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Preface

The Global Labour Research Centre (GLRC) at York University is very pleased to publish this collection of papers from our second annual Graduate Student Symposium, which took place on 27-28 October 2016. The symposium showcased graduate student research on a wide range of issues related to the study of work and labour in a global context, and created an interdisciplinary forum for graduate students and post-doctoral fellows to share their research in a collaborative environment.

The GLRC promotes the study of work, employment, and labour at York University. The Centre's mandate is to support engaged, interdisciplinary, and accessible research on pressing issues of economic and social justice, to foster a collaborative intellectual community, to cultivate and expand new knowledge mobilization activities around work, employment and labour research, and to develop international linkages with leading research and learning centres. Graduate students play a vital role in the life of the GLRC and it is our hope that the annual symposium provides an environment conducive to the development of graduate research in the study of work and labour.

The papers in the symposium proceedings offer a reflection of the vibrant and diverse range of topics covered by symposium participants. The proceedings begin with an essay from Professor Ethel Tungohan. Dr. Tungohan presented the keynote lecture for the symposium titled 'Imperialismo, Ibagsak ("Down with Imperialism"): The Migrant Domestic Workers' Movement in Canada'. Her contribution to this proceedings documents the vulnerabilities and labour abuses experienced by women working in Canada's caregiver program, and illustrates how these conditions are sustained through recent policy changes to the program.

As an interdisciplinary conference, participants explored a wide range of social, political, economic, and geographic factors shaping the organization and experience of work. Several essays in the proceedings examine the working conditions and work experiences of particular groups of workers in public and private sector workplaces, including public transit workers (Kritee Ahmed), workers in the cultural industries (Kait Kribs, Jacqueline Ristola), and yoga instructors (Judith Mintz). The spread and impacts of precarious work, a widely-noted tendency in contemporary labour markets, are explored in the context of both temporary help agencies in the Greater Toronto Area

(Aujla) and forms of informal employment in Italy (Marco Marrone). The ways in which the experiences and conditions of work are shaped by social location is a central theme throughout the proceedings, with contributions that highlight dimensions of race and racialization (Candies Kotchapaw), dis/ability (Danielle Landry), age (Marrone), and the intersections of gender, race, and citizenship status (Aujla). Finally, the ways in which the state shapes work and working conditions is raised in a number of contributions, including through occupational health and safety laws (Matt Corbeil), as well as state policies on im/migration (Tungohan), youth employment (Marrone), sheltered workshops (Landry), and through the management of public sector workforces (Ahmed). Taken together, the articles in this collection present a complex and nuanced analysis of the changing nature of work in the contemporary economy, both within and beyond Canada.

The 2016 GLRC Graduate Symposium and this publication were made possible through the efforts of a number of members of the GLRC community. Thank you, Rawan Abdelbaki, Matt Corbeil, Lacey Croft, Jordan House, Jolin Joseph, Adam King, Loren March, Ives Polking, Stephanie Ross, and the anonymous reviewers of the papers published in these proceedings.

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August 2017

Canada's Caregiver Program: 'Excessive Demand', Caregiver Deportations, and Labour Abuse

Ethel Tungohan

In a piece she wrote for the *Torontoist*, Mercedes Benitez, discussed her life story (Thomas and Benitez, 2017). Benitez's story is harrowing. She came to Canada in 2008 after working as a caregiver in Hong Kong and in Israel, leaving her family behind in the Philippines. Benitez completed the two-year live-in work requirement in 2010 and was finally able to apply for permanent residency. Thinking that her struggles were almost over and that she could finally be reunited with her husband and two children, Benitez was surprised when she heard back from the Canadian government in 2014, which planned to reject her application for permanent residency under the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act (IRPA)'s "excessive demand" provision. Specifically, the immigration officer in charge of her case determined that her son Harold, who has an intellectual disability, would be a drain on Canada's social welfare system.

Benitez's story is commonplace. In this commentary, I highlight how new provisions under the Caregiver Program (CP) magnify caregivers' vulnerabilities. I also discuss how the Canadian government's decision to "put Canadians first" when reforming the Temporary Foreign Worker Program (TFWP) (Government of Canada, 2014) has made it more difficult for caregivers to attain permanent residency and has also increased the numbers of caregiver deportations.

Domestic Work in Canada

Since the early 20th century, Canadian families have relied on the labour of caregivers from other countries to meet their caregiving needs. Different migration programs enable the entry of caregivers from other countries into Canada. In keeping with Canada's "white settlement" immigration policy (Triadafilopoulous, 2012), whereby

European settlers were given access to Canadian citizenship, European caregivers automatically received Canadian citizenship as 'mothers of the nation' whereas non-European caregivers found that they could not settle permanently in Canada (Arat-Koc, 1997; Tungohan, 2012). Caribbean caregivers entering Canada through the Caribbean Domestic Scheme (CDS) in the early to mid 1900s, for example, were only allowed into Canada on a temporary basis because the Canadian government saw the CDS as a bilateral labour exchange program that represented Canada's 'generosity' in helping these Caribbean states alleviate labour shortages and conveniently ignored that Canadian families benefited from Caribbean women's labour (Calliste, 1991). Similarly, caregivers entering Canada through the Non-Immigrant Employment Authorization Program (NIEAP) were unable to apply for permanent residency because the Canadian government deemed that workers under this program did not have the skills that Canada needed in the long-term (Sharma, 2006). It was only after caregivers and their allies mobilized in the late 1970s that caregivers were given the right to apply for permanent residency (Tungohan, 2013). Even then, though, the Foreign Domestic Movement (FDM), founded in 1981, mandated that caregivers could only apply for permanent residency after two-years of live-in domestic work, a requirement that remained under the Live-in Caregiver Program (LCP), implemented in 1992, despite caregiver activists' concerted opposition to it.

The entrenchment of the live-in requirement, coupled with the stipulation that caregivers' employment and immigration papers remained tied to their employers, magnified employers' power over caregivers because employers knew that caregivers ultimately wanted Canadian citizenship and enforced compliance in this way. In extreme circumstances, caregivers found their actions strenuously regulated. Many researchers have found, for example, that some employers saw themselves as having complete ownership over caregivers' presence, and even went so far as to regulate the way they dressed, their diet, and what they did during their days off (Pratt, 1997; Bakan & Stasiulis, 2005; Tungohan et al., 2015).

Furthermore, the requirement that caregivers live apart from their families during the LCP caused much hardship for caregivers and their families. The difficulties of living apart from their children while taking care of other people's children was a theme that was well-developed in Marie Boti and Florchita Bautista's documentary *Brown Women, Blonde Babies* (Boti & Guy, 1991), with the women being interviewed painfully recounting their love they felt for the babies they were taking care of and the distance they felt from their families. Researchers have also highlighted the extent to which

family separation and family reunification caused emotional and mental distress. While advances in information technology have, in part, lessened this alienation by enabling the formation of affective networks across borders (De Leon, 2009; Brown, 2016; Tungohan, 2013), the realities of being physically apart from each other and only being reunited after many years living separately made the situations of caregivers and their families less than ideal.

The Caregiver Program: New but Not Improved

The Caregiver Program (CP), which was launched in November 2014, supposedly responded to the concerns voiced by many migrant advocates on the human rights abuses emerging from the program. Unveiled with much fanfare by then-Immigration Minister Chris Alexander, the new CP supposedly helped eliminate the conditions of abuse facing caregivers by eliminating the live-in requirement, making it optional. Nevertheless, the continuation of ‘tied work permits,’ whereby caregivers’ employment and immigration status are tied to their employers, ensured that employers still held tremendous power.

In addition, the CP eliminated guaranteed pathways to permanent residency for caregivers. By separating the CP into two streams – the high medical needs stream and the babysitting stream—and by mandating that caregivers seeking entry into Canada under these streams complete language and, in the case of the former, licensing requirements, caregivers found that they had to face more strenuous requirements. The creation of annual quotas for each stream also sharply curtailed the numbers of caregivers who were eligible for permanent residency. This meant, in effect, that even caregivers who had completed the CP’s two-year work, licensing and language requirements still would not be able to apply for permanent residency if they fell outside the set quota. Since announcing the changes to the CP in 2014, the federal government has set the quota to 5,500 in total, a figure that has remained constant in subsequent years (IRCC, 2017). The decision to impose annual quotas and new language and licensing requirements, along with the continuation of the system of tied work permits, place caregivers under the CP in an even more vulnerable position.

My interviews with caregivers and settlement service workers have highlighted that caregivers were aware that their chances of obtaining Canadian citizenship became slimmer under the CP. Caregivers who entered Canada under the LCP and who were being abused by their employers became even more unwilling to switch employers because doing so meant that they would have to switch to the CP, which

imposes new requirements and which removed their guaranteed pathway to permanent residency. Moreover, caregivers who were under the CP felt that they could not alienate their employers, not only because their continued stay in Canada depended on their employers' good will but also because of the financial burdens imposed by the new language and licensing requirements. The language tests that they now had to pass, for example, cost upwards of \$300 to take (IELTS, 2017).

This raises the question: Why were these changes even introduced? The aforementioned changes coincided with the Conservative government's stringent measures against immigration 'fraud', which indirectly affected caregivers. Within the context of a sharp public outcry against the Temporary Foreign Workers Program (TFWP), caused in part by media reports on 'foreign' workers hired by the Royal Bank of Canada replacing Canadian workers, the pressure was placed on the Conservative government in early 2014 to show that it was prioritizing Canadians. In fact, the title of the report outlining the government's changes to the TFWP, was entitled "Putting Canadians First" (Government of Canada, 2014), a turn of phrase that foreshadows populist slogans used during the 2016 campaign to exit the European Union in Great Britain and the US presidential election. That the foreign workers in question did not enter through the TFWP was irrelevant (Hussan, 2015); for many Canadians, the TFWP became a scapegoat for their economic struggles.

'Putting Canadians first' resulted in a drastic modification of the LCP, which was classified under the TFWP, and a desire on the part of the Conservative government to catch caregivers 'abusing' the system. During this time period of heightened vitriol against foreign workers, former employment minister Jason Kenney reversed previous statements in support of caregivers and made allusions to an increased number of caregivers who were in Canada illegally. Even though the federal government in 2014 had not supplied actual numbers indicating the exact percentage of caregiver applicants for permanent residency who committed fraud, the federal government's sweeping changes to the program included a desire to weed out undesirable applicants.

As a result of this concerted effort to catch errant caregivers, in 2015, the Canadian Border Services Agency (CBSA) launched 'Project Guardian' in British Columbia. Project Guardian is a tip-line that members of the public could use to report cases of caregivers who were violating IRPA. Since coming into effect, Migrante-BC and the West Coast Domestic Workers Association have reported that a dozen caregivers were given deportation orders, all of which were issued on account of

administrative violations (Ball, 2016). For example, CBSA discovered that some of the caregivers were found in violation of IRPA because they started working for a new employer before their new work permits were issued; in many cases, the caregiver in question was not aware that their actions were against the law. And even if caregivers were aware that working before they received their new work permits violated IRPA, living in situations of financial duress made it necessary for them to work. Such a rigid interpretation of IRPA is inhumane in that it deliberately ignores how the urgency of meeting human needs such as buying food and other essentials led caregivers to misuse IRPA. In other words, these actions were not born out of malice and arguably have had no negative consequences on anyone. If anything, removing these caregivers placed their Canadian employers in a challenging situation because they would have to make other caregiving arrangements, which is no easy feat considering the lack of daycare spots across the country and the lack of support given to families caring for elderly parents and for family members with disabilities.

Compounding the lack of security experienced by caregivers under the CP is the federal government's desire to limit the number of domestic workers who could qualify for PR through its increased use of the 'excessive demand' provision of IRPA. While more research needs to be done to ascertain the exact numbers of caregivers' permanent residency applications rejected on these grounds, certainly public awareness of cases of caregivers' children with mental and physical disabilities being deemed burdens to the Canadian state has heightened.

Benitez's case, mentioned above, is virtually identical to Luvy Alicbusan's (Adler, 2015), and Josarie Daniele's (Keung, 2016) cases. Like Benitez, Alicbusan and Daniele were caregivers whose PR applications were rejected because their children have medical disabilities and were rendered "medically inadmissible." Karen Talosig's case is similar, except that her permanent residency application was initially rejected because her daughter is deaf (Carman, 2015). Being deaf, according to the immigration officer who processed her application, would be a burden on Canadian medical and educational institutions. Although Talosig successfully lobbied for a reversal of this decision by getting the support of many actors, including British Columbia's Minister of Education, who attested that educating Talosig's daughter would not cause the province of British Columbia to pay more than it does for the education of other children being educated in the province, Talosig's case is the exception. Despite years spent taking care of Canadian families while living apart from their own, caregivers like Benitez, Alicbusan, Daniele and Talosig discovered that the same care is not extended

to their families, and most especially towards their children with mental and physical disabilities.

Conclusion

It is thus clear that, contrary to the Canadian government's pronouncements that the CP will reduce caregiver abuse, the CP magnifies caregivers' vulnerability. The Canadian government's actions limit the numbers of caregivers who can attain permanent residency. New language and licensing requirements and annual quotas make it harder for caregivers to become permanent residents. Moreover, the Canadian government's decision to continue its system of tied work permit, its desire to punish caregivers violating IRPA, and its stringent interpretation of the 'excessive demand' clause of IRPA place caregivers in an untenable situation.

In order to ensure that caregivers' rights are protected, it is imperative that the Canadian government give caregivers open work permits that do not tie them to a single employer. The annual quota system limiting the number of caregiver permanent residency applications should be removed and caregivers be given landed status upon arrival. The new language and licensing requirements should be rethought because they present an unnecessary burden for caregivers, whose everyday responsibilities do not necessitate a high-level of English and French fluency and are not necessarily related to the licensing requirements specified by professional associations. Project Guardian should also be stopped and the 'excessive demand' class of IRPA should be reconsidered.

Finally, Alicbusan, Benitez, Danieleles, and Talosig, who have lived apart from their families for many years, should be allowed to reunite with their children in Canada and should be granted permanent residency. It is discriminatory to deny these caregivers and their families access to permanent residency because of their children's disabilities. The decision to more strictly enforce IRPA's "excessive demand" clause by denying entry to caregivers' children with disabilities is in violation of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, which enshrines equality rights, and also of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and the United Nations Convention on the Persons with Disabilities, both of which Canada has signed.

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Unpacking Customer Service: Public Transit Work in Toronto, Canada and London, U.K.

