Inc.com* identifies the mindfulness market as "One of the Best Industries for Starting a Business in 2017."¹⁰⁴ Scott reports, "Twenty-two percent of companies already offer meditation training at work, according to a study by the National Business Group on Health (NBGH) and Fidelity Investments. Another 21 percent plan to add such training in 2017." Soeren Mattke, Christopher Schnyer, and Kristin R. Van Busum, in a U.S. Department of Labor and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services study, indicate that workplace wellness programs,

...have achieved a high penetration in the United States. Our analysis suggests that about three-quarters of employers with more than 50 employees now offer such a program, which translates into about 100,000 organizations. It is more difficult to generate estimates for smaller businesses because many surveys do not cover them, but uptake rates for those are reportedly much lower.

Most observers expect that uptake will continue to increase as programs become more comprehensive and more accessible for smaller worksites.¹⁰⁵

programs or products. Employees may find ways to be reimbursed through flexible spending or professional development credit."

¹⁰⁰ "Corporate Wellness Market Size, Share & Trends Analysis Report (2018-2025)," *Grand View Research* (July 2018), <https://www.grandviewresearch.com/industry-analysis/corporate-wellness-market>. (accessed April 22, 2019).

¹⁰¹ Jen Wiczner, "Meditation Has Become A Billion-Dollar Business," *Fortune*, March 12, 2016, <http://fortune.com/2016/03/12/meditation-mindfulness-apps/>. (accessed February 11, 2019).

¹⁰² Hannah H. Kim, "Will success turn it into 'McMindfulness'?"

¹⁰³ <https://www.headspace.com>.

¹⁰⁴ Bartie Scott, "Why Meditation and Mindfulness Training Is One of the Best Industries for Starting a Business in 2017," *Inc.*, March 1, 2017, <https://www.inc.com/bartie-scott/best-industries-2017-meditation-and-mindfulness-training.html>. (accessed February 11, 2019).

¹⁰⁵ Soeren Mattke, Christopher Schnyer, and Kristin R. Van Busum, *A Review of the U.S. Workplace Wellness Market* (Santa Monica: Rand Corporation, 2012), 39.

Large FTE businesses have led the market for meditation products. As Peter S. Goodman, of *Huffpost*, reports, the Promega Corporation, a Madison, Wisconsin global biotechnology company employs 1200 workers and garners \$300 million annual revenues. Promega's workers participate in meditation classes during their workday, held in a yoga studio on its corporate campus, replete with "glowing candles and Buddhist statuary."¹⁰⁶ Ashley G. Anderson Jr., Promega's chief medical officer, celebrates meditation's ability to help create a "culture of wellness," which is conducive to increased productivity. "If you create a culture in which vibrant physicality is an admired thing, you've achieved a lot. A healthy workforce is a productive workforce."

Chade-Meng Tan, a "celebrated" Silicon Valley workplace meditation advocate, who furnishes his "Search Inside Yourself" mindfulness *qua* "emotional intelligence (EI)" program to 1000 Google employees, acknowledges the personal and business use values that meditation skills provide. "Everybody knows this EI thing is good for their career...And every company knows that if their people have EI, they're gonna make a shitload of money."¹⁰⁷ Mark Bertolini, Aetna's former CEO, celebrates both his personal membership in the meditation community, and his role in corporate management: "Some people think I'm weird....They say I'm only doing it because of my own experiences. And I say, 'I may be weird, but I'm also in charge of the company.'" As Goodman reports

...Bertolini emphasizes that the program was provoked by concern for the sorts of corporate interest that get captured in a spreadsheet: Aetna determined that workers in its most stress-prone positions were racking up medical bills that exceeded those of other employees by an average of \$2,000 a year....Aetna reduced its health care costs by 7 percent — a savings the CEO pegs in part to limiting stress through meditation and yoga.¹⁰⁸

Elba Mueller summarizes the synergistic meditation business plan.

In order to remain competitive in today's market, successful companies need:

- To possess a clear vision of their goals
- Inspiration to be innovative in their approach to supplying products and services
- Leadership to guide individuals towards success
- Teamwork to enable employees to keep up in today's global marketplace

The practice of meditation helps to make all of this possible. The Harvard Business School along with INSEAD—Europe's leading business school—have concluded from their research that the two most effective business tools for twenty-first century executives are meditation and intuition. The benefits of

¹⁰⁶ Goodman, op. cit.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid.

meditation in the workplace are cumulative; they build on one another, starting with the individual and from there, positively impacting the performance of the business as a whole.¹⁰⁹

Aetna is the epitome of the enterprise-wide implementation of EMPs. Within Aetna's first level of business-system sophistication, the company offers yoga and meditation classes to individual employees (13,000 participated). This is done to provide workers with valued cognitive skills that improve their productive capabilities. Within the next higher level of business-systemic sophistication, Aetna develops advanced management practices that enable these skills as capacities within Aetna's productive process. Once management sufficiently enables worker capacities, Aetna acculturates these capacities within the business, in synergy with CMMI efforts. The goal is to transform capacities into dispositions; that is, behaviors that become dependably repeatable and quantifiable under controllable conditions. Once these metrics are established, and determined to have evidentiary significance with regard to improved productive performance, they can become a marketing tool to demonstrate added business value to Aetna's customers and investors. Once economic actors outside of Aetna's particular business-system environment acknowledged the value of EMPs to business success, the functional significance of EMPs transcends the business-system level of sophistication, and passes into the more complex level of capitalist societal system as a whole.

