

Architecture: Work/Knowledge/Management

*Peggy Deamer*

This talk will argue that three things need to be reconsidered in contemporary architectural practice: 1. That we architects do work. 2. That the work we do is not object production but knowledge production. 3. That what is central to knowledge production is creative management.

In Part 1, I will argue that the traditional social concern that architecture has had for the user in lieu of the producer is a product of the move in capitalism from production to consumption; that the alignment of architects/producers with constructors/producers still needs to occur and brings with it class issues; and that understanding ourselves properly as 'immaterial' workers does not diminish the alignment with 'material' workers but rather opens up new connections.

In Part 2, I will argue that our obsession with object production (and its leading us to falsely think we are material piece-workers) in lieu of knowledge production has skewed our understanding of our worth and made us incapable of navigating the neo-liberal economy. New forms of practice initiated by BIM and IPD, which puts us squarely in the neo-liberalism's 'knowledge economy', do not mitigate the precarious nature of our work but they do allow us to participate in and redirect its advantages.

In Part 3, I will argue that despite our sense that 'management' is the antithesis of creative autonomy, creativity in the new economy is a) all about management, and b) highly creative if done well. In this, BIM and IPD are at their most powerful not when they help bring projects in on time and on budget – mitigating risk – but rather when they raise the stakes for architects by asking them to assume more risk and more reward.

In conclusion, I will make some remarks about practice in relation to both theory and education.

Biography:

Peggy Deamer is a Professor of Architecture at Yale University. She is the editor of *The Architect as Worker: Immaterial Labor, the Creative Class, and the Politics of Design* (forthcoming), *Architecture and Capitalism: 1845 to*

*the Present*, and co-editor (with Phil Bernstein) of *Building in the Future: Recasting Architectural Labor and BIM in Academia*. She is the organizing member of the advocacy group, The Architecture Lobby.