Kritee Ahmed

Take a moment to think of yourself as a passenger on a bus. What are some of the words that come to mind when you think of yourself in that way? Write them down. Now take a moment and consider yourself to be a customer on a bus. Again, what thoughts come to mind? Write those down too. Now compare your list of words. Did you notice that the types of words and meanings you came up with differ in some ways, and in others overlap?

This is part of an abstract exercise I often ask my students to partake in, to get a sense of the language we use and how it impacts how we come to view the world, and how we act in relation to that known world. The exercise makes visible how the language that is used and the bodies of knowledge within which that language is situated may sit within wider webs of meaning. Language and knowledge are tied to particular practices that have real effects on people through the types of actions they legitimate or make possible. Language, then, does more than shape descriptions of people and places; it shapes both what we know about the world and how we know it, and thereby shapes how we act in relation to people and places (Townley, 1993, pp. 520-3). Following this logic, the way you think about yourself on the bus will come to affect the way you act in relation to the bus, transit worker, and transit system. The manner in which institutions and organizations identify and label people also have an effect in shaping people's conduct (Gordon, 1991, pp. 2-3; Townley, 1993, pp. 520-3) and those webs of meaning structure policies and practices emanating from them. As such, references found in organizational texts, workplace practices and everyday parlance to 'customers' (and therefore customer service) certainly have effects to be investigated.

Considering these abstract thoughts more concretely, my research project examines public transit work and workers, and the ongoing effects of organizational reinvention (Osborne and Gaebler, 1992) that centre issues of customer service in two public transit organizations: Toronto, Canada's Toronto Transit Commission (or TTC) and London, U.K.'s Transport for London (or TfL). TTC CEO Andy Byford has indicated the need to reorganize the TTC and centre the customer in organizational reinvention (Toronto Transit Commission, 2012, p. 2). As for TfL, organizational reinvention appeared in a London Assembly Transport Committee (2012) document: "[i]mproving customer service is about more than solving day to day issues: it is also vital to changing the entire ethos of the organisation" (p. 31). By scrutinizing the emphasis on the customer and customer service (du Gay and Salaman, 1992), my research project centres on the materialization of this customer service ethos in the everyday work at the TTC and TfL.

My research, therefore, problematizes customer service language and its associated practices—not to say that customer service orientations are inherently "bad," but rather to sociologically investigate its effects on work that serves the public. In this short paper, I briefly explore the aims of my research project, which entails an unpacking of the taken-for-granted assumptions as well as the seemingly cohering common sense mundaneness attached to customer service. First, I outline the reasons for comparing the TTC and TfL by providing some contextual detail about both organizations. I then elaborate on the key substantive research questions to enunciate some of the "problems" that emerge when unpacking "customer service" in public work. Following this, I briefly highlight the analytical framework employed by the project to help interpret findings from this research. Finally, my concluding thoughts deliberate upon the broader contributions of the research project.

Comparing Toronto and London

Both the TTC and TfL have faced budgetary constraints. The TTC budget was recently threatened with a cut (Draaisma, 2017) and a UK government grant disbursed to TfL was terminated (Crerar, 2016). Apart from TfL's recent fare freezes and changes to bus fares, both the TTC and TfL have seen increases in rider fares (Sandhu, 2015; Topham, 2016; Spurr, 2016a; Spurr, 2016b). I compare the TTC and TfL because while they are both large public transit organizations that have centred customer service as orienting public transit, they have an interesting relationship with one another. During the last Toronto mayoral election, for example, the three leading candidates referred to London

in one way or another for transit expansion, whether in relation to above ground rail (John Tory for Mayor, 2014) or subways (John Tory for Mayor, n.d.; Chow, 2014; Mangione, 2014). The TTC's top two people, CEO Andy Byford and its deputy CEO and customer service officer, Chris Upfold, were colleagues from London Underground (Kalinowski, 2014). Similarities between the two systems, as well as the TTC's and Toronto's links to TfL and London, provide important interfaces for analysis.

But the two systems also diverge as cases. TfL has broader powers on a range of transportation matters, which extend into managing cycling and the London congestion charge (Transport for London, 2012, pp. 1-2). On the other hand, the TTC is a largely unified and unionized transit commission, focused on public transit. Some bus fuelling and cleaning services have been contracted out, but further expansion of this has been halted (Peat, 2015). Unionized members are affiliated with Amalgamated Transit Union (ATU) Local 113. In its historic past, the TTC's predecessor did operate as a public-private partnership (Iyer, 2015). On the other hand, not all of TfL's vast services are publicly delivered. Recent history has shown that London Underground, an arm of TfL, has had a poor record with public-private partnerships (Booth, 2013). Moreover, there are several unions that operate within TfL, instead of one. As such, these similarities and differences enable an investigation into the ways that customer service structures work, the conduct of workers, organizational discourse, as well as the popular perceptions and representations thereof.

Unpacking Customer Service

To dig deeper and unpack the logics that operate through customer service (du Gay and Salaman, 1992) and thereby govern workers (Dean, 2010; Townley, 1993, pp. 520-3), I discuss four research questions that guide my project. Each question aims to disrupt our stable conceptions of the languages and practices associated with customer service. The focus on customers in the TTC and TfL requires nuance. Questioning and determining whether "the customer" is a static figure, exploring the genesis of the term, and following the social and cultural routes of the term before blossoming in the TTC and TfL (and its predecessor organizations) will foster insight into meanings and values placed on the term. It will also help outline how the term and its associated practices came to dominate in each city's public transit organization.

A hypothetical starting point of this inquiry might lead to British department store founder Gordon Selfridge's utterance of the phrase, "[the] customer is always right" (Brewer's Dictionary, 2000, p. 168). Who is the central figure in that phrase? How

did that figure come to be found in organizational discourse in the TTC and TfL? This leads to my first substantive research question:

(1) What is the “customer” and how has the concept been articulated in organizational discourse and situated social histories in public transit systems in Toronto and London, U.K.?

Social theorists like Michel Foucault (cf. Mills, 2003; Foucault, 1981) can help to study language and its associated practices, or discourse. A broader Foucauldian approach, as I discuss below, helps to focus sociological investigation on how the “customer” is made known, and how this specific understanding may have consequences in the types of demands that are deemed legitimate to be made on public transit organizations and, importantly, their staff (cf. Townley, 1993, pp. 520-3). Du Gay and Salaman (1992) have also written an important text in the centring of the customer in restructuring work from which to build an analysis.

The study of the customer leads us to the second and third substantive research questions:

(2) How do the discourses and practices associated with customer service reshape managerial practices, the organization of work, and the conduct of workers in public transit systems?

(3) More broadly, how does this orientation towards customer service inflect and infect public conceptions and organizational practices associated with public service generally?

As the first question helps set the terms upon which the customer emerges, these subsequent two questions explore the actual language and practices that come packaged with customer service in the two public transit systems. They aim to uncover the type of workers that come to be preferred and desired through such practices. They also direct us to how a customer service orientation helps to shape broader perceptions and representations of public service. After all, a customer service orientation can shape work by (re)organizing the labour process and by affecting the type of work conducted and how workers conduct themselves. The questions also suggest the type of work that a worker must do on themselves to become a better version of themselves (Foucault, 1988). One of these practices might emerge through

organizational practices that seek to improve services via customer complaints and feedback (Ahmed, 2016). Such feedback can operate as a disciplinary technique, particularly when vigilant passengers desiring good (customer? or public?) service capture worker behaviour in photos and videos (Ahmed, 2016). If a transit worker is behaving poorly and providing 'bad customer service', such actions might be 'caught on tape.' However, one might never know when one is being watched with visual evidence or otherwise (Ahmed, 2016).

Because of the pressures that arise for workers from a customer service orientation, research on public transit work must probe how workers navigate that very ethos as they work and interact with customers. As such, I ask:

(4) What strategies do workers employ to navigate the customer service ethos?

While the emphasis on customers and customer service in the study of public transit is not necessarily something new, its specific sociological study is limited. I have written specifically about it (Ahmed, 2016) and have considered its effects in an observational research methods piece, in part, to think through how customer service may affect passenger perceptions of public transit workers in everyday incidents (Ahmed, in press). Others have engaged in the study of public transit by investigating worker experiences (Terkel, 2004, pp. 201-6; Transport for London, n.d.; Booth, 2013; Lee, 2015; McDowell, 2016, pp. 187-91), organizational structures (Booth, 2013), transit strikes (MacDonald, 2012), and racialized relations between transit operators and passengers (Kelley, 1994, pp. 55-75). Richard Lee's (2015) book on TTC workers serves as a critical intervention in humanizing public transit workers. Yet his text does not sociologically unsettle the orthodoxies of "customer service" and how this impacts public sector workers more broadly. These crucial interventions have helped to survey some of the social and material relations of work in public transit; yet the link between public transit work and customer service must be strengthened. By elevating the myriad ways by which workers interpret, navigate and perform customer service principles, as well as the frustrations and resistances to it that emerge, this project aims to highlight its everyday, taken-for-granted materialization and its impact on perceptions of public transit workers and public service generally.

Analytical Framework

Though I have already hinted at my analytical approach in this project, in this section I add more colour to the analytical framework to be employed. To make sense of TTC and TfL developments, I bridge a Foucauldian governmentality approach with political economy to understand transformations in the urban everyday (Keil, 2002). As inferred above, a Foucauldian governmentality approach directs me to the types of knowledge employed to make known various actors (e.g. ‘customer’) so that they may be governed in particular ways (Dean, 2010, pp. 40-4). Such knowledge, whether in the form of a guiding work ethos, political discourse, or perhaps the seeming orthodoxy of an intellectual discipline, among others, may be seen operating through the practices employed by management at work, and the practices that aim to cultivate particular subjects, or types of people, whereby the way something is known or made analyzable permits particular forms of action or intervention (Dean, 2010, pp. 40-4; Townley, 1993, pp. 520-3). Governmentality studies, simply put, provide a means to explore how transit worker conduct is shaped and (re)produced to be governed in the everyday through bodies of knowledge that enable workplace practices.

I also employ a broader political economy approach to look at the social, political, economic, and material ways that produce and sustain the conditions within which workers act (Clement, 2001, p. 406). Political economy, further, analytically focuses my project on fiscal decisions and the production of budgets (cf. Radice, 2011). These broader economic forces and conditions affect transit funding, thereby shaping what might be deemed ‘feasible’, structuring work and structuring how workers must perform in the workplace. Political economy also makes it possible to consider how the languages and practices associated with the structuring associated with particular economic conditions come to organize and affect everyday life.

Finally, I employ Henri Lefebvre’s concept of the everyday to build an important conceptual bridge. Derived from Keil’s (2002) discussion of the everyday, everydayness may be understood as the individual routines and practices that may both unearth the ordering of life and the resistance to social control (p. 583). The scrutiny of the everyday helps to make visible the securing and organizing of social order, the materialization of the economy, and how that economy is sustained culturally and popularly.

Each of these approaches differentially guides the project to explore the everyday and quotidian conduct. Where a governmentality approach ascends from an analysis of the most mundane level of everyday action and practices (Foucault, 1980,

p. 99), political economy arguably descends from understanding global capitalist processes to understand much more local levels of analysis in the everyday. In this sense, I do not consider the two main approaches as being adversarial, but as providing unique insights on their own to be considered. The differing methodology of analytics used provides varied interpretive lenses to consider how knowledge is deployed to shape action and intervention in the workplace and how the flows of money constrain and attempt to impose order in everyday life. Such differential ways of understanding public transit work will have important implications in thinking through the differential possibilities of building better public transit as well as what the future of public service work and organizations might be like.

Concluding Thoughts

My research project, therefore, intends to transgress the seemingly smooth sheen of customer service orientations and explore their multifaceted nuances and effects on public transit work and workers and how that work is perceived. Perception here is important. That public organizations have come to echo what might be typically associated with business logic (cf. du Gay and Salaman, 1992; Clarke and Newman, 1997) in their performance may suggest that private firms should take on the responsibility of delivering said services. This may enable the privatization or contracting out of public services to private firms to enable capital accumulation and private profit (Harvey, 2006, p. 414). The study of public transit and customer service, of course, must be considered in light of the structuring of public budgets and fiscal decisions, all of which help to order what and how public services are delivered.

Crucially, critiquing customer service in its quotidian operations aims to provide a commentary on the consequences of the materialization of customer service language and practices. It aims to underscore the valuable social contribution of public transit workers in urban life and advance social debates around the need to fund transit service adequately. By unpacking customer service and its associated language and practices (du Gay and Salaman, 1992), this project contributes to both thinking through the choices that must be made to maintain the vitality of public transit organizations and public services, and to recognizing the service of the workers who get people moving.

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Temporary Employment Agencies in Ontario: Experiences of South Asian Immigrant Women

Navneet Aujla

In 2014, over 700,000 workers in Ontario were employed through over 1,300 temporary employment agencies (TEAs) (MacEachen et al., 2014). It is expected that this number will only increase since past trends demonstrate that the employment services industry has continued to grow across the country, and particularly in Ontario (Statistics Canada, 2012). Precarious jobs are characterized as those that offer limited social benefits and statutory entitlements, job insecurity, low wages, and high risks of ill-health (Vosko, 2006). Precarious jobs have become more prevalent in recent years, increasing by almost 50% in the last twenty years in the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area alone (PEPSO, 2013). The proliferation of agency work can be attributed to the general prevalence of precarious work. Agency work is associated with a lack of protection and labour regulations, and includes lack of job security and benefits, lower wages, and lack of unionization and/or collective agreements (Burgess & Connell, 2004; Vosko, 2010). Moreover, a recent report that was carried out by the Ontario Ministry of Labour noted that 37 out of 20 agencies were found to have multiple violations related to payments for overtime, public holidays, and vacation pay (Mojtehdzadeh, 2015). Thus, the temp agency industry is a site of frequent violations of the already weak legal protections for worker rights. Accordingly, research on the effects of temporary agency employment on workers is currently of crucial importance.