Bertolini's continuing advocacy for EMPs reflects the expansion of the functionality of EMPs from the microeconomic to the macroeconomic domain. With meditation successfully implemented at Aetna, Bertolini exploits dispositional metrics to frame its business ethos as inclusive. Therewith, Bertolini goes on the road, along with Bill Clinton, HRH The Prince of Wales, and Lady Lynn Forester de Rothschild to champion his humanitarian capitalist vision into the macroeconomic sphere; that is, into the capitalist global societal superstructure. Joining the Coalition for Inclusive Capitalism (CIC), along with representatives of other large companies that offer meditation programs (like BlackRock and Fidelity Investments), Bertolini participates in the "Embankment Project for Inclusive Capitalism" (EPIC) which works "to identify and create new metrics to measure and demonstrate long-term value to financial markets."

The CIC describes the macroeconomic significance of its efforts.

¹⁰⁹ The specific characteristics cited come from: Elba Mueller, "5 Ways Meditation Can Benefit Businesses," *The Chopra Center*, <https://chopra.com/articles/5-ways-meditation-can-benefit-businesses>. (accessed February 13, 2019). Emma Seppala, "How Meditation Benefits CEOs," *Harvard Business Review*, December 14, 2015, <https://hbr.org/2015/12/how-meditation-benefits-ceos>. (accessed February 13, 2019). Stephanie Denning, "The Benefits Of Meditation In Business," *Forbes*, February 2, 2018, <https://www.forbes.com/sites/stephaniedenning/2018/02/02/the-benefits-of-meditation-in-business/#10acf19754f5>. (accessed November 3, 2018). Arun Thukral, "This is How Meditation at Your Workplace Can Bring Impeccable Results," *Entrepreneur India*, May 15, 2018, <https://www.entrepreneur.com/article/313450>. (accessed February 13, 2019). Peter S. Goodman, op. cit.

Considering the incredible changes that have taken place, it is not surprising that despite continuous updates, these [accounting principles and] standards do not cover all the aspects of value that have become increasingly important in business. Today, it is not uncommon that as little as 20% of a company's value is captured on its balance sheet – a staggering decline from about 83% in 1975. Meanwhile, the majority of a typical company's real value is now reflected in intangible aspects of its business model– relating to things such as innovation, culture, trust, and corporate governance – that are difficult to measure.¹¹⁰

To this end, the CIC identifies appropriate use values, as a set of “prioritized stakeholder outcomes,” and develops corresponding “value levers,” which are factors that influence or affect stakeholders' assessment of business value. (Table 1)¹¹¹

For the CIC, value denotes "the degree of importance or worth of something to someone.... In the economy, value is mostly perceived as a monetary measure attached to a good or service. The value attached to a good or service can be different depending on the perspective of the evaluator (e.g. companies, capital providers, or society as a whole)."¹¹² The CIC identifies four types of use values that inclusive companies can exploit as exchange values.

Financial value: Traditional yardstick to measure a company's performance. The monetary value created by the company's productivity, including revenue generation, cost optimization and capital structure.

Consumer value: The functional or emotional value a company creates through goods and services to meet customer needs, including innovation.

Human value: The value a company creates through the employment and development of people, including engagement, know-how and skills.

Societal value: The value created through the relationships between a company and all other external stakeholders, including its environmental, social and economic impact, across the full value chain.¹¹³

¹¹⁰ Coalition for Inclusive Capitalism, “Embankment Project for Inclusive Capitalism,” 93, <https://www.inc-cap.com>. (accessed April 22, 2019).

¹¹¹ Ibid., 5.

¹¹² Ibid., 115.

¹¹³ Ibid.

Table 1: EPIC Prioritized Stakeholder Outcomes Matrix

Example: Prioritized stakeholder outcomes matrix

This examples shows how the draft stakeholder outcomes have been validated and prioritized. The outcomes are numbered in order of priority and potential gaps and interdependencies surfaced as part of this process. Further stakeholder outcomes were identified and added to the original draft matrix such as brand trust and health outcomes.

	Investors	Customers	Suppliers	Employees	Governments
Financial value	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Strong cash flows ii. High and stable dividends iii. Insulation from economic cycles 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Competitive pricing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Consistently meet payment terms 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Competitive remuneration 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Considered tax policies
Consumer value	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Brand trust ii. Robust new product pipeline 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Reliable service ii. Healthy products iii. Product innovation/ category leadership iv. Global network 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Support attempts at innovation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Voice of the customer 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Competitive/anti-trust market
Human value	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Employee satisfaction ii. Employee turnover iii. Strong innovation culture 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Fair and respectful employment practices 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Highly trained workforce 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Employee satisfaction ii. Flexible working opportunities iii. Diversity and inclusion culture 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Fair and respectful employment practices
Societal value	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Health outcomes ii. Low carbon intensity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Health outcomes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Low carbon intensity ii. Local sourcing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Community investment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Contribution to the wider economy ii. Low carbon intensity