While existing research on precarious and temporary employment focuses on its effects on all workers in general, little is known about the lived experiences of particular groups in specific precarious work arrangements. As the temporary help industry predominately employs women, especially women who have recently immigrated to Canada and who are visible minorities (Vosko, 2010), this paper focuses on the

experiences of South Asian immigrant women working through temporary employment agencies (hereafter referred to as TEAs) in Ontario. The question that this paper seeks to address is: What are the experiences of South Asian immigrant women working in TEAs in Ontario? In asking this question, the aim is to unpack the ways in which the dimensions that contribute to one's social location—such as gender, race, ethnicity, immigrant status, and education, among others—shape the experiences of temporary agency employment for South Asian immigrant women. I begin by briefly reviewing theories and concepts related to precarious employment to situate the rise of precarious employment in relation to the decline of the standard employment relationship (SER). Then, I provide an analysis of key findings. I conclude with a short discussion of what these findings mean for this group of women, and the strategies that need to be employed in order to improve their living and working conditions.

The data for this study was gathered between 2015 and 2016 (Aujla, 2016). Data generation techniques included 12 qualitative interviews with current and former temporary agency workers, as well as participant observation. Participant-observation occurred by working through four separate TEAs. Additional interviews were conducted with former agency employees, along with members of a workers' advocacy group in Toronto.

Conceptualizing Precarious Employment

To analyze the experiences of South Asian immigrant women within temporary agency employment, the experiences need to be linked to broader political and economic structures with attention to how these experiences are gendered, racialized, and shaped by immigration status. The approach most suitable in this regard is the feminist political economy (FPE) perspective. Political economy examines the interaction between the economic, political, and social (Clement, 2001). For my research, this involves studying economic context (employment practices), political processes (laws and policies), and social relations (race, gender, etc.), and how they all come together to organize the experiences of immigrant women workers in temporary agencies. FPE, further, is critical of the orthodox neoliberal economic model and its assertion that an unfettered market economy driven by economic rationality is beneficial for all members of society (Riley, 2008; 2). It also uses gender as a key analytical component (Peterson, 2005).

To understand the rise of temporary agency employment, it is important to examine the SER. The SER emerged as an employment norm in the post-World War II

era (1945-mid-1970s) and was characterized as a full-time, permanent position working for one employer on the employer's premise, with social and legal benefits (Cuyper et al., 2008; Vosko, 2000). The SER was based on a male-breadwinner model with secondary standards for those who were outside full-time, permanent and unionized positions (Fudge, 1991). As the SER was primarily accessible to working white men, this arrangement tended to exclude women, people of colour and immigrants (Vosko, 2000). During this era, therefore, efforts were made through the state and organized labour to decommodify labour through the expansion of social and economic rights, the result being that some workers secured a rising standard of working and living conditions (Vosko, 2000; Standing, 1999).

The 1970s marked the rise of neoliberalism, and with it a marked material and ideological shift regarding work and labour. This shift reduced many of the worker rights, employment standards, and protections established in the post-WWII era. This period is also characterized by the growth of precarious employment, including temporary agency employment. Standing (1999) explains that, "the most common interpretation of flexibility is the extent and speed of adaptation to market shocks" (p. 49). As such, proponents of 'labour flexibility' argue that forms of security for workers limit the competitiveness of businesses by preventing them from adapting to market changes quickly. Therefore, forms of security such as regulations related to hiring and firing, and working hours, came to be seen as impediments to economic growth (Standing, 1999). TEAs are able to market themselves as providers of 'numerical flexibility' or 'temporal flexibility' in which the quantity of labour being used can be varied easily in accordance to demand at any particular time (Peck & Theodore, 2002; Vosko, 2000).

However, temporary agency employment is just one type of precarious work arrangement that has increased. There is a "strong relationship between racialized-gendered social locations and dimensions of precarious employment, regardless of form" (Vosko, 2006, p. 60). This means that women, and especially women of colour, are overrepresented in precarious jobs. For example, Statistics Canada data showed in 2014 that 7.1% of women were engaged in involuntary part-time work compared to 3.5% of men, and 12.2% of women were engaged in temporary work compared to 10.5% of men (Fleury, 2016). In addition, a study in the Greater Toronto and Hamilton region showed that racialized women outside of the SER earned an average income of around \$45,000 while white men in a similar situation earned over \$60,000. Racialized women even in a SER earned less than \$60,000 annually while white men in a SER

earned close to \$80,000. White women and racialized men both had a higher annual income than racialized women in a SER and outside of it (PEPSO, 2013). Temporary agency employment in Ontario is particularly precarious due to the absence of a full-time permanent position and a single employer, and because it is accompanied by limited social and legal protections. The precarity of temporary employment agencies is further exacerbated by a 'tripartite relationship' or 'triangular relationship', which involves the contracting out of individuals (workers) to third parties (client firms) by a service provider (the agency) (Cooke & Zeytinoglu, 2004; Vosko, 2010). This relationship raises questions about who is held liable when workers' rights are infringed upon and the scope of rights that workers might have access to.

Findings

Women experienced precariousness at work through a multitude of ways. To begin with, they faced a lack of control over work schedules and the duration of work assignments.

For example, when work assignments became available, the women were typically given less than 24 hours' notice. This caused a lot of stress as the women remained unable to plan their daily lives. Jasmine explained "...they only send you when there is work...We're just waiting all the time. Then they send you for two days and then not the next day. The work is not regular." This erratic scheduling often made other responsibilities such as housework and childcare difficult to manage as the women were always expected to show up to work on short notice. Moreover, it was commonly known that anyone who refused an assignment more than a few times would not be called in again. This meant that the women lacked the right to refuse work assignments without being penalized for it.

A second dimension of precarity for the women was a lack of control over working conditions, including where they will be sent to work, how long they will work there, what tasks they will do, and at what pace they will work. For example, the women found that agency workers tended to be given harder assignments than permanent workers. In addition, the women were often pushed to work extremely fast as the threat of being sent home always loomed over their heads, whether stated explicitly or not. Jasmine recounted one experience saying "the supervisor would count this is how much your production was and they would get rid of whoever was slow... I used to kill myself there."

Low wages and income was another dimension of precarity as most women reported being paid minimum wage or less. Given that full-time hours were rare, it can be reasonably assumed that, in a given year, all of the women earned wages that fell below the poverty line. Moreover, women were often segregated to lower-paying jobs that had lesser opportunity of leading to being hired permanently.

Finally, as agency workers, the women were not entitled to many of the rights and protections available to permanent workers. It was also difficult to prove when violations of rights occurred. For example, bullying and wage theft were two common issues. However, as Laura explained: "...folks [feel] like they can't say anything because they'll lose that assignment." Household dynamics increased the level of precariousness that women faced as gendered expectations and responsibilities shaped both their decisions and opportunities in regards to employment. Three of the women arrived to Canada shortly after getting married and starting a family was their first priority. This required first achieving economic security, meaning the women had to take whatever jobs they could find quickly. Preeti stated, "...as I was getting a lot older... my first step was to get pregnant...So my focus was on that and that is why I went through the agency." This meant that time and money could not be used to pursue more stable jobs.

The same three women also reported being responsible for most of the housework and childcare duties. When Jasmine was asked about her husband's help, she replied, "He doesn't do anything. Even now (laughing)." Balancing both paid work and household work often proved to be a challenge, particularly as the women did general labour work through the agency. Harjot spoke of having to leave the agency after three months of working while simultaneously raising her baby because it was too exhausting. Childcare responsibilities limited employment opportunities for women in comparison to their husbands who could take jobs with any hours. It should be noted that the burden of household and childcare responsibilities was often offset by parents or adult children living with the women who acquired work through agencies. Eight of the women lived with at least one other woman family member and reported less stress regarding housework. Thus, multiple generations living together helped to offset financial costs of social reproduction that fall upon the household, both daily and intergenerationally.

Being a recent immigrant also posed unique challenges that exacerbated dimensions of precarity. For most of the women, finding work immediately upon arrival to Canada was necessary as they had little to no savings. Two women, for example,

had to take loans to cover the cost of their flights to Canada. This desperate need for money significantly impacted their employment decisions and made them more vulnerable to exploitation.

Another factor that made the women more vulnerable to exploitation was the barriers to finding well-paying and/or stable employment opportunities. Despite most of the women having at least an undergraduate degree, they faced significant challenges finding work related to their field of education. They were told they lacked Canadian qualifications and experience. Obtaining Canadian qualifications usually required time and money that the women did not have. Laura noted that recent immigrants are funnelled into agencies, stating “I think that there is a whole bunch of things, first the Canadian experience that people are asked to get, [that] push them into temp agency work.”

Some of the experiences that women had in other jobs were even more precarious, making agencies a preferable option. For example, in Manpreet’s other jobs, she either made \$5-\$6 an hour, or \$35-\$50 a day doing piecework. She acknowledged, “It is wrong. But I had no other choice. Whatever money I could take home.” Mandy and Anisha were never paid by their other employer, and Jasmine tried working out of her own home. However, she was unable to make enough income.

When asked whether they felt that recent immigrants can attain economic security if they work through agencies, half of the women I interviewed replied that it is not possible, and four said that it is possible but only to a certain extent or that it would take a long time. Many of the women told stories about having difficulties meeting expenses and being unable to save any money. Harjot stated, “There are so many expenses. With an agency you can’t do it.” As such, findings demonstrate that the women experienced precariousness in a multitude of ways including: a lack of control over work schedules and the duration of work assignments; a lack of control over working conditions; low wages and income; and a lack of rights and protections. These dimensions were influenced and exacerbated by social factors such as gender, race, and immigrant status.

Conclusion

My research demonstrates that intersecting social factors of race, gender and immigrant status had a large impact on the women’s experiences, both funnelling the women into temporary agency employment and making them more vulnerable to exploitation. This leads to precarious livelihoods for the women where they are unable

to meet the low-income cut-off (LICO), become trapped in a cycle of precarious employment, and must face the challenges of balancing both paid work and work within the home. Strategies for assisting women who work through temporary work agencies need to address the lack of security related to work and pay, as well as the lack of enforcement of employment standards. Additionally, barriers to employment for recent immigrants need to be addressed so that immigrants can more easily and quickly work in the fields within which they are trained and already qualified. Finally, there needs to be greater services and programs in place to assist women who are limited in terms of employment by their roles as primary caregivers (Aujla, 2016).

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The Provincial State, the Mining Industry and the Making of the OHSA

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In the 1960s and 1970s, Northern Ontario mineworkers' struggle for occupational health and safety (OHS) catalyzed a province-wide movement that eventually culminated in the overhaul of Ontario's existing OHS laws and policies (MacDowell, 2012; Storey, 2005). The Occupational Health and Safety Act, 1978 (OHSA) brought three significant changes to the administration of OHS in Ontario's mines: regulatory oversight was transferred from the Ministry of Natural Resources to the Ministry of Labour; workers were granted a host of new participatory rights to help manage OHS problems in the workplace, including the right to refuse unsafe work and the right to form joint labour-management health and safety committees; and the province established its first statutory standards concerning workers' exposure to silica (previous "codes of requirement" issued by the Mines Engineering Branch, which were largely formulated on the basis of the mining industry's research, did not have the force of law).

The goal of this paper is to show that in spite of these important legislative changes, brought about in response to growing worker activism and electoral pressure from the New Democratic Party, the ruling Progressive Conservative Party's approach to OHS retained a staunchly pro-management outlook. In fact, the government, under business pressure, opposed the OHSA's most notable measures, like making joint health and safety committees (JHSCs) mandatory, rather than voluntary, and granting workers the right to refuse unsafe work without reference to management's right to discipline employees who "frivolously misused" their new privileges. In no way was business dominance over the government more evident than in the process to establish regulations concerning workers' exposure to silica, a toxic dust responsible

for the debilitating lung disease silicosis. Business concerns about the high costs of meeting the original proposed standard were sufficient for the government not only to delay promulgating the regulation until 1983, but also to significantly water down its force.

The rest of this paper proceeds thematically. The next section examines how the Progressive Conservative government responded to business pressure to limit the scope of worker power in the formulation of the OHSA. In this regard, the government was thwarted only by its minority hold on power. Finally, the paper looks at the government's approach to regulating workers' exposure to silica. Because the regulations were not subject to legislative oversight, but were a cabinet prerogative, business demands were more easily translated into policy.

Limiting Worker Power

From the mid-1960s until the mid-1970s, mineworker militancy in Northern Ontario put OHS on the political agenda in ways it had never been before. Wildcat strikes over noxious sulphur fumes in the Copper Cliff smelter, toxic radon gases and silica dust in Elliot Lake and carcinogenic asbestos in Matachewan generated public sympathy for the mineworkers. By 1974, the Progressive Conservative government, responding to the pressure from an increasingly popular New Democratic Party, agreed to convene a Royal Commission to study OHS in the mines. Based on the findings of the so-called "Ham Report," released in 1976, the Conservative government promised to overhaul the province's OHS legislation. As a temporary measure, the government enacted Bill 139, An Act Respecting Employees' Health and Safety. Under this Act, the Minister of Labour had the discretionary authority to establish JHSCs in certain workplaces, and workers were granted for the first time the right to refuse unsafe work without fear of discipline. However, Bill 139 was always cast as temporary, and the government promised to engage in a thorough public consultation process before proceeding with the permanent legislation.

In the subsequent debate about the scope and content of the OHSA, the mining industry's position, which it shared with capital more generally, was clear. Simply put, while the mining companies did not oppose either JHSCs or the right of work refusal in principle, they wanted to make sure that the new measures did not infringe upon the traditional managerial prerogative to control the productive process. Thus, JHSCs would be palatable so long as they were not imposed by government dictate, but voluntarily accepted by individual managers. Similarly, the industry accepted that no

worker should be forced to work in an unsafe condition, but pressed for safeguards against “frivolous” work stoppages. At public hearings, representatives from three of the province’s largest mining firms—Inco, Falconbridge and Noranda – insisted that management retain its right to send home workers who refused unsafe work when no other work available (“Frivolous complaints,” 1977). Management also feared that worker activists would use the new right for political purposes or to contravene the “no-strike clause” of the Labour Relation’s Act (see, for example, Lutley, 1976).

The government’s proposed OHS legislation, Bill 70, went a long way in meeting capital’s demands. JHSCs would not be mandatory in every workplace. Instead, like Bill 139, the Minister of Labour would be granted the discretionary authority to establish them in given workplaces if certain criteria were met. However, unlike Bill 139, the section outlining the process to be followed in a case of a work refusal now contained explicit reference to management’s right to discipline employees who frivolously refused to work.

That the mining industry and other segments of capital were pleased with the government’s proposed legislation was clear from the briefs they submitted to the Standing Committee on Resources Development, which reviewed the Bill clause by clause after its second reading in the Legislature. Representative in this regard was the Canadian Manufacturers’ Association (CMA) brief, which read, “We concur with the approach taken by the Government on many of the items contained in Bill 70, especially those pertaining to safety committees and the right of refusal to work,” (Ontario Division of the CMA, 1978). The CMA lauded the government’s “discretionary and flexible approach” to JHSCs and to workers’ right to refuse unsafe work, which was “appropriate” and clarified “the rights and responsibilities of both employees and employers,” (ibid).

However, business alacrity was short lived. Because the Progressive Conservatives had only a minority hold on power, Liberal and NDP MPPs were in the majority on the Standing Committee that reviewed Bill 70. The NDP MPPs used this leverage to introduce significant amendments to the government’s bill, notably by making JHSCs mandatory in every workplace in the province with more than 20 employees and by eliminating any reference to “frivolous misuse” in regard to the right to refuse unsafe work (Senior Staff Correspondence, n.d.).

The mining industry reacted with immediate hostility to the amendments. J.M. Hughes, Executive Director of the Ontario Mining Association (OMA), the industry’s principal lobbying group, protested to Bette Stephenson, the Minister of Labour. In a

letter (Ontario Mining Association, 1978, March 6) to the Minister, Hughes sought to “impress upon [Stephenson] the belief that the Bill, as amended, is regressive legislation, is completely unworkable, and to urge its serious reconsideration.” Hughes then outlined his main concerns: “As one example, all the proposed amendments dealing with mandatory joint safety and health committees and the frivolous exercise of the right to refuse unsafe work will only contribute to the adversary principle between management and labour, when our economy cries out for co-operation in attaining common goals,” (ibid). In her response to Hughes, Stephenson (1978) made clear that her government had not lost its way: “Since the concern expressed by you regarding these amendments parallels my own, I would urge you to send a copy of your letter to the Chairman of Caucus of each of the two opposition parties who were, indeed, responsible for the amendments which you find unacceptable.” Stephenson concluded her letter citing her hope that “an appropriate and realistic legislative structure” could still be achieved.

In the months that followed, Stephenson delayed the reintroduction of the bill to the Legislature as she sought ways to remove the Standing Committee’s “unacceptable” amendments. In a telling memo dated March 30, 1978 to T.E. Armstrong, Deputy Minister of Labour from Paul Hess, the Ministry’s Director of Legal Services, Hess (1978) outlined three ways Stephenson could prevent the bill as amended from attaining the status of law. Clearly, the Minister of Labour prioritized maintaining a good relationship with the province’s large employers over fulfilling her party’s promise to move ahead with OHS reform.

There was no small irony in the government’s reluctance to accept the amendments, particularly in light of the advice Stephenson received from her senior civil servants with regard to the actual legal implications of the new bill. In short, the changes did not constitute the radical transfer of power in the workplace management feared. There was no question that management would retain its disciplinary powers. In a 1976 memo to Stephenson, Paul Hess (1976) dismissed employer calls to insert the clause on frivolous misuse of the right to refuse work, not because it would contravene the spirit of the new law, but rather because it was “unnecessary.” “Such a right,” he continued, existed “without making provision therefor.”

Yet it was not until after the Legislature had returned from its summer recess and Premier Bill Davis had shuffled his cabinet, replacing Stephenson with Robert Elgie, that Bill 70 was reintroduced for third reading. Elgie’s bill was a partial compromise. While it would allow for the establishment of mandatory JHSCs in mining worksites, the

government once again reiterated its commitment to management's rights. Against the advice of senior legal advisors within the Ministry of Labour, Elgie reinserted the frivolous misuse clause. In the end, however, the Liberals and the NDP voted the clause down, and it was thus not included in the final Act.

Limiting Worker Illness? Regulating Exposure to Silica

Business influence over the formulation of regulations concerning exposure to silica was easier to discern and ultimately more successful than efforts to limit worker power. As noted above, the previous OHS laws contained no legal standards concerning exposure to toxic substances. The process to set new standards took place in multiple stages. First, the Ministry of Labour issued a "notice of intent" to regulate silica in the July 22, 1978 edition of the Ontario Gazette. Next, the Ministry conducted an "economic impact study" to gauge the mining companies' capacities to meet the proposed standard. From there, the government promulgated its first regulation in late 1979. However, this regulation did not set strict standards, but instead adopted the American Conference of Governmental Industrial Hygienists' Threshold Limit Values (ACGIH TLVs) as "criteria or guides." Finally, in 1983, the Ministry promulgated its first strict standards. However, these standards were significantly lower than those that had been proposed in 1978. These original standards are outlined next.

Three elements of the government's first proposed regulation are worth noting. First, it prescribed both "silica" and "silica flour" as "regulated substances." Second, the "time-weighted average exposure limits" were set at 0.1 mg/m³ for silica, and 0.05 mg/m³ for respirable silica flour (Ontario, 1978a). Third, in instances in which exposure to the regulated substance exceeded exposure limits, the excess was to be "eliminated, controlled or reduced" to below the limit in "progressive stages." Only after suitable measures taken to eliminate, control or reduce the exposure proved impractical, could management provide workers with "suitable respiratory equipment" "for such period or periods as a Director may permit from time to time," (Ontario, 1978b).

Once the July 22 notice of intent had been issued, the Ministry of Labour sent its economic impact survey to the mining companies that would be affected by the regulation. Not surprisingly, the companies argued that the standard was not feasible. Texas Gulf's (1978) response was typical. The company hinted that the proposed regulation would lead to capital flight, pitting workers' health against sustained economic development. Noting its impact study indicated "a need for capital

expenditure of over \$18 million for added ventilation in an exceptionally well ventilated mine,” Texas Gulf was “sure that the proposed silica standards [would] be a barrier to some new mining ventures or some expansions in the industry,” while “the economic consequences to the community... [were] likely to be considerable,” (ibid).

In addition to the surveys submitted by individual mining companies, the OMA also submitted its own policy briefs to the Minister. In one, a consultant made an elaborate case that there was insufficient evidence to warrant limiting exposure to silica flour at levels proposed by the Ministry (Ontario Mining Association, 1978, August 29). In another, the OMA argued that enacting TLV guidelines as standards was “contrary to the concept of their existence,” favouring instead their use as “guidelines and objectives,” (Ontario Mining Association, 1978, February 27). Further, the OMA claimed that it was “not feasible” to maintain a time-weighted average concentration of 0.1 mg/m³ in Ontario mines, while it considered that a concentration of 0.25 mg/m³ “may be achievable,” (ibid). Officials within the Ministry of Labour clearly took a different view from the OMA: Scratched in ink on the margins is a hand-written note that reads, “I believe the 0.1 mg/m³ in Ontario mines is achievable,”(ibid).

Nevertheless, the first regulation was a major victory for the OMA. While it stipulated that ventilation systems had to be used to “prevent the exposure of a worker... to agents in the atmosphere that are likely to endanger the health or safety of a worker,” (O. Reg. 660/79, s. 242) it did not establish strict standards in that regard. Instead, the ACGIH TLVs were adopted as “criteria or guides,” (ibid, s.279) exactly as the OMA had suggested.

The final regulation, which was not put into effect until 1983, was strikingly different from the original notice of intent issued in 1978. The time-weighted average exposure of a worker to silica was to be “reduced to the lowest practical level with a view to achieving at least 0.10 mg of silica per m³ of air by volume, and in any event shall not exceed 0.20 mg of silica per m³ of air,” (O. Reg. 769/83, s. 4) while any reference to silica flour was simply eliminated. Further, the regulation provided for significant exemptions from the “strict duty” to meet the time-weighted average. In the case of an “emergency,” or if “measures and procedures” to meet the standard “[did] not exist or [were] unavailable,” “[were] not reasonable or practical...” or “[were] not effective because of a temporary breakdown of equipment,” it was sufficient for the employer to provide a worker with “respiratory equipment,” (ibid, s. 5). There was no longer any reference to the stepwise effort to “eliminate, control or reduce” the exposure level, nor to any time limits as dictated by a “Director.”

Conclusion

The research findings discussed in this paper show that the mining industry – and capital more generally – exercised tremendous power over the Progressive Conservative government in the making of the OHSA. In its efforts to appease its business clients, the government overrode the advice of its leading civil servants, even when that advice revealed that capital's fears were largely unfounded. It was only because the opposition parties held the balance of power in the Legislature that a more business-friendly law was not enacted. More strikingly, the mining industry's threats of disinvestment were sufficient to significantly limit the force of regulations designed to protect workers' health. Although the passage of the OHSA was a significant turning point in the history of mineworkers' struggle, it is clear that in the government's view, business interests continued to outweigh worker health and safety.

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The Case for Greater Inclusion of Racialized Social Workers in the Practice Space of Public Policy Development

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The roots of social work can be traced to the altruistic response of white, middle class women to the prevalent and disruptive social problems of their society, yielding a narrative of disadvantage where assumptions perpetuate that those requiring interventions are racialized, and marginalized people (Bisman 2004; De Palma 2014). This led to the opinion that social problems are best dealt with at the direct intervention level, where issues are individually problematized, as opposed to taking a critical structural analysis of the issue. Effectually, however, globalization and the free market system contribute to the increasing need for social work intervention, based on the stratification of the education and employment systems.

This paper discusses the restrictive nature of the typical social work curriculum, tracking practice issues of how race and gender identities, coupled with social work's marginalized status as a profession, converge to create employment access barriers in the public sector. I argue that since policy documents are often written in response to social problems faced by marginalized and racialized groups, social workers that share an identity with these communities must also be present in the creation, legislation, and implementation of social and public policies.

The Study

The sample was taken from racialized Bachelor of Social Work (BSW) and Master of Social Work (MSW) students (n=5) that were in the process of completing their degree, or had graduated from the program and were employed in, or had experience in, a public policy field of practice. The perspectives of social work social policy professors (n=3), both racialized and non-racialized, were also captured to qualify the hypothesis

that the construction of the social work curriculum inhibits racialized social workers from practicing in policy development-focused careers. Participants were recruited through email, social media, and telephone.

A phenomenological approach was utilized to identify some of the issues faced by racialized social workers in pursuit of policy development spaces for employment. This approach revealed that, beyond the problematic of the construction of the social work curriculum being inadequately specialized for social workers seeking public policy as practice, there are major institutional and ideological barriers present. This most directly manifested in the form of systemic racism, which excludes or prevents racialized social workers from attaining significant authoritative status in public policy development. Systemic racism was present in how workers' identities were constructed. One participant declared that, "...race was at the centre of everything, it is how I was perceived as an advocate. When white workers who were not social workers were inserted into the equation, the constituents chose to go to those workers because they trusted the authority of the white workers" (A.S.).

For A.S. and other participants, the issue of race was a disqualifying characteristic in accessing opportunities for public policy specific spaces for employment. Gender identity was also a barrier for female workers pursuing careers in the traditionally male dominated public sector. In addition to the external societal issues of race and gender that permeated the participants' responses, participants identified that, when compared to other professions, such as public administration, law, and economics, social work did not share the same level of societal respect. The participants noted that their social work education actually placed them at a disadvantage for employment opportunities in public policy spaces such as working at a Member of Parliament constituency office or at the Ministry of Education. One participant shared that not having a visible minority social worker as a mentor to teach or regularly speak about the importance of racialized social workers being involved throughout the policy development process was a barrier to pursuing policy development as a social work career area.

The Canadian Association of Social Workers (CASW, 2005) governs the practice of social workers in Canada, and suggests that, "social workers promote social fairness ... reduce barriers and expand choice for all persons" (CASW, 2005, p. 5). Where the CASW offers a more individual, client care focus, the National Association of Social Workers (NASW) in the United States offers a structural approach to social work intervention. The NASW states that, "Social workers should facilitate informed

participation by the public in shaping social policies and institutions...to...engage in social and political action ... to ensure that all people have equal access to the resources ... be aware of the impact of the political arena on practice and should advocate for changes in policy and legislation” (NASW, 2016, p.1). These value and ethical principles are concepts that I argue as being essential to ‘doing’ social work. The CASW’s (2005) direct practice priority has hampered the successful engagement of social work at the institutional level. Both the NASW the International Federation of Social Workers (IFSW) include definitions of social work practice showing the interconnectedness of direct individual and family interventions that inform approaches to effective engagement at institutional levels.

Interview participants identified that, for them, policy development, as a defined practice space, possessed accessibility challenges, first and foremost, based upon their social work education and credentials. The participants outlined that the education they received did not favourably position them to occupy policy analysis or policy development roles post graduation. One non-racialized participant, L. E., stated that she relinquished her membership as a licensed social worker because the regulatory body refused to provide liability coverage for her ‘non-traditional’ social work practice of policy consultations. L.E. had the freedom to relinquish her registration with the governing body of social work, with the knowledge that she would be able to find other work without major barriers caused by the colour of her skin. Oppositionally however, this same accessibility and leverage is not afforded to racialized workers.

One participant was careful to point out that she had to make the case for the importance of a social work lens to be applied to Ministry of Education policies. The worker’s manager struggled to grasp the value of a degree in social work as a professional designation, relevant to public administration. Consequently, a disjuncture persists in society’s understanding of how direct practice experience of social workers contributes to the shaping of public and social policies.

Three social work professors agreed that racialized students still experience perpetuated systemic exclusion in social policy development engagement. They each discussed that in the context of teaching and learning in preparation for practice, racialized students were not necessarily exposed to interrogating how their race identity is a barrier to employment, and how to problem-solve those barriers through practice experiences. W.T. (a racialized professor) spoke openly that he is aware of the issue of race in specific employment positions and noted that he worked with governments to formulate the Affirmative Action and Employment Equity policies of the

1970s and 1980s in Ontario. The reality is that there are real and perceived barriers that exist in accessing public policy development as a practice space for racialized people. Johnson's (2006) study of the employment possibilities for male and female racial minorities as compared to their non-racialized counterparts found that significant disparities exist. Data from the 1997 National Graduate Survey of the federal public service as an employer found that, "...the representation of visible minorities in managerial or executive capacities is...1 in 33" (Johnson, 2006, p. 13). The statistic provided by Johnson (2006) shows the adverse forces that racialized people face in accessing employment in the public sector. It also points to the need for the public service as an employer to review its racial diversity strategy to be more inclusive at the managerial and administrative levels throughout the employment process. This strategic positioning allows the public sector to be more representative of the general population while encouraging more racialized and marginalized groups to seek employment in these non-traditional employment spaces.