Table 2: EPIC Human Value Lever Categories

Human value lever categories

Predefined long-term value categories applicable to all companies		Company-specific examples	
Value lever category	Value lever subcategory	Example value levers	Example strategic capabilities
Leadership Value generated by leaders' capacity to develop and deliver strategy, and inspire people	→ Performance cadence Embedding a reliable performance management structure at multiple levels of the company	→ People management KPI design and reporting	→ Leadership training → People management data analytics
	→ Top team diversity The more diverse a top team, the better the performance and quality of decision-making. By diversity we mean the mix of skills and backgrounds	→ Succession planning	→ People management data analytics → Leadership talent pipeline
Workforce alignment Value generated by the stock, flow and development of people	→ Workforce planning Having the right capability to meet operational, service and financial objectives and coherent plans to achieve future resource needs	→ Team optimization	→ Performance management → Planning and resourcing function
	→ Employee development The elements of the employee lifecycle (attraction, on-boarding, performance management, career development and retention) that contribute to developing employees to achieve current and future business goals	→ Personal development programs	→ Employee education and training function → Individual professional development plans
Workforce performance The optimal and sustainable level of value generated by people	→ Output gearing Ensuring the optimum productivity of people, that it is focused on the right outputs, and is sustainable. Organizational agility in response to changes in the context and environment	→ Occupational health and wellbeing	→ Health and wellbeing reporting systems → Health and safety programs
	→ Internal progression The ability to meet employee expectations for growth, recognition of high performance and retention of knowledge and capability	→ Career management	→ Human resources information system → Effective line management
Engagement Value released from people's commitment to a company's goals and purpose	→ Culture A positive culture contributes to the individual's affinity with the place that they work, the people they work with and the values that they hold, resulting in increased performance and discretionary effort	→ Culture development program	→ Cultural alignment analysis
	→ Employee enablement The provision of facilities, tools and resources to achieve objectives	→ Flexible working	→ Mobile technology → Human resources policies and processes

EPIC divides stakeholders into business owners, employees, suppliers, customers, investors, and governments; then maps each stakeholder segment to value categories: financial, consumer, human, and societal. Based upon this partitioning, it identifies goes on to connect value levers to business capabilities that create or maintain long-term value. (Table 2)¹¹⁴

For example, the “Leadership” lever contains “Performance cadence” and “Top team diversity” sub-levers. Performance cadence embeds “a reliable performance management structure at multiple levels of the company.” Examples of such levers are people management, key performance indicators, and reporting.” Top team diversity recognizes that “The more diverse a top team, the better the performance and quality of decision-making. By diversity we mean the mix of skills and backgrounds.” Top team diversity serves the development succession plans and the “leadership pipeline.” Workforce performance, which represents “the optimal and sustainable level of value generated by people,” is a human value lever category. EPIC divides this category into two subcategories. The first is “output gearing,” which ensures the optimum and sustainable productivity of people, and seeks an organizational “agility in response to changes in the context and environment.” The second subcategory is “internal progression,” offers the “ability to meet employee expectations for growth, recognition of high performance and retention of knowledge and capability.” The workforce performance levers figure deeply in occupational health and career management planning and operations.¹¹⁵

The CIC identifies two underlying problems that demand a new "accounting" of business value. The first involves the changes in the modes of capitalist production arising from the mechanics of the FMC.

For most of the previous century, the value of a business was determined in large part by its tangible assets. In a manufacturing-based economy, the logic of this approach was evident: property, plant, and machinery were indeed critical components required for success. In the digital era, however, manufacturing no longer provides the growth opportunities and prosperity it did. Now, as business adapts to an increasingly service-based economy – one in which intellectual property and innovation are often key drivers of value – tangible assets comprise less of a company’s value than they once did. Indeed, this is a world where a company like AirBnB can become larger than any hotel chain in the world without owning a single property.¹¹⁶

The CIC aligns this semantic framing of business value and capitalism’s social responsibility with that of EMPs. The Report's section on "Metrics and associated narrative for employee health," announces that

Based on the aforementioned challenges, opportunities and requirements, we have outlined one metric and accompanying narrative for companies across sectors to use to measure employee health.

¹¹⁴ Ibid., 100.

¹¹⁵ Ibid.

¹¹⁶ Ibid., 12 – 13.

*The proposed metric would measure the percentage of a company's employees that participate in 'best practice' health and wellbeing programs. [My italics]*¹¹⁷

Among programs included in the calculation of this metric is "Lifestyle Management."

...supporting employees with psychological safety, encouraging health assessments, physical and emotional health and wellbeing, stress management, social connectedness, mindfulness, emotional resilience, making healthy food and physical activity choices easier, and supporting smokers to quit.¹¹⁸

Taken together, these values take on functional significance within two systemic domains, the capitalist productive base and its societal superstructure. The success of inclusive capitalism depends upon the creation of "standard and verifiable metrics that investors can trust," and that companies can use to "communicate how they are creating long-term value and positioning themselves for the future." Thus, the fundamental program of the CIC is to create inclusive semantic use values (metrics), which can effectively communicate these four profitable use values to customers, investors, and throughout society's superstructure.

Dominic Barton, of the consulting firm McKinsey and Company, explains the business significance of effectively communicating inclusive business values throughout society.

...there is growing concern that if the fundamental issues revealed in the crisis remain unaddressed and the system fails again, the social contract between the capitalist system and the citizenry may truly rupture, with unpredictable but severely damaging results."¹¹⁹

As the Conference's co-host, Lady Lynn Forester de Rothschild, told Chinese business leaders in 2013

At the moment, that faith and confidence is under siege in America... As business people, we have a pragmatic reason to get it right for everyone – so that the government does not intervene in unproductive ways with business... I think that it is imperative for us to restore faith in capitalism and in free markets.¹²⁰

An additional motivation involves the persistent debilitating effects upon the working class of neo-liberalism and the continuing economic stagnation brought about by the financial crisis of 2008. Significant among these is the inability of the global economy to restore sustainable

¹¹⁷ Ibid., 46.

¹¹⁸ Ibid.

¹¹⁹ Nafeez Ahmed, "Inclusive Capitalism Initiative is Trojan Horse to quell coming global revolt," *The Guardian*, May 28, 2019, <https://www.theguardian.com/environment/earth-insight/2014/may/28/inclusive-capitalism-trojan-horse-global-revolt-henry-jackson-society-pr-growth>. (accessed May 3, 2019).

¹²⁰ Ibid.

employment and wage levels compatible with human needs, and to stem the exploding gap in economic equality.

People around the world have begun to question some fundamental facts about business's role in society. On the whole, globalization has been an incredible force for good but the benefits of economic growth have not been shared equally across society and in many cases this has resulted in declining trust in institutions – including business.¹²¹

This fabrication of new semantic use values is an example of the Marxian conception of the capitalist process of valorization. The CIC's goal is to fabricate a semantic that communicates, and thereby expands, companies' value in a manner that contributes to capital growth. It also appeals to a supporting ethic that encourages a synergistic relationship (Barton's "social contract") between business and a broader social movement, which putatively will benefit both business and the society.

The CIC's marketing campaign intends to attract customers and investors to a new inclusive marketplace. As Richard Straub explains

Management thinkers framing the greatest challenges of our time as human ones...Increasingly there is an insistence that...powerful [technological] forces must leverage human creativity, not marginalize it. Smart machines can help us find answers more quickly, but cannot frame the questions to address. We must use these technologies to unleash human potential — undoubtedly the most underused resource on the planet — and bring greater purpose, meaning, and values to work.¹²²

This marketing semantic reframes the functional and cultural significance of meditation trainers. The traditional meditation teacher, who primarily serves the moral and spiritual needs of humanity, becomes a "professionally" "licensed" "life coach" and "therapist," who serves worker self-actualization and success, as it is inextricably connected with increased worker productivity and business success. Although they approach the project differently, Jones and the CIC are both committed to literally *leveraging* aspects of the millennial ethos, which function *externally* to the capitalist enterprise, to produce a new semantic that functions *internally* within the FMC system as a productive and marketing use value. It transforms the equanimity of the Bodhisattva¹²³ into the driving passion of the visionary entrepreneur or CEO.

¹²¹ Embankment 7.

¹²² Richard Straub, op. cit.

¹²³ "Bodhisattva," *Chinese Buddhist Encyclopedia*, <http://www.chinabuddhismencyclopedia.com/en/index.php?title=Bodhisattva>. (accessed April 17, 2019). The Bodhisattva is the enlightened being of Mahayana Buddhism.

The Scientific Division of Labor as an Ethical Value

The skills enabled by EMPs inform the modeling of new production and management processes, which, as Marx explains, can engender new divisions of labor. Marx was sensitive to changes in the divisions of labor, which develop as the modes and social relations of production evolve. In the *German Ideology*, Marx explains that through the division of labor inside

...various branches there develop various divisions among the individuals co-operating in definite kinds of labour.

The various stages of development in the division of labour are just so many different forms of ownership, i.e. the existing stage in the division of labour determines also the relations of individuals to one another with reference to the material, instrument, and product of labour.¹²⁴

Gary Hamel and Michele Zanini, writing in *The Harvard Business Review* in 2016, provide an assessment of the pressures upon the modes of the division of labor that large FTE businesses confront.

More people are working in big, bureaucratic organizations than ever before. Yet there's compelling evidence that bureaucracy creates a significant drag on productivity and organizational resilience and innovation. By our reckoning, the cost of excess bureaucracy in the U.S. economy amounts to more than \$3 trillion in lost economic output, or about 17% of GDP.

How many of these 23.8 million overseers do we actually need? We can get an answer by looking at the management practices of a small but growing number of post-bureaucratic pioneers. Their experience suggests it's possible to run complex businesses with less than half the managerial load typically found in large companies.¹²⁵

They also suggest that a "redeployment" of highly skilled management to productive work would "deliver better than average output per capita once reassigned to more productive, and potentially more satisfying, work."

More freedom and responsibility would mean more initiative, innovation, and institutional flexibility — which would further boost productivity. These side

¹²⁴ Karl Marx, *The German Ideology* (1845), Part 1, A, 3, "Production and Intercourse. Division of Labour and Forms of Property – Tribal, Ancient, Feudal," <https://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1845/german-ideology/ch01a.htm>. (accessed April 22, 2019).

¹²⁵ Gary Hamel and Michele Zanini, "Excess Management Is Costing the U.S. \$3 Trillion Per Year," *Harvard Business Review*, September 5, 2016, <https://hbr.org/2016/09/excess-management-is-costing-the-us-3-trillion-per-year>. (accessed February 24, 2019).

benefits are far from trivial. For example, a number of highly respected leaders in the pharmaceutical industry have argued that the only way to raise R&D productivity, and thereby reduce the soaring costs of drug discovery, is to dismantle bureaucracy. Roger Perlmutter, the president of Merck Research Laboratories, suggested that a good start would be to “scrape off the top five levels of management, including myself.”¹²⁶

According to Richard Straub, work role consolidation represents a new "norm" governing those socially responsible businesses that offer EMPs. These standards transform the historically hierarchical organization of production into a "networks" of owners, management, and workers who are self-organized, self-motivated, and "self-employed." This leads to a reduction managerial staff, while increasing an empowerment that appeals to the socialization of millennial managers and workers.

For Straub, the science of capitalist production, which as we have seen includes ergonomics, and psychological and social engineering; can be effectively applied in the workplace for the benefit of workers. In this sense, capitalist productive science now takes on an ethical dimension. As Justin Biddle explains, "It is uncontroversial that science is a value-laden activity. Not only do value judgments legitimately influence which research projects are investigated, how experiments are conducted, and how research results are applied; they also legitimately influence hypothesis appraisal."¹²⁷

The consulting firm “Synergy at Work” provides an example of how capitalist science and ethos join to establish new norms of production, and the value-laden application of the science of wellness and meditation to the working environment.¹²⁸ Synergy typifies the emerging wellness market and its technology for human capital management. It seeks to establish synergies between the labor power of meditative workers, emerging norms of production, and the workplace social engineering that includes a semantic reconstruction of the work ethic.