Theory versus Practice

Gary Mathews (1982) outlined the general struggle that exists within the field of social work to decisively identify what is 'Social Work.' Matthews (1982) stated that, "the vast majority of legislators...could not provide an adequate description of the training and experience necessary to be a professional social worker..." (p. 621). There is a general perception that social work is a passive profession that only exists to provide direct care intervention. The construction of the social work curriculum in Canada heavily favours the type of social work that is individual and intervention-focused. This limitation in the access to policy engagement courses adversely impacts social workers' ability to adequately develop policy specific skills as professional workers. Those seeking policy related training require self-advocacy to attain policy specific learning opportunities.

Social workers trained exclusively to do direct practice interventions find restrictions on their practice capabilities. Subsequently, policy engagement may seem unnecessarily bureaucratic and be perceived to reduce opportunities to influence policies at the agency level and beyond by generating feelings amongst social workers that they are not equipped to do so, or that 'someone else can do that kind of work'. Consequently, social workers miss opportunities that are present in their frontline experience that can concretely inform policy documents and proceedings. This neglect in capitalizing on the opportunity to influence both social service agency and

government policies negates the ethical principle of the NASW (2016) where, “social workers should facilitate informed participation by the public in shaping social policies and institutions” (p. 1). Social workers cannot be effective facilitators for their clients to participate in the shaping of social policies and institutions, if they, themselves, are not first partakers in experiences of shaping outcomes of public and social policy development.

Race and Gender Relations

Mounting data suggests that there are inherent barriers to specific employment spaces and opportunities for racialized people. Block and Galabuzi (2011) found that although racialized people possess the educational credentials to occupy employment in the Canadian public service, this does not translate to equitable employment opportunities. Block and Galabuzi (2011, p. 11) state that, “from a public policy perspective, the under-representation of racialized workers in public administration is of grave concern. Both racialized men and women appear to be experiencing significant barriers ...[which] has implications for good policy development.” Further, Block and Galabuzi noted in public administration, “only “4.0% of racialized men and 4.1% of racialized women were employed in this sector, while only 7.5% of racialized men and 7.9% of racialized women were employed in management of companies and enterprises”(2011, p. 10). Data indicate that social workers and racialized people are hired to maintain front line positions that are most affected by precarious working conditions as in non-permanent, contract status with limited access to employee benefits eclipsing the conditions faced by social service users seeking social work interventions.

The ‘glass ceiling’ effect in social service agencies perpetuates disadvantage. As is common across the labour market (Block and Galabuzi 2011; Austin *et al.* 2016), racialized and gendered wage gaps remain in social work largely because higher paying positions are primarily occupied by non-racialized men. Subsequently, racialized female social workers may not pursue administrative positions that can raise their socio-economic status. Within the public sector, male domination further limits the mobility of female workers into higher paying leadership roles.

Practice Implications

Racialized social workers who occupy direct policy engagement positions, such as Members of Parliament and Cabinet Ministers, whose practice is informed by field

experience, will be able to precisely pinpoint areas requiring attention or amendment at the “problem identification” stage of policy development. For example, with respect to child welfare, racialized social workers’ presence at the policy creation table is paramount to reversing the negative effects of black children disproportionately becoming wards of the state.

A Toronto Star report (Monsebraaten, 2016) on the Children’s Aid Society found, “42 per cent of children in care...were black, in a city where only 8 per cent of children are black” (p. 1). Further, the report revealed “concerns about black families being over-scrutinized and over-surveilled by educators, police and medical professionals.” Racialized child welfare workers that have policy analysis experience can drive home this systemic racism problem through developing and promoting policy alternatives. I argue that for public policies to be more dynamic, social workers with the relevant knowledge and experience must be active in all levels of policy development. Westhues (2003, p. 25) agrees, stating that, “social workers have come to accept social policy development as an essential component of our work as professionals... the values we stand for, infused in social policy will shape and give definition to the vital, ever changing culture we know as Canadian.”

Future Planning

Policy practice social workers share the responsibility to mentor other social workers. Visibility in these positions can shift society’s ideology toward more institutional inclusivity. As one interview participant stated, “policy and politics is in the realm of white male workers while direct practice, care work, is in the realm of women social workers. Women and racialized people were only brought in to discuss the ‘lived experiences’ of a given issue; rarely, if not ever, as a public policy practitioner” (S.Y.). Social workers, and particularly racialized social workers, who occupy decision making roles with respect to public and social policy development can effectively address this issue of the absence of representation. Social workers who are engaged in the policy development process can educate and collaborate with other professions towards best practice possibilities.

The Role of Governments

The path to social work-informed public policy proposed in this paper depends on governments that value social work’s professional contributions in mitigating social problems. For racialized social workers, the drive for acceptance by governments

requires collective pursuit of social justice. Affirmative action and equity policies must address the absence of a representative bureaucracy. Recognizing that the free market system is interwoven into every facet of our social lives, it is essential that governments collaborate with social workers to guard against the predatory nature that the market can have on the delivery of social services.

Conclusion

The significance of how social workers are able to effectively find practical solutions to both individual and community social problems cannot be discredited in the policy making process. It is particularly important then, that in recognizing that social workers have an absolutely relevant and critical role to play in the policy development process, that social workers do not get relegated to a 'specified space' such as only program implementation after policies have been written. Opportunities for racialized social workers to be involved in shaping curriculum that, first and foremost, reflectively target subject matters concerning barriers to employment access in policy spaces is a logical first step from an educational standpoint. From an external change perspective, the profession of social work has to make itself visible and audible to policy makers by being engaged at the agency levels during the implementation process, first to inform the approach that must be taken at the municipal, provincial and federal levels of policy creation, legislative development, and implementation.

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Independent (Net)Work: Microfunding & Musician Labour in Digitally Networked Capitalism

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Early digital culture and new media scholars were optimistic about digital media's potential as a facilitator of openness and accessibility—as a disruption to the old notions of top-down production and consumption. Axel Bruns (2008) and Henry Jenkins (2006), for instance, argued that the internet blurred the boundary between active and passive consumption, identifying blogs and social networks as the means by which grassroots creators could communicate with, and subvert the messages of, top-down creators. Recently, however, the once-dominant techno-utopian narratives concerning consumer agency and the free circulation of content have been superseded by more critical interpretations, often referred to as the digital labour debate (Duffy, 2015). This debate includes critical assessments of the free and immaterial labour performed on social media sites (Terranova, 2012; Cote & Pybus, 2011; Gill & Pratt, 2008), explanations of the exploitative nature of such platforms (Hesmondhalgh, 2015; Fuchs, 2014), and the impact this has upon creative workers (Cohen, 2015; Ross, 2012; Ross, 2009).

Though the discourses of openness and accessibility once readily employed by new media scholars have since fallen out of vogue, they nevertheless remain a cornerstone of mainstream media deliberations, especially with respect to emerging and independent musicians' ability to self-record and self-distribute. Since the rise of Napster in 1999, the popular press has tended to frame the discussion of digital music and file sharing in one of two ways: as a boon for musicians or the bane of the recording industry. While on the surface it appears that these discourses undergird an anarchic desire to see the dismantling of the recording industries, they actually support the logics of the neoliberal creative economy (Powers, 2015)—a newly formed

economy regularly extolled for its allegedly boundless opportunities to become a self-made creative entrepreneur. “Creative work,” Ursula Huws (2014) writes, “thus has to be seen as straddling a number of different positions in the labor market, including self-employment, paid employment, and petty commodity production” (p. 172). Media work, such as making music, is constructed in the popular press as an accessible form of cultural production. However, despite musicians’ relatively open access to digital media, such platforms immediately bind them in a relationship of surplus value generation. Under the structure of platform capitalism, capital intervenes by taking a rent (Huws, 2016): it takes a small percentage of profits from the exchange of goods. It is in this sense that emerging musicians who participate in the neoliberal creative economy become creative workers. In this important respect, in the era of platform capitalism, discourses of openness and accessibility are more accurately linked to conditions of precarity and risk than to notions of fluid work structures and freedom of choice (dePeuter, 2014; Gill & Pratt, 2008).

It is at these intersections of trends in digital culture and media work that I situate the case of micro-funding and digital distribution platform Patreon. Building upon Duffy’s (2015) discursive approach to studying fashion bloggers, and Celia Suhr’s (2012) case-based analysis of social media platforms and the new field of cultural production, this paper blends critical political economy of media and cultural theory as its interpretive framework. A unique site, Patreon is the brainchild of a musician and combines elements of crowdfunding, digital distribution, and social media to create a platform for creative workers—or “artists” as they are referred to on the site—to connect with fans, seek ongoing financial support, and promote their work. Through this case study, I address the following questions: How do digital distribution and micro-funding platforms such as Patreon change or reshape how musician labour is discursively understood? How it’s materially practiced? Does the need to accumulate social capital make musician labour more or less strenuous? Ultimately, I argue, to achieve commercial success in the era of platform capitalism, musicians perform ongoing relational labour (Baym, 2015) to sustain a monetize fanbase; they manage and maintain micro-funding accounts; and they produce incentives for their supporters, a process I call (net)work. In what follows, I offer a short description of the relationship between networks and social capital. I outline the contours of my conceptual model (net)work, and, before turning to my case study on Patreon, I provide a brief critical account of crowdfunding platforms.

(Net)works of Capital

“Capital,” according to Pierre Bourdieu (1986) “is accumulated labor,” appropriated on a private, exclusive basis, and sold by individuals to capitalists to sustain themselves. In addition to economic capital, there is cultural and social capital. Like economic capital, these auxiliary modes of capital are also accumulated through labour, though not on an exchange basis, *per se*; to accumulate social and cultural capital one must work to amass experience, knowledge, and education. For Bourdieu, networks are an example of stock in social capital, insofar as the volume of social capital an individual possesses is directly correlated to the size and quality of the network connections s/he can effectively mobilize. Consequently, networking is crucial for developing one’s social capital.

Possession of social capital and the formation of a networked reputation, Andrew Watson (2014) writes, are paramount to obtaining work in the cultural industries—a sector marked by an ongoing history of structured job insecurity and worker independence. As independent creative labourers, musicians under conditions of platform capitalism are charged with the responsibility of managing their own production, distribution, and promotion, as well as the newly added responsibility of forging monetizable social networks through ongoing, unpaid relational labour (Baym, 2015). Indeed, it is increasingly evident that the emphasis on cultivating social capital via social networks has shaped the nature of creative labour, as networks simultaneously become the necessary webs of connections through which musicians deliver their content and the fields within which their social position is established. If a musician’s field or network is weak, or the connections are too loose, she will struggle to insert herself into the popular domain.

I want to expand our understanding of networks through the concept of (net)work. Instead of understanding a network as an object, or a series of loose connections between like and like, I want to draw our attention to the explanatory potential of (net)working as a verb, as an action. What does it mean to (net)work? What does it mean to (net)work in the digital era? How has the expectation for (net)work changed the nature of creative labour under conditions of platform capitalism? More specifically, how do musicians (net)work to engage fans and consumers? Musicians have long been expected to network with industry professionals, fans, and other musicians, but in what sense has this expectation of (net)working changed in the digital era? As a conceptual frame, (net)work articulates the implied flexibility, sociability, and entrepreneurial skills musicians are now expected to possess.

For Bourdieu (1986), networks are an example of stock in social capital. Networking is crucial for developing social capital (Watson, 2014) because the size of one's network connections determines the volume of their social capital (Bourdieu, 1986). Possessing social capital and establishing a networked reputation is now paramount to obtaining work in a "sector increasingly marked by structured job insecurity" (Watson, 2014, p. 171). Angela McRobbie (2002) argues that this kind of worker must become a "micro-structure" that is self-producing and self-reliant (in Galuszka, 2013). Similarly, Brooke Duffy (2015) articulates this as "aspirational labor" wherein content creators appear to produce simply for the love of the activity but, in reality, they harbour very real desires to eventually get paid for their work, either directly or through employment within the industry.

In the case of platform capitalism, (net)work speaks to the surplus value that is expropriated from the productive labour of musicians. By simply intervening and taking a rent—a small percentage of sales, in Patreon's case—capital extracts surplus value from the exchanges made between musicians and fans. "The value that accrues to the social networkings and search engine sites," Ursula Huws (2014) argues, "ultimately derive[s] from surplus value produced by labor. But this is the labor of the workers who produced the commodities that are advertised on these sites, not the labor of people who use the site" (p. 161). In the case of Patreon, the concept of (net)work pushes the importance of creative labour to the fore, and turns away from the emphasis on fan/user-generated labour that initially spawned the digital labour debate. This is not to say that research on digital labour and fan-generated content is not significant, but that in this corpus of research there exists a gap. (Net)work seeks to fill this gap by emphasizing the creative labour put forth by musicians who use these sites to make a living; it speaks to the social capital needed to make use of these platforms because one's success in the neoliberal creative economy is contingent upon one's ability to foster a monetizable fanbase—a task that involves countless hours of relational and social labour.

Crowdfunding

In part a response to the structural limitations placed upon emergent musicians, crowdfunding surfaced as a promising outlet for the funding, promotion, and dissemination of creative content by their producers. Philip Peltz (2013) explains that crowdfunding is but one of several new tactics musicians can deploy to simultaneously finance and release their music, wherein the fundamental aim is to have fans raise

money to finance a band's endeavours, such as the production of an upcoming album or live tour. Artists, according to Peltz, "monetize their superior social status" through crowdfunding platforms, capitalizing on the relational labour they tirelessly put forth on social networking sites (p. 112).

When operating a crowdfunding site, there is considerable time spent on administrative tasks, Sara Bannerman (2013) observes, which can be distracting from the production of music. In this light, crowdfunding platforms, Devon Powers (2015) writes, "mesh well within the neoliberal 'creative economy'" and ultimately serve "those who approach creativity like entrepreneurs" (p. 124). These platforms are fuelled by the administrative, relational, and creative labour put forth by musicians. With "each rollout of online tools" corporations have devised "ever more ingenious ways of extracting cheaper, discount work from users and participants" (Ross, 2012, p. 30). David Hesmondhalgh and Leslie Meier (2015) concur, arguing that "web utopians hail crowdsourcing as a new form of financing but freedom from the majors has impelled musicians to remodel themselves and their careers according to more entrepreneurial terms and to take on new forms of promotional work" (p. 11).

Patreon

Jack Conte is a musician and videomaker, and is part of the duo Pomplamoose with his wife, Nataly Dawn. Over the last eight years the two have seen both viral and commercial success, with their quirky cover songs and videos receiving millions of YouTube views (Ruiz, 2016). Frustrated by low, pitiful revenues trickling in from video views and unreliable, sporadic income from commercial work, Conte set forth to create a better solution—"for himself, and all creators of digital media" (McKinney, 2014). In May of 2013, with the help of his former roommate and web developer, Sam Yam, Conte launched the micro-funding and distribution platform Patreon. The name, Patreon, is a combination of two words: patron, a person who provides financial support; and eon, "used rhetorically meaning an indefinite or long amount of time" (Billig, 2016). An apt description of the site's function, the name articulates exactly what Patreon does: it creates a space for creative producers to receive regular funding from fans (or patrons) in the form of micro-payments that allow them to sustain ongoing creative production.

Patreon is open to any amateur or professional creatives—primarily the former—seeking support, and anyone can become a patron. It works like most other crowdfunding platforms, but rather than have a campaign to collect one lump sum of

money, creators collect micro-payments from a group of supporters and fans in order to fund ongoing creative endeavours (Ruiz, 2016). Patreon is unique as a crowdfunding platform because it operates on a subscription model, differentiating it from Kickstarter and IndieGoGo, which are goal-based platforms (Nugent, 2016). The subscription model enables recurring funding for ongoing production—patrons donate a specific amount of money to the creator on a schedule determined by the creator. Support is typically given per month or “per thing” and can range from \$1 to \$500, though this varies from creator to creator. It is more common, however, for musicians on Patreon to collect support per music video, whereas illustrators and artists tend to collect per month.

In a recent keynote talk delivered at the 2016 DIY Musician Conference in Chicago, Conte emphasized the need for musicians to “Work to Publish.” According to Conte, “working to publish is about getting shit done. It’s selfless, it’s outward focused, it’s results, it’s giving back to the world” which he compares to working for pleasure, a labour he sees as a “luxury” that’s “inward focused” and “self-indulgent.” This idea of continuous production supports the very site has created—musicians churn out an endless stream of content in the hopes that patrons will pay to support this endeavour. Patreon initially appears practical, providing ongoing support rather than a lump-sum investment but it demands ceaseless production from the artist. Musicians must not only “work to publish” by churning out an endless stream of content, they also labour to provide the incentives promised at each level of funding. This productive labour is compounded by the continuous need for musicians to labour relationally, to make ongoing efforts to foster relationships with fans and patrons — they (net)work.

Conclusion

While it possesses many strengths, Patreon is marred by several limitations, chief among them the amount of labour it demands of its creators. Many commentators lament that creators require an existing fanbase before monetization can begin, and that Patreon is not the place to build such an audience (Ruiz, 2016; Nugent, 2016); you must learn to (net)work before you can run, so to speak. According to some critics, the fastest way to build a committed fanbase is to “give your work away for free” (Ruiz, 2016). This, as many emerging musicians can attest, is not an ideal situation. Once work has been distributed for free, it becomes devalued, making it difficult to then begin asking fans for monetary support. According to one Patreon user, “as it is now, creators have to do all the leg work and it is only working for 5-10% of the popular

few,” and this mirrors trends present in the very industries musicians are attempting to circumvent (Ars Fantasio, comment to T. Arnold, 2016). Another user states that the site really “isn’t as artist friendly as it says,” and that those without a massive fanbase are left in the lurch (Comic Squid Queen, comment to T. Arnold, 2016).

(Net)work, in the form of fostering and cultivating an audience of monetizable supporters, is no easy feat and demands an extensive output of relational labour (Baym, 2015). As Hesmondhalgh and Meier (2015) write, “in spite of the considerable hype about initiatives such as crowdfunding, the new digital technologies have failed to offer a sustainable and meaningful institutional alternative to corporate capital” (p. 6). In the realm of crowdfunding, emphasizing the benefits of self-promotion is a deceptive practice that obscures the reality of the conditions of production. In the end, it appears that the real spoils do not go to aspiring musicians but to established ones (Ross, 2012, pp. 30-39). As Bannerman (2013) concludes, “while crowdfunding may ultimately make funding more mobile, it may also make creation, labour, and funding more disconnected from important forms of stability and support.” So, while platforms such as Patreon do give musicians greater access to and continuous interactions with fans, in so doing, I argue, they create higher expectations for musicians to (net)work, to accrue social capital and place greater importance on their capacity to shape such connections into economic capital. To be sure, new technologies do grant musicians greater access to the means of production and distribution, but with that privilege of access comes increased pressure to become entrepreneurs—a skill they likely don’t have, nor desire to possess.

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Employability as Ideological Training: Sheltered Workshops, Disablement, and Labour in Capitalism

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Social welfare fundamentally changed after the Second World War, however, many of the core principles of the Poor Laws remained. Lasting principles originating from the Poor Laws include the doctrine of ‘less eligibility’, which dictates that receipt of social assistance should never be more desirable than work, and the use of moral categories to distinguish between the ‘able-bodied’ and those who are not expected to work (Piven & Cloward, 1993; Shragge, 1997). Likewise, compulsory unemployment remains a built-in component of the capitalist economy because this system requires that there be more workers seeking employment than employers will ever recruit. Drawing from political economy and critical disability studies, this paper considers how categories of disability are discursively produced through work and social provisioning in capitalism. The first section recounts a history of what ‘counts’ as work performed by disabled people: how their labour within residential institutions has been exploited, how this exploitation was discursively maintained, and how some disabled people’s work remains an exception within North American labour laws. The second section considers how one segregated form of labour for people with developmental disabilities, sheltered workshops, persisted under the false pretence that they create a transition point into the mainstream workforce. The present-day sheltered workshop system, which the Ontario government recently committed to shift away from “one individual at a time” (Simmons in Welsh, 2015b), continues to operate ‘outside’ of, and as a legally authorized exception to, minimum wage legislation. This simulated work setting encapsulates how disabled people’s labour remains caught up in work society’s infatuation with employability.

Employability as able-bodiedness

A hierarchy exists amongst those who are unemployed, rooted in the productivist values of what Weeks (2011) refers to as the ‘work society’. Work society’s productivist values benefit the market and serve employer desires for ‘docile bodies’ while disabled people, whose bodies and minds do not conform those of the standard worker, are effectively ignored. As a result, disabled people came to be perceived as a social problem under capitalism, providing justification for their policy-based exclusion from production in the labour market and their segregation from ordinary life (Russell, 2001).

Piven and Cloward (1993) do not focus on disability in *Regulating the Poor*, however, following their analysis, disability is defined according to its relation to the labour market and further, the determinations of what constitute disability shift according to the relief cycle. The state, as controller of public relief systems, discursively produces disability by evaluating disability status in order to expand or contract the labour supply (Stone, 1984 as cited in Russell, 2001; Galer, 2014). The ways in which the term ‘employable’ is used are telling; it can refer to ‘job readiness’ but at times it is also used interchangeably with the term ‘able-bodied’. Talking about employability as able-bodiedness encapsulates the significance of able-bodiedness as the norm and disability as a flexible boundary category.

Social assistance eligibility is likewise determined based on a disabled person’s employability. In times of financial restriction, such as the UK context at present, the eligibility criteria for social assistance and social care tightens (Hall & McGarrol, 2012). The professed goal of social assistance programs, and workfarism more generally, is to help make people ‘work ready’; this is also the central goal of our educational systems, as well a measure of rehabilitative and psychiatric treatments (Glazer, 1993 as cited in Weeks, 2011). In these ways, the neoliberal state remains preoccupied with enforcing work. Medical and rehabilitation professionals, case managers, social workers, even jobseekers themselves become involved in the subjective process of evaluating disability claimants’ employability (Galer, 2014).

What counts as work?

Unpaid labour by residents within psychiatric institutions in the Global North was justified from the late 19th century to the post-First World War period as ‘moral treatment’ for apparent idleness that contributed to poor mental and physical health (Reaume, 2000). The idea that work regimes functioned as treatment for idleness was popular among medical experts of the period (Galer, 2014). Institutions for people with

intellectual disabilities share a similar legacy of invisible unpaid labour being performed by residents, with work assignments distributed according to ability and gender (Abbas, 2012; Beckwith 2016).

After the First World War, ‘work therapy’ continued to be promoted by medical and rehabilitation professionals, as offering necessary physical, psychological, and social benefits to people with various forms of disability. Prevocational and vocational ‘training’ was offered within institutions, rhetorically validating the economic exploitation of residents (Malacrida, 2015). Work even became central to institutional learning for children with intellectual disabilities; it was integrated into play for inmates as young as six (Abbas, 2012).

Over time, sheltered workshops developed both inside and outside of residential settings. Though the individual labourer within the sheltered workshop is promised the opportunity to learn vocational skills that could lead to independence, they are more likely to become subjected to a life of work in the workshop, paid only meagre sub-minimum wages (Gill 2005; Taylor 2002).

Shifts in the labouring done by disabled people and the framing of this labour within institutions (and gradually into the sheltered workshop system) reflect the ever-changing discourses used to justify unpaid labour as beneficial to the individual rather than a form of exploitation (Abbas, 2012). These shifting discourses functioned to justify exploitation and differentiate between the paid work done by staff and disabled people’s labour within residential facilities and sheltered workshops.

Therapeutic work regimes had the added benefit of ensuring residents were more compliant to paid staff, whose work was often indistinguishable from unpaid resident labour (Abbas, 2012; Galer, 2014). Residents’ labour was essential to the running of residential institutions as it subsidized the substantial operating costs of large-scale facilities and helped to manage growing populations (Beckwith, 2016; Galer, 2014). Beckwith (2016) and Reaume (2000)’s archival work stands as a testament to the labour people with intellectual and psychiatric disabilities have performed within institutional settings in Canada and the US. These accounts document how people with intellectual and psychiatric disabilities “have a rich history of mastering and performing relevant and meaningful labor” (Beckwith, 2016: 42).

In her recent book *Disability Servitude: From Peonage to Poverty* (2016), Beckwith writes about the effect of institutional peonage lawsuits in the US during the mid 1960s to mid 1970s, brought by past residents suing for back wages. By bringing into question over a hundred years of involuntary servitude, these cases had significant

impact. *Souder v. Brennan* (1973) in particular ruled that the Fair Labour and Standards Act applied to public institutions and hospitals, granting resident workers the right to minimum wage. Despite this decision being subsequently overturned in 1976, the damage was already done. During the three-year period that *Souder v Brennan* was being appealed, most states had ceased ‘therapeutic’ work programs within institutions, choosing to replace resident labourers with a mostly non-disabled workforce.

These legal challenges also accelerated deinstitutionalization in the United States. No longer able to rely on the unpaid labour of residents as a profitable resource, large-scale institutions suddenly became economically unfeasible. In the three-year period between these legal decisions, an average of 27,200 people with intellectual and psychiatric disabilities per year were released into quickly developed community programs, three times as many as in the previous decade (Beckwith, 2016). To this day, the decision of *Souder v. Brennan* (1973) is blamed for creating the conditions of ‘enforced idleness’ on the wards of mental hospitals. However, criticisms rarely take aim at the professionals and the state who created the conditions that led to this litigation and subsequently failed to develop sustainable community-based alternatives.

Historical accounts and the consequences of this stream of litigation illustrate disabled people’s capacity to labour and contribute, even if they have been unable to compete in the mainstream labour market in conventional ways. Ironically, people were sent to live and die within institutions based on the belief that they were (or at least, based on anxieties that they might be) unemployable when, in reality, their labour sustained these institutions. Disablement was thus produced by the economic and social forces of capitalism through notions of employability that justified social exclusion.

Sheltered workshops

People with all forms of disability remain largely absent from or marginalized within the Canadian workforce. Disabled Canadians are much less likely to participate in the labour force than non-disabled working aged (aged 25 to 54) adults (Statistics Canada, 2008). Those who work in integrated settings earn less on average than their non-disabled counterparts, approximately 73% less (Statistics Canada, 2008). Canadians with developmental disabilities in particular have some of the lowest labour force participation rates (i.e. working or seeking work) of all disabled Canadians, at a rate of

only 32.7% (Statistics Canada, 2008). Similar patterns of lower labour force participation and higher unemployment among disabled people have been found in the United States and the UK (Hall & McGarrol, 2012; Russell, 2001). As of 2015, there were roughly 65,000 Ontarians with developmental disabilities and 370 agencies in Ontario delivering various kinds of developmental services, including forms of employment training and supports (Ontario Ministry of Community and Social Services, 2015). A 2014 survey of these 370 agencies only received a response rate of less than half; of those that responded, nearly 3,500 participants in more than 50 sheltered workshop-like programs in Ontario were counted (Welsh, 2015a).

Applying Weeks' (2011) concept of 'work society', the sheltered workshop system represents a continuation of the exploitative forms of labour that took place within residential institutions and it continues to deploy individualizing discourses to justify itself as 'therapeutic' and 'rehabilitative'. Within this system, developmentally disabled labourers are trained to do unskilled, labour-intensive non-marketable tasks that provide no real work experience (Abbas, 2012; Galer, 2014). Mimicking industrial workplaces (with large open 'shop floors'), they intend to socialize developmentally disabled labourers into worker roles (Copp, 1998). Expectations of workers are communicated in numerous ways: through the layout of the space, through referring to workshop clients as 'employees', by using buzzers to indicate break times and work time, and by following hierarchical chains of command: (disabled) employees, (and non-disabled) floor instructors, managers, and a director (Copp, 1998). In exchange for their labour, 'employees' receive a largely symbolic stipend (Galer, 2014).

Promised the opportunity to learn vocational skills so they can transition to independence, sheltered workers are in fact more likely to remain labouring within these settings long-term (Copp, 1998; Gill 2005). This simulated work setting encapsulates how disabled people's labour, even when located outside of the mainstream labour market, is still caught up in work society's infatuation with employability. "Sheltered workers were training *to become employable* rather than gaining skills that in fact made them employable" (Galer, 2014, p.5) [emphasis added]. Operating in a liminal space that is neither 'inside' nor 'outside' of the mainstream labour market, disabled people labour as neither 'workers' nor 'patients'. In the process, the political nature of the issues of unemployment and chronic poverty are evaded (Galer, 2014).

Like workfare programs, sheltered workshops operate 'outside' of the mainstream labour market and are careful to separate work from wages because of the

rights and benefits this association might invoke. Instead, the work performed within these programs gets rebranded as 'work preparation' (Friedli & Stearn, 2015). The 'training' received, in both cases, is ideological and is used to mobilize the reserve army of labour; workers learn to psychologically prepare themselves to accept low paying, unstable jobs based on the needs of the market (Peck, 2001; Shragge, 1997). As Lynn Friedli states: "Employability is now less a set of skills than a mindset" (2014, p.4).