Entrepreneur Lisa G. Jing, the "innovative" and "passionate" founder and CEO of Synergy at Work, is "dedicated to transforming the workplace into an environment where people are their whole and best selves."¹²⁹ She "specializes in an integrated, whole-person approach to employee well-being as a cornerstone of company culture." Synergy's commodity is "leadership coaching based upon a "brain training technology developed in the field of applied neuroscience to measure how the brain is currently functioning across 17 distinct capacities, such as: concentration, memory, decision-making, emotional intelligence, and resilience." Synergy "works with [servant] leaders to help them understand their unique brain profile and ways to enhance leadership performance through specific online exercises which are stimulating and fun." The functional significance of the program lies in training executive leaders or managers to "inspire and lead their team," and "individual contributors" to use brain-based leadership

¹²⁶ Ibid.

¹²⁷ Justin B. Biddle, “Antiscience Zealotry”? Values, Epistemic Risk, and the GMO Debate, *Philosophy of Science*, 85, no. 3 (July 2018): 363.

¹²⁸ *Synergy at Work*, <http://www.synergyatwork.com>. (accessed February 6, 2019).

¹²⁹ Ibid. for all Jing quotations here.

coaching to enhance their talent "at a neurological level." Thus, Synergy at Work "advocates for employee health and well-being as much more than just a component of the employee benefits program. Employee well-being is a key business strategy for the sustainability of both individuals and organizations and a critical factor for competitive advantage."

This synergistic vision has its critics. Writing in the *The Harvard Business Review*, David Brendel illuminates some ways that a meditative disposition might defeat business goals, such as worker risk avoidance and groupthink.

But my growing knowledge of (and enthusiasm for) mindfulness is now tempered by a concern about its potential excesses, as well as the risk that it's crowding out other equally important models and strategies for managing stress, achieving peak performance, and reaching professional and personal fulfillment. At times, it appears that we are witnessing the development of a "cult of mindfulness" that, if not appropriately recognized and moderated, may result in an unfortunate backlash against it.¹³⁰

In addition, William Little, writing for *The Guardian*, criticizes selective causal explanations and evidentiary cherry picking within EMP marketing. He suggests, echoing Marx and Engels, that workplace meditation may represent an "opiate" that desensitizes the worker from the symptoms of the toxic workplace.

[M]indfulness might encourage colleagues to be nice to each other, and help bosses make better decisions (in the interest of the bottom line, of course) and we might all work faster. But removing the negative thoughts from our minds also makes us more accepting of our lot. Even for people who are inclined to challenge the status quo, a course of mindfulness will make them less likely to question why they aren't getting extra holiday, longer lunch breaks or reduced working hours to reward improved productivity. Mindfulness is the ultimate sticking plaster for when nothing materially improves.¹³¹

Little reflects upon the structural causes of the toxic capitalist workplace that the Rand report ignores. During a conversation with two British friends living in Denmark, Little asked if they would ever consider moving back to England.

¹³⁰ David Brendel, "There Are Risks to Mindfulness at Work," February 11, 2015, <https://hbr.org/2015/02/there-are-risks-to-mindfulness-at-work>. (accessed April 7, 2019).

¹³¹ William Little, "Mindfulness courses at work? This should have us all in a rage," *The Guardian*, Jan 31, 2018, <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2018/jan/31/mindfulness-work-employers-meditation>. (accessed February 25, 2019). Powell and Snellman: "Are these new practices intended to remake the organization of work to produce shared gains, or to increase productivity by increasing work output while the associated gains are skimmed off by those at the top of the (flatter) hierarchy?" (op. cit. 210)

They looked horrified, saying they were infinitely happier in their jobs in Denmark than they ever were here. I said they must be practising mindfulness on repeat to be that content at work – yet they had never heard of it.

Clearly in Denmark they treat the causes rather than the symptoms. Workers leave work at 4pm on the dot, get paid generously, have less income inequality and pay more taxes. (After that conversation, I now have to use mindfulness to push the thought of Denmark and how happy everyone there is out of my mind.)¹³²

Some scientific studies regarding EMPs suggest prudence regarding claims of positive affects of workplace meditation. As M. Goyal, S. Singh, and E.M.S. Sibinga conclude from a study of 41 meditation programs

Our review finds that the mantra meditation programs do not appear to improve any of the psychological stress and well-being outcomes we examined, but the strength of this evidence varies from low to insufficient. We find that the mindfulness meditation programs show small improvements in anxiety, depression, and pain with moderate strength of evidence, and small improvements in stress/distress, negative affect, and the mental-health component of health-related quality of life with low strength of evidence when compared to nonspecific active controls. The remaining outcomes had insufficient evidence to draw any level of conclusion for mindfulness meditation programs. We were unable to draw a high grade for either type of meditation program for any of the psychological stress and well-being outcomes.¹³³

Behavioral scientists Kathleen D. Vohs and Andrew C. Hafenbrack writing for the The New York Times concur in these findings.

But on the face of it, mindfulness might seem counterproductive in a workplace setting. A central technique of mindfulness meditation, after all, is to accept things as they are. Yet companies want their employees to be motivated. And the very notion of motivation — striving to obtain a more desirable future — implies some degree of discontentment with the present, which seems at odds with a psychological exercise that instills equanimity and a sense of calm.

To test this hunch, we recently conducted five studies, involving hundreds of people, to see whether there was a tension between mindfulness and motivation. As we report in a forthcoming article in the journal *Organizational Behavior and*

¹³² Little, op. cit.

¹³³ M. Goyal, S. Singh, and E.M.S. Sibinga, "Meditation Programs for Psychological Stress and Well-Being," *Comparative Effectiveness Reviews*, 124, January 2014, <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK180104/#discussion.s9>. (accessed April 7, 2019).

Human Decision Processes, we found strong evidence that meditation is demotivating.¹³⁴

Critics point to the preliminary and inconclusive evidence that some workplace meditation advocates claim corroborates the effectiveness of mindfulness in achieving favored cognitive skills. Brendel points to data that suggests that

The outsize growth of mindfulness training in workplace settings over the past few years is perturbing and unjustified, given the dearth of clear and convincing evidence that such programs propel business growth. In fact, in many instances, applying mindfulness strategies at work may be counterproductive—even if credentialed experts deliver the training....Some [EMP] attendees reported to me that they felt coerced into participating, with fear of negative judgment if they didn't behave as "team players."¹³⁵

Kim reports that, "Mindfulness training can also run counter to a corporation's goals," defeating the frank and unbiased exchange of ideas necessary for informed and balanced business planning and management.

An article published by the journal *Industrial and Organizational Psychology* in 2015 suggests that because mindfulness encourages employees to act in line with their values and interests, it may elicit behaviors that are not in the best interests of organizational performance.¹³⁶

A 2017 report from the National Center for Complementary Health and Integrative Health suggests that the fine-tuning of meditative practices accomplished within EMPs may contribute little to their success. Researchers analyzing the prevalence and patterns of use of three meditation types among 34,525 adults during a 12 month survey period concluded that the "use of meditation may be *more about the type of person practicing* than about the specific type of meditation practiced..."¹³⁷ [My italics]

If these results are correct, the implementation of EMPs may carry significant inductive business risks. When businesses implement EMPs that fail to deliver, the wasted capital investment in training results from a misunderstanding of the available evidence and the causality of workplace meditation. This risk is multiplied when business owners take biased explanations of workplace toxicity seriously, like that of Mattke, Schnyer, Van Busum, and others. Ironically, this waste

¹³⁴ Kathleen D. Vohs and Andrew C. Hafenbrack, "Hey Boss, You Don't Want Your Employees to Meditate," *The New York Times*, June 14, 2018, <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/06/14/opinion/sunday/meditation-productivity-work-mindfulness.html>. (accessed November 3, 2018).

¹³⁵ Pandit Dasa and David Brendel, "Does Mindfulness Training Have Business Benefits?"

¹³⁶ Kim 6.

¹³⁷ National Center for Complementary Health and Integrative Health, *Meditators and Nonmeditators Differ on Demographic Factors, Health Behaviors, Health Status, and Health Care Access, New Analysis Shows*.

may actually benefit large FMC companies that experience a systemic need to absorb excess surplus capital, which drives down rates of profit. Furthermore, even if EMPs do not deliver on their promise, inductive business risk can be ameliorated because EMPs can still function to identify (as a performance metric) those workers who possess natural cognitive abilities that add value to the production process; and thus bolster a company's the inclusive branding that can increase its market share.

Another problem is the business risk that improperly engineered EMPs may cause workers to develop moral sensitivities that inspire attitudes that may negatively affect their productivity. Consider the following short list of large companies that offer employee mindfulness programs.

1) Raytheon: Jefferson Morley, writing for *Salon*, cites an Amnesty International report indicating that "the bulk of this war's civilian casualties have come from the Saudi-led coalition's technological superiority and exclusive domination of the air. In the process, coalition airstrikes have left a trail of material evidence in their wake, including the remains of many Raytheon-manufactured systems."¹³⁸

2) Google: Casey Michel, writing in *THINKPROGRESS*, reports that Google employees are concerned about the internet censorship capability of technology developed under Google's "Dragonfly," which the company has provided to the Chinese government. In a letter created and distributed by employees, they express their concerns about Dragonfly's powerful capability in "oppressing the vulnerable, wherever they may be."¹³⁹

3) Aetna: *CNN* announced that an Oklahoma jury ordered the company to pay \$25.5 million "to the family of a cancer patient who was denied coverage by insurance company Aetna. The jurors said that the company acted "imprudently" and that the verdict was a message for Aetna to change its way of acting." The jury foreperson reported "an Aetna medical director ...acknowledged handling 80 cases a day and the fact that...three medical directors acknowledged that they spent more time preparing for the lawsuit than Orrana's medical case."¹⁴⁰

4) Amazon: The *Washington Post* reported that Amazon's five billion dollar plan to build a second headquarters in New York City received considerable criticism and opposition from voters, civic leaders, and politicians. The then Democratic Representative-elect Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez said that her "office had been flooded with calls from residents who were outraged by the pending Amazon deal. She also questioned who would truly benefit from -- and who would pay for -- the transformation the company touted. 'Amazon is a billion-dollar

¹³⁸ Jefferson Morley, "Raytheon's profits boom alongside civilian deaths in Yemen," *Salon*, June 27, 2018, https://www.salon.com/2018/06/27/raytheons-profits-boom-alongside-civilian-deaths-in-yemen_partner/. (accessed February 28, 2019).

¹³⁹ Casey Michel, "Google's secret 'Dragonfly' project is a major threat to human rights," *THINK PROGRESS*, December 11, 2018, <https://thinkprogress.org/google-dragonfly-china-censorship-human-rights-fe1fe1ddf55a/>. (accessed February 28, 2019).