Conclusion

At the end of 2015, the Ontario Ministry of Community and Social Services announced a commitment to phase out sheltered workshops. This was partly in response to mounting criticism and renewed public attention, though disability rights activists have been vocally opposed to the system since the 1980s and public approval has been in decline for just as long (Galer, 2014). More significantly, legal challenges have been made against the sheltered workshop system. In 2013, Terry Lynn Gerry was awarded \$186,000 in damages and back pay through the Ontario Human Rights Tribunal, who found the discriminatory pay practices of sheltered workshops to be in violation of the Ontario Human Rights Code (Monsebraaten, 2014). Instead of quick and widespread closures, as was experienced with deinstitutionalization, the Ontario government has indicated the transition will be gradual. No new admissions are accepted into the existing programs (Developmental Services Ontario, 2015; Welsh 2015b).

The lasting impacts of this system, and the unintended consequences of this upcoming transition to integrated work settings, are yet to be realized. No matter what new forms their labour takes, developmentally disabled people are likely to remain oppressed under capitalism, regardless of whether they are exploited as wage labourers or excluded from wage labour, living in a precarious state of poverty, trying to maintain disability benefits. The high rates of poverty and unemployment facing developmentally disabled people remain unaddressed and there may be new ways of generating profit from the now 'employable' disabled reserve army of labour.

This is not to suggest that developmentally disabled people should or must remain oppressed under the current system. Though there remains little room to expand on potential solutions, I would argue that some socially just alternatives and means to labour market integration show promise. For instance, a number of alternative businesses have been in operation in Ontario for decades. Alternative businesses are distinct from sheltered workshops in that they are social enterprises run

entirely by disabled workers. Most of the jobs offered by alternative businesses are permanent part-time; many employees support themselves through a combination of ODSP and earned income. Their community economic development approach is concentrated on creating lasting employment opportunities that support people in jobs that are flexible to their needs. Alternative businesses are not an adequate solution to widespread unemployment on their own. Some scholars are rightly critical of their limitations (see for instance: Hall & Wilton, 2011), but as consumer-run social enterprises, they remain dedicated to the personal and collective empowerment of disabled people. As such, they actively resist the notion that disabled people cannot work (Church, 2006).

As previously mentioned, disabled workers in integrated settings typically earn significantly less than their non-disabled counterparts. The successful integration of large numbers of disabled workers into mainstream workplaces would require a large-scale reconceptualization and prioritization of accessibility. Rethinking accessibility could create a shift in the normative expectations applied to all workers, so as to include disabled people in workplace cultures rather than considering them as exceptions to able-bodied norms. In other words, there is a need to ‘crip’ work society, so to speak (McRuer, 2006).

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Rethinking the Informal Economy in the West: Internship, Voucher-based Occasional Work and Self- Employment in the Italian Context

Marco Marrone

This paper represents a synthesis of my personal research path, which examines the transformation of labour and its relationship with capitalism. More specifically, this paper focuses on the tendency of capitalism to informalize the employment relationship to achieve both a cheaper workforce and to avoid employer responsibility towards workers, a tendency that intensified following the 2008 financial crisis. By informal employment, I mean here essentially all those workers who share the condition of working without being recognized as workers, a situation that employers achieve by utilizing legal frameworks that facilitates this. On one hand, this provides a significant advantage for employers who are exempted from their legal obligations, including paying a salary or respecting employment standards. On the other hand, it produces significant impacts on the lives of workers, who become more insecure both inside and outside the workplace. Despite the significant differences among the three forms of employment considered in this paper—internships, voucher based occasional work, and self-employment—all share the common status of working outside legislated employment standards. The lack of recognition and protection experienced by these forms of employment provides the rationale for the use of the term ‘informality’.

In the following sections, I will engage in a rethinking of the notions of informal labour and informal economy, focusing on how, since the 1990s, it is necessary to rethink the linkages between the formal and informal dimensions of work. This is very much necessary not only to move beyond the idea of informal economy as a separate sphere, but also to consider the informal economy, which is often investigated in non-western countries, as a crucial feature that is also present in the western context.

Second, in order to understand the actors who drive the expansion of the informal economy, I will focus my attention on the Italian case. Since 2008, in fact, statistics show how those kinds of positions that make it possible to regulate working activities through an alternative framework are very much rising. Finally, I will discuss a crucial feature in this context: the role of the state in allowing employers to promote these positions as a strategy to help people enter the labor market.

Rethinking the Informal Economy

The expansion of informal labour in the West it is not a new thing, though debates over informality have increased significantly in the era of globalization (Routh & Borghi, 2016; Portes & Haller, 2010; Portes & Castells 1989). The phrase ‘informal economy’ first appeared in the social sciences in the 1970s through anthropological work describing economic life in Africa (Hart, 1973). However, as later underlined by Hart, the concept of informality was more a residual category for all those activities outside state regulation (Hart, 1990). The debate on the informal economy was brought into sociology by scholars such as Portes and Castells (1989), who used the concept to focus on the transformation of economies in the West at the end of Fordism. Before the rise of neoliberal globalization, the informal economy was characterized as “those income generating activities occurring outside the state’s regulatory framework that have analogs within the framework” (Sassen, 1998, p. 152). This indicates that it is perceived as a separate sphere. However, especially since the 1990s, globalization, and the rise of network capitalism (Gereffi & Korzeniowicz, 1994; Boltanski & Chiapello, 1999), the informal economy began to be increasingly seen as interconnected with the formal economy, often as an outcome of outsourcing processes by Western companies operating in the Global South (Mezzadri, 2012).

Furthermore, the definition of the informal economy was extended from simply indicating unregistered companies to also including “all forms of informal employment, that is employment without labour or social protection, both inside and outside informal enterprises, including both self-employment in small unregistered enterprises and wage employment in unprotected jobs” (Chen, 2007, p. 2). Finally, scholars have also indicated that informal economies were legacies of pre-modern economies, which would have disappeared once western capitalism would have extended globally (Lewis, 1959). Not only did this not happen in the Global South, where informal employment is increasing, but it also seems to be expanding in industrialized economies, where it was not expected/predicted, as an effect of neoliberal policies

(Routh & Borghi, 2016). It is in this later context, where the expansion of the informal economy emerges in multiple forms as a predatory tendency of contemporary capitalism, that this paper places its attention.

However, attempts by employers to move outside employment standards should not be a surprise. The natural tendency of capitalism towards the ‘denigration of labour’, as captured by Braverman (1979), is for capital to deny the value of labour to reduce labour costs and also to exert control over labour. If Braverman describes the degradation of labour as an effect of Taylor’s scientific organization of work, the rise of informal employment described above can be perceived as an effect of neoliberal reforms. The state, which once worked as a decommodifying agent (Esping-Andersen, 1990) has in the neoliberal context acted to support the commodification of work. This happened not only as a retreat from the market, but often because of labour policies developed in order to facilitate the unemployed entering the labour market. It is in this context that Barber *et al.* (2016) describe this process as ‘low-intensity neo-liberalism’. Specifically, the last 35 years of reforms adopted in Italy, despite their content, have never been presented as neoliberal, but instead are often hidden under other rhetoric including, for example, that of reaching EU standards.

Financial Crises and the Informalization of Labour in the Italian Context

The XV report on the Italian labour market released by INPS, the Italian Institute for Social Insurance, underlines how the impact of the 2008 financial crises on the labour market has been even more significant than the great recession of 1929 (INPS, 2017). Furthermore, in 2014 the International Labour Organization (ILO) clearly underlined how austerity policies have prolonged the effects of the crises (ILO, 2014). In this context, ISTAT reveals how unemployment moved from 8.6% in 2008 to 12% in 2015, while youth unemployment moved from 21% in 2008 to 40% in 2015.

A decrease in employment it is not the only effect that financial crises had on the labour market, however. As illustrated in Table 1, while full-time employment has decreased since 2008, with almost two million jobs lost, other types of positions such as internships, vouchers, and self-employment have experienced growth.

Table 1 – Employment in Italy, 2008-2015

TYPE OF EMPLOYMENT	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Full-time	19499	19178	18876	18837	18436	17917	17865	17953
Part-time	3199	3145	3275	3377	3712	3838	3944	4018
Internship	/	/	/	/	186043	209941	226778	348047
Voucher	24755	68396	149561	216214	366465	617615	101722	138003
Self-Employment	20,5	17,6	20,2	16,9	17,7	16,8	22,5	22,7

Even though internship data has only been collected since 2012, internships have demonstrated an exponential growth in the period following the financial crises. In 2015, for example, internships grew by 54%. Most likely, this growth is an effect of the ‘youth guarantee’ program, an EU program that began in 2014. The program provides almost 7€ billion for those countries that have an unemployment rate of more than 25% in order to improve the employment rate. Italy received 1.7€ billion and mainly spent its share of these funds promoting internships by paying interns a minimum amount of compensation. Furthermore, we must consider that these statistics exempt those internships that are part of formal educational programs. These are a significant number if we consider that an increasing number of universities have adopted mandatory internships in their degrees to fulfill the task of the ‘third mission’, a buzzword used in academic circles to indicate the necessity of ‘moving education closer to the needs of the market’ (Laredo, 2007). Thus, the total number of internships is higher than that captured by official statistics and will probably increase in the near future due to an extension of the use of internships to high school students (Marrone, 2016).

An extensive debate among journalists, activists, politicians, and trade unionists has followed the explosion of voucher-based occasional work. Originating in 2003, and taking inspiration from what had been done in Belgium with *cheque-service*, the aim of voucher-based work was that of formalizing that part of the informal economy that usually involves individuals who have a marginal position in the labour market (Borelli &

Vielle, 2015). Therefore, a ticket system has been developed to create a system that could easily be used for those working activities that are historically unregulated, such as domestic jobs. Voucher-based occasional work consists in hourly work that can be paid using tickets widely available for purchase, even in corner shops, the cost of which includes taxation, insurance, and social contributions. At its inception, voucher-based occasional work was largely limited in terms of both those who could access the work, as well as the sectors in which the working relationship was permitted. Because of this, it was largely ignored until 2008, at which point interventions from the government removed restrictions on voucher-based work. The liberalization process was completed by 2012, at which time the use of vouchers was allowed for every kind of job.

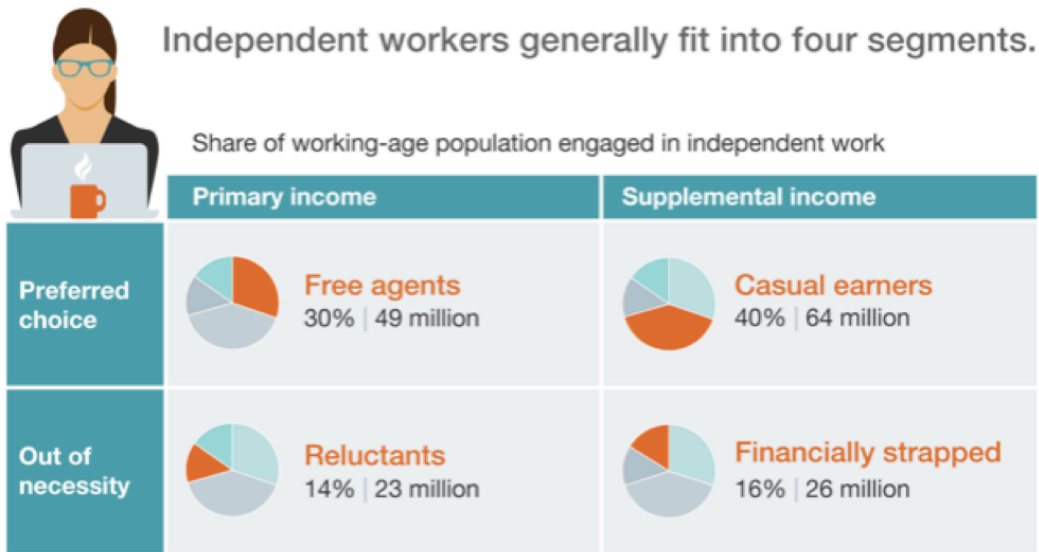
After 2012, in fact, the use of voucher-based occasional work demonstrated an exponential growth, every year registering almost double the number of individuals as compared to the previous year. In 2015, there were 1.4 million individuals doing voucher-based work, which raised suspicions of abuse from unions. As a result, over three million signatures were presented by the Italian General Confederation of Labour (CGIL) to the government requesting the abolition of voucher-based work. The use of voucher-based occasional work enables companies to avoid legal responsibilities, reducing the employment relationship to a mere exchange of work for money. The easy access to voucher-based work, as well as the significant advantage it gives to companies seems to explain its explosive growth. In other words, following the liberalization of voucher-based work, informalization increased through the expanded use of informal employment in areas where formal employment positions had previously existed (De Angelis & Marrone, 2017).

Finally, the ballooning of the informal economy seems to also have involved self-employment. However, since self-employment is a category that involves many different forms, there can be many reasons behind the rise of this phenomenon. One explanation has been underlined by Sennet (2012), who asserts that the rise of self-employment in the UK must be seen as a strategy for those individuals who do not find any employment option. Another possible explanation comes from the misclassified use of self-employment as an employer strategy to hide formal employment (Marrone & Bertazzon, 2015, p. 15). Finally, a third possible factor was underlined in the McKinsey Report (see *Figure 1*), which surveyed more than 8.000 self-employed workers across Europe and North America and found that individuals are undertaking this form of work

both out of choice and necessity, with self-employment often as a second job in response to financial pressures created by the economic crises (Manyika, et al., 2016).

In conclusion, it is important to underline the paradoxical effect that these reforms seem to present. Both internships and voucher-based occasional work were introduced to facilitate entry into the labour market, especially for young people. However, they seem to be producing a counter tendency, since their growth suggests that they are substituting informal work for formal employment. In this context, the state appears to favour the use of informal employment while undermining the formal employment relationship. It thereby supports a system that keeps the unemployed trapped in the former rather than assisting them in securing the later.