¹⁴⁰ CNN, "Jury orders Aetna to pay 25.5 million dollars to family of cancer patient," October 11, 2018, http://www.tellerreport.com/news/--jury-orders-aetna-to-pay-25-5-million-dollars-to-family-of-cancer-patient-.rJV__JHaX.html. (accessed February 28, 2019).

company. The idea that it will receive hundreds of millions of dollars in tax breaks at a time when our subway is crumbling and our communities need MORE investment, not less, is extremely concerning to residents here."¹⁴¹

Businesses pay workers in part based upon their capacity to manifest valued cognitive skills within production. They also believe that EMPs will deliver on their promise, and not engender further productive dysfunctionalities. If employees begin to expand their meditation skills from calming *samatha* to morally insightful *vipassana* practice, significant business risks may emerge. The potential that workers might shift from applying their meditation to practical wellness and cognitive skills enhancement to deeper philosophical insight is reflected in an analysis by Robert Wright, author of the book *Why Buddhism is True: The Science and Philosophy of Meditation and Enlightenment*.¹⁴²

Nonetheless, the average mindfulness meditator is closer to the ancient contemplative tradition, and to transformative insights, than you might think. Though things like stress reduction or grappling with melancholy or remorse or self-loathing may seem “therapeutic,” they are organically connected to the very roots of Buddhist philosophy. What starts out as a meditation practice with modest aims can easily, and very naturally, go deeper. There is a kind of slippery slope from stress reduction to profound spiritual exploration and radical philosophical reorientation, and many people, even in Silicon Valley and on Wall Street, are further down that slope than they realize.¹⁴³

EMPs avoid training in meditation techniques that reflect specific religious orientations that might offend the millennial moral tolerance or their suspicion of traditional religion. From the owner’s perspective, workers meditate on the job in order to help the business succeed, not to develop a social consciousness at odds with business goals. If workers are to develop a new form of consciousness, it must be one that is consistent with that of visionary servant leaders, who promise an inclusive capitalism. The mindfulness industry’s parallel marketing of meditation products to the public and to workers capably exploits aspects of the millennial ethos to expand and monopolize public and private markets. In this, we are reminded of Weber’s explanation of the removal of religious specificity within a rationalized capitalist economic system, and its replacement with an emerging ethic of capitalist profit.

¹⁴¹ Taylor Telford, "Amazon’s HQ2 split between New York and Virginia sparks backlash from locals, politicians," *The Washington Post*, November 13, 2018, https://www.washingtonpost.com/business/2018/11/13/amazons-hq-split-between-nyc-arlington-sparks-backlash-locals-politicians/?noredirect=on&utm_term=.09a52a375635. (accessed April 7, 2019).

¹⁴² Robert Wright, *Why Buddhism is True: The Science and Philosophy of Meditation and Enlightenment* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2017).

¹⁴³ Robert Wright, "Is Mindfulness Meditation A Capitalist Tool Or A Path To Enlightenment? Yes," *Wired*, August 12, 2017, <https://www.wired.com/2017/08/the-science-and-philosophy-of-mindfulness-meditation/>. (accessed May 8, 2019).

The dynamic relationship between workers' ethical socialization and the modes of capitalist production is not lost on Marx.

The production of ideas, of conceptions, of consciousness, is at first directly interwoven with the material activity and the material intercourse of men, the language of real life. Conceiving, thinking, the mental intercourse of men, appear at this stage as the direct efflux of their material behaviour. The same applies to mental production as expressed in the language of politics, laws, morality, religion, metaphysics, etc., of a people. Men are the producers of their conceptions, ideas, etc. – real, active men, as they are conditioned by a definite development of their productive forces and of the intercourse corresponding to these, up to its furthest forms. Consciousness can never be anything else than conscious existence, and the existence of men is their actual life-process.¹⁴⁴

In the case of EMPs, production requirements motivate the engineering of worker consciousness, one that is "directly interwoven with...material activity." Given these potential risks, it is crucial for businesses to circumscribe workplace mindfulness practices, and engineer a work ethos in such a manner that it becomes compatible with the needs of production.

Summary

Time will tell if EMPs can deliver on their lofty promise. In the mean time, capitalist private property relations remain, and ultimately perpetuate the alienation of workers from the objects of their labor. As the FTE sector engineers its ethos, as both an exercise in maximizing production and inclusive marketing, new manifestations of class struggle emerge, such as those at Google.

In the *Monthly Review Online*, Whitney Webb sums up a fundamental Marxist concern regarding the "Green New Deal." Webb suggests that this new deal would reside

...safely inside in the realm of the "Washington consensus" and would strengthen - not lessen - the grip of the oligarchy and powerful monied interests on the American political system....

Given Ocasio-Cortez's rapid rightward shift and the actual text of the plan she is promoting, it is essential to call out the "Green New Deal" for what it is: a neoliberal agenda that will keep the U.S. shackled to the oligarchy sucking it dry and that will only worsen the systemic inequality it claims to want to eradicate.

¹⁴⁴ Karl Marx, *The German Ideology* (1845), Part 1, A, 4, "The Essence of the Materialist Conception of History. Social Being and Social Consciousness," <https://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1845/german-ideology/ch01a.htm>. (accessed April 22, 2019).

Despite its pretty, progressive-sounding banner, Ocasio-Cortez' Green New Deal - in its current form - will continue to perpetuate gross distributive injustice by ensuring that the side with the most "green" keeps winning as the world continues to seek solutions to climate change.¹⁴⁵

Writing for *The Guardian*, Dr. Nafeez Ahmed, an international security journalist and academic, suggest a disingenuous side to the altruistic pronouncements of the CIC. Reporting on the Henry Jackson Society's 2014 Conference on Inclusive Capitalism, which inspired the EPIC report, Ahmed summarizes the purpose of the event.

While the self-reflective recognition by global capitalism's leaders that business-as-usual cannot continue is welcome, sadly the event represented less a meaningful shift of direction than a barely transparent effort to rehabilitate a parasitical economic system on the brink of facing a global uprising. Central to the proceedings was an undercurrent of elite fear that the increasing disenfranchisement of the vast majority of the planetary population under decades of capitalist business-as-usual could well be its own undoing.¹⁴⁶

Rebecca Stoner reviews *Keywords: The New Language of Capitalism* by John Patrick Leary,¹⁴⁷ a book critical of the capitalist semantic project, and offers a Marxist interpretation of Leary's account. Capitalist keywords (including some of those cited in this study) represent

...a set of ubiquitous modern terms, drawn from the corporate world and the business press, that he argues promulgate values friendly to corporations (hierarchy, competitiveness, the unquestioning embrace of new technologies) over those friendly to human beings (democracy, solidarity, and scrutiny of new technologies' impact on people and the planet).

When we understand and deploy such language to describe our own lives, *we're seen as good workers*; when we fail to do so, we're implicitly threatened with economic obsolescence. After all, if you're not conversant in "innovation" or "collaboration," how can you expect to thrive in this brave new economy?¹⁴⁸ [*My italics*]

Stoner's comments support this study's claim that one function of EMPs, beyond those directly applicable to productive activity, is to provide businesses with a mechanism to identify and

¹⁴⁵ Whitney Webb, "Corporations see a different kind of 'green' in Ocasio-Cortez's 'green new deal'," Feb 14, 2019, <https://mronline.org/2019/02/14/corporations-see-a-different-kind-of-green-in-ocasio-cortezs-green-new-deal/>. (accessed April 23, 2019).

¹⁴⁶ Nafeez Ahmed, op. cit.

¹⁴⁷ John Patrick Leary, *Keywords: The New Language of Capitalism* (Chicago, IL: Haymarket Books, 2019)

¹⁴⁸ Rebecca Stoner, "The language of capitalism isn't just annoying, it's dangerous," *MR online*, December 21, 2018, <https://mronline.org/2018/12/21/the-language-of-capitalism-isnt-just-annoying-its-dangerous/>. (accessed December 26, 2018).

retain workers who are likely to manifest favored workplace behavioral dispositions. Companies who can demonstrate their capacity to do so, through an application of the CIC's metrics, may expect an increase in customers and investors. Leary appreciates Ernest Mandel's claim that capitalists believe "in the omnipotence of technology," and that, today, capitalism is expanding "at an unprecedented rate into previously uncommodified geographical, cultural, and spiritual realms."¹⁴⁹ This omnipotence and expansion represents a process that this study identifies with the development of a semantically engineered capitalist consciousness that supports a booming mindfulness market.

Likewise, EMPs remove traditional ethical language, re-conceptualizing the mindfulness ethos, as Jones does, in a manner that appeals to millennial workers, and serves the accumulative needs of capital. Stoner's analysis appreciates the ethical content of capitalist marketing, as well as the language that purveys it.

...[T]here's the "moral vocabulary of late capitalism," which often uses words with older, religious meanings; Leary cites a nineteenth-century poem that refers to Jesus as a "thought leader." These moral values, Leary says, are generally taken to be indistinguishable from economic ones. "Passion," for example, is prized for its value to your boss: if you love what you do, you'll work harder and demand less compensation.¹⁵⁰

In conclusion, we offer our main hypothesis in the form of a statement that provides the conditions for its empirical testing. It is cast as a "function-ascribing statement" that Cummins claims "explains the presence of the functionally characterized item *i* [EMPs] in a system *s* [businesses, the FTE sector, and FMC] by pointing out that *i* is present in *s* because it has certain effects on *s*,"¹⁵¹ and that reflects the interpenetration of production and sales characteristic of FMC.

*EMPs function as both labor power multipliers and sales "levers" in the FTE sector of FMC businesses relative to our Marxian analytical account of those systems' capacity to increase production and sales just in case EMPs are capable of multiplying labor power and increasing sales of such businesses; and the Marxian explanation appropriately and adequately accounts for such businesses to have the capacity to increase production and sales by, in part, appealing to the capacity of EMPs to multiply labor power and increase sales in such businesses.*¹⁵²

As evidence accumulates, our hypotheses concerning the effectiveness of meditation with respect to capitalist productive goals will become more or less corroborated. That evidence will be central in determining if meditation is productively effective with respect to worker cognitive abilities and dispositions, or is significantly counterproductive. Nevertheless, the behavior of capitalist actors corroborates our account of the human capital, productive, social, and market

¹⁴⁹ Stoner, op. cit.

¹⁵⁰ Stoner, op. cit.

¹⁵¹ Cummins 741.

¹⁵² See: Cummins 762.

functionality of EMPs. In this regard, we point to the recent statement issued by the Business Roundtable, comprised of nearly 200 corporate CEOs, that defines the purpose of a corporation. This purposing represents a rebranding of the capitalist ethos that involves:

The reimagined idea of a corporation [that] drops the age-old notion that they function first and foremost to serve their shareholders and maximize profits.

Investing in employees, delivering value to customers, dealing ethically with suppliers and supporting outside communities are now at the forefront of American business goals.¹⁵³

Thus global FMC celebrates its mission.

“While each of our individual companies serves its own corporate purpose, we share a fundamental commitment to all of our stakeholders,” said the statement signed by 181 CEOs. “We commit to deliver value to all of them, for the future success of our companies, our communities and our country.”¹⁵⁴

¹⁵³ Maggie Fitzgerald, “The CEOs of nearly 200 companies just said shareholder value is no longer their main objective,” *CNBC*, https://www.cnbc.com/2019/08/19/the-ceos-of-nearly-two-hundred-companies-say-shareholder-value-is-no-longer-their-main-objective.html?fbclid=IwAR24VNIVROiQQHa2jeQGS-9nvhin8iGJi_o73CETr5qhy58PyQLbTkNE55M. (accessed August 21, 2019).

¹⁵⁴ Fitzgerald, op. cit.