Figure 1 – The Self-Employed and the McKinsey Report



Source: 2016 McKinsey Global Institute survey of ~8,000 US and European respondents

Conclusion: The Degradation of Labour in the 21st Century

Perceiving the 2008 financial crises simply as a recession risks overlooking deeper and more significant transformations to the post-crisis economy. In Italy, while formal employment has been significantly reduced since 2008, informal employment has shown exponential growth. This apparent contradiction seems to underline how financial crises have impacted not only the quantity of jobs, but also employment quality. Despite key differences, internships, voucher based-occasional work, and self-

employment all seem to share a commonality in that they allow employers to avoid certain legal obligations. This condition produces significant consequences for workers both inside and outside their workplaces. First, these positions increase uncertainty and vulnerability, being exempted from both the protection of employment standards and the possibility of joining trade unions. Second, they have no access to social rights such as unemployment insurance, which undermines their possibility of refusing highly exploitative positions, thereby increasing inequality between individuals who share the same job but not the same employment status.

Furthermore, these positions make use of a narrative that often minimizes the role of an individual's working activities in favour of other aspect such as education, flexibility, or autonomy in the organization of labour. However, this should not be a surprise, since it involves a new mechanism that reproduces the longstanding tendencies towards the degradation of labour identified by Braverman. What is new in this context is the role of the state, which, instead of working as a decommodifying agent (Esping-Andersen, 1990), is introducing neoliberalism in the form of employment policies.

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A Labour of Love? The Ironic Imbalances of Teaching Yoga

Judith Mintz

This paper examines the ways yoga instructors negotiate, resist, and conform to a gendered ideal as workers within contemporary global yoga culture. Magazine and online images predominantly represent yoga as populated with white upper-middle class women; yet as workers teaching up to 20 weekly classes in multiple locations, most can barely afford to emulate the lifestyle they promote. This consumerist reality of yoga as a commodity for well-being and social capital sits in stark tension with its original purpose as a method for the practitioner to know themselves, as stated in the Yoga Sūtras and Upanishads (Schnäbele 2013, p. 138). We might consider yoga teachers as guides toward generating self-awareness, purity of thought, speech, and body; however, this is inaccurate. Instead, yoga teachers are the backbone of an industry fuelled by the sale of yoga teacher training programs, props, clothing, music, and home decor. These commodity sales account for a higher dollar value than what they earn through leading yoga classes and owning studios. According to Yoga Journal, people spend \$16.8 billion dollars on yoga props, clothing, accessories, and classes (2016 Yoga in America Study). The yoga teachers thus produce and reproduce dominant ideologies of embodiment while also being subject to social norms and economic situations that dictate how they manage their careers.

While we see stereotypical images in advertising of the stay-at-home-mom doing yoga and fitness, discussions about the yoga teacher who is also a mother are less frequently popular despite their prevalence in North America. Like many mothers who work outside the home, mothers who are yoga teachers balance a delicate line between managing the demands of their families and teaching. It is important to examine and subsequently disrupt this pattern, because not only do gender

inequalities in domestic labour persist despite many second wave feminist interventions (Hoschschild 2003), but the yoga industry as a whole fails to consider the ways in which these inequalities affect female teachers who are mothers. I add to the problematic by pointing out that contemporary yoga discursively regulates women's behaviour while producing pliable social reproducers. I argue that teaching yoga is an inherently precarious occupation that contradicts the purported goals of yoga itself, and that a career as a yoga teacher is falsely idealized and predicated on neoliberal social constructs of flexibility, individual responsibility, and happiness. The methodological foundation for this research is feminist multi-sited ethnography, and I share some of the narratives and analysis from my fieldwork doing interviews with yoga instructors, many of whom are mothers. Through hearing the stories of yoga teachers, we learn about the conditions in the yoga world that shape and reproduce inequality. This work disrupts the complacency of the industry that simultaneously claims to desire prosperity and health for all while ensuring that equity does not in fact become manifest.

Theoretical Underpinnings

Contemporary yoga is in the eye of a perplexing dialectical storm. Its practitioners can either perform what Hennessy and Mohan (1989) refer to as a "crisis containment" (326) that reproduces ideologies of capitalism, sexualization of women's bodies, and class and race exclusion, or alternately, yoga practitioners can disrupt these ideologies through feminist acts of working class insurgency and body positivity projects. I argue that the yoga world today is playing out what Hennessy and Mohan (1989) call the "global reach of capitalism" with its expensive pants and designer juices decorating the media in everything from banking and food advertisements. At its core, materialist feminism links women's identities, bodies, desires, and needs to class (Hennessy and Ingraham 1997, p. 2), all of which are in play in this examination of contemporary North American yoga teachers as workers. Similar to the way many yoga practitioners approach their practice, Hennessy and Mohan articulate how discipline produces the "...good subject necessary under the emergent conditions of production, exchange, and consumption, and to serve as the ideological foundations of...family, sexuality, and labour..." (p. 329)

I articulate materialist feminism with yoga through contradictions inherent between teaching yoga, care work, and ideologies of neoliberalism and self care. Schnäbele (2013) argues that yoga practice "must be seen as a part of the broader

political scope of individualized health—and self-care, yoga bodywork being a part of this personal prevention program and fundamentally a requirement of modern society.” (p. 140) Materialist feminism thus becomes the lens through which to explain the social structures and processes that exploit and oppress women. Hennessy and Ingraham (1997) argue that “women’s labor continues to be a primary source of capital accumulation.” Through social reproduction, women’s bodies create future workers who will inhabit striated positions in class hierarchies. Comacchio (1997) offers a materialist feminist analysis of health as a capitalist commodity, and demonstrates the ways in which white women historically have shouldered the responsibility of producing the next generation of citizens who would be healthy, fit, productive, and content with their places in society (p. 309). Further, patriarchal ideologies of motherhood dictate that a good mother places the needs of her children before herself (O’Reilly 2016).

In his discussion on the trajectory of health as a social value, Robert Crawford (1994; 2006) makes several important arguments that are relevant to the ways in which contemporary North American yoga practices and health articulate with neoliberalism. He points out that health is central to our social identity. It is linked intrinsically to notions of work and fear of death, and that in developing ways to avoid illness, and the healthy self is defined by what it is not: i.e. the unhealthy self. Even though 72% of yoga clients are women (Infographic, 2016. yogajournal.com), they are also pitted against each other through class difference engendered by neoliberal ideologies that assess individual success or failure. Mothers who are yoga teachers negotiate these pressures to be supermoms who effectively balance career success and a healthy marriage while producing prodigal offspring. As Sharon Hays (2007) explains, many mothers in Europe and North America experience a “cultural contradiction” through expectations of intensive mothering (p. 409), in which their commitment to children and also work pull them between the spheres of the domestic and the public. These concepts pertain to the study of yoga teachers as labourers. I articulate the conflicts and contradictions they embody as a proletariat who simultaneously reproduce neoliberal ideologies of health as social currency. Lau (2000) calls this the “new age capitalism” as many yoga teaching mothers aim to sidestep the confines of typical 9-5 work structures to accommodate their family schedules, while maintaining social status as consumers and producers of a healthy lifestyle.

Methodology

The yoga teachers I interviewed in this multi-sited ethnography are women in the global yoga teacher community who responded to my calls for participants on social media and through word of mouth snowball sampling. In his classic literature review of the different forms of multi-sited ethnographic practice, Marcus (1995) defends multi-sited ethnography because of globalized processes and transnational movement. I made several posts on social media pages over 16 months asking for yoga teachers to come forward to talk about their experiences with teaching yoga. The first calls for participation were not specifically aimed at mother yoga teachers; but I came to realize that many yoga teachers, the majority of whom are women, are also balancing mothering with their teaching careers. Some came to me through word of mouth snowball sampling, social media, and through discussions about the intersections of teaching yoga and mothering at the yoga studio in which I taught and volunteered. I carried out individual interviews and participant observation in Toronto, New York, and England via Skype, where participants pay particular attention to the transformative potentials of social change in and through yoga. This research represents a broader analysis of the narratives of a sampling of 20 yoga teachers, most of whom are white, middle class, and also mothers. While this can be construed as a limitation in the study, it is also an ethnographic finding that demonstrates the larger demographic of yoga teachers in this culture, and indicates an imbalance with regards to who has the privilege of accessing yoga teacher trainings and offering classes. The findings illustrate that they struggle to preserve the significance of what they are teaching rather than subjugate it in service of the commodification of yoga, and that they sacrifice a career as what one research participant called it, “a yoga star,” in service of doing motherwork.

In addition to my being a doctoral researcher, I am also a mother and yoga instructor, so I bring personal experience to discussions. In Elisabeth Badinter’s 2010 book *The Conflict*, her participants say that, “motherhood is only a part of what they do and who they are, ...but most say they do not want to give into it. Their identities as working women are not up for discussion. Thus they engage in negotiation.” (130) The brief sample that I share here is a slice of my dissertation project. I analyzed these discussions with thematic coding, looking for words that indicate frustration or negotiation of care work and scheduling with other family members.

Findings

The research participants demonstrated a phenomenon that Arlie Russell Hoschschild (2003) calls “gender strategy.” What this means is that the mother yoga teachers I interviewed report that they are still doing the bulk of the housework, the child care, and the family organizing. My hypothesis is that our neoliberal, responsabilizing society does not make it easy for women to be empowered as mothers, and that for mothers who are also yoga teachers, there are more barriers over which they must hurdle than yoga teachers who are not mothers. The following salient and touching points that a few of my respondents shared illustrate my hypothesis.

Julie is a mother of four kids who are 8, 10, 15, and 20. Her husband works in IT and they live in the Kitchener-Waterloo area. She got pregnant while doing her undergraduate degree, and dropped out to do full time mothering. She returned to school recently, completed her B.A., and became a yoga teacher six years ago. When I asked her about the challenges of negotiating the demands of care work and being a yoga teacher, she said:

Scheduling is difficult. My work is all over the place. And I have to try to keep that all together, who’s gotta be where, and where else. I try to get the scheduling in so I make sure that someone is home for the other kids if I’m not. Also my brother lives with us, so sometimes he’s able to fill in childcare holes. I can’t ever have a superstar yoga career because I can’t do 8 hours of yoga a day.

Julie is in charge of all of the driving around and the organizing of the household, while her husband goes to work. Her life seems much more complex than her husband’s. She is definitely in a place of authority as a mother, but seems to run into some difficulties balancing power sharing with her husband. Here, we see Julie using gender strategies:

I think a lot of couples, you know, can struggle with that. Like where one person wants to be more authoritarian and the other. He gets much more frustrated when he feels his authority is threatened.

When I asked Laura, a mother of three in rural England to describe the ways in which she and her husband manage the care work in their family in conjunction with his

meagre income combined with governmental social support, she wrote that the paucity of income is stressful in her home, but that she prefers staying at home with her children and teaching only one or two classes weekly to running around trying to teach yoga full time:

Societal support is so poor, that we are so thoroughly inculcated with the notion that we are responsible for ourselves, that the fact that I can see that and am rearing healthy humans is the most important work I can do, and I will take any money that helps. The structure of my life has also meant that I have been unable to make yoga my career. In the time I have been at home with kids, hundreds of other teachers have appeared on the local scene. Some of those, I know for a fact, see no dissonance in putting their young children in paid childcare so that they can go and teach.

Both Julie and Laura sacrifice their success as a yoga teacher in service of their work as mothers, as social reproducers.

Another theme that arises with yoga and precarious labour is the way that yoga teachers struggle with maintaining their understanding of integrity about yoga practice and philosophy in conjunction with socio-economic demands of making a living and supporting a family. Some yoga instructors do not have to support a family, like Kerri from Brooklyn New York, but they are still keenly aware of the precariousness of teaching yoga in an expensive city and worry about what to do as the yoga industry expands:

The people who I know that are doing 15 classes a week are still hand to mouth. The teachers are not people who are getting the pay. It's 18-20 bucks a class. Teachers don't make enough money to volunteer.

Many teachers feel that they have to compromise the integrity of what they are offering in order to make ends meet as yoga teachers. Others give up teaching full time, like Kerri, who is aware of her privileged position as the wife of a hard working owner of three successful restaurants. A feminist materialist analysis of her situation suggests that she has forgone working full time as a yoga teacher in favour of social reproduction—to support her husband's work; but Kerri's integrity around the ways in which she teaches yoga are more complex than whether she simply teaches or not.

Cognizant of the fact that teaching big classes often garners greater remuneration, she adds:

I don't want to compromise, I don't want to teach a class to 70 people. I mean, I've done it once, and I hated it. There's no personal interaction; I don't know how to hold space for that many people.

Yoga teachers feel frustrated that the majority of the people who attend their classes only want to relax their bodies, which is both a consumer of food and bodily techniques. They practice yoga in order to feel relief from their emotional labour as workers and caregivers while simultaneously improving their productivity in the workplace (Schnäbele 2013). In order to make some semblance of a living teaching yoga, however, the yoga teacher, who is also working in multiple roles as caregiver, spiritual and physical healer, must accept the frequent lack of commitment to yoga practice from people who want relaxation rather than yoga's deeper meanings.

Conclusion

Yoga teachers struggle to make a living in a world where the yoga industry bubble has burst, while yoga practitioners try to retreat from a culture that expects their productivity as workers and consumers. Mother-yoga teachers in particular often feel pressured to choose between the precariousness of teaching over mothering work, but these are conflicting choices. If the mother-yoga teacher chooses to lead a potentially lucrative prime-time yoga class at 5:30 p.m. on a weekday or 10:00 a.m. on a Saturday, she is labeled a bad mother for not being with her children at important times. If she chooses to be with her children, she forfeits her status as an upwardly mobile professional yoga instructor, as supported by the data in this paper. By theorizing the good worker subject and the material conditions produced by patriarchal ideologies of motherhood, however, we can begin to disrupt what I call the hegemonic yoga path; but we still do not have a solution to this problem borne out of neoliberal values of the ideal worker and consumer. The good yoga teacher is still expected to consume and sell yoga-related products and their very labour as instructors is the commodity they are selling. I intend that this research will reveal the problems in the yoga world and fitness industry, and future projects will develop policies to counter-act the effects of individualism.

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Blood, Sweat, Ink, and Tears: Exploitation of Labour in the Japanese Animation Industry

Jacqueline Ristola

In 2014, the renowned Studio Ghibli announced it was shutting down for “restructuring.” While it’s sad to see such a great film studio end, what’s more disheartening is that the studio set a high standard for labour conditions in the anime (Japanese animation) industry. Animators were paid a regular salary, an exception, not the norm, when it came to Japanese animation studios. Ghibli’s decline is an ominous sign of what’s to continue in the Japan: the continued rise of exploitative, precarious work within the anime industry.

What are the labour conditions of working animators today in Japan? How are they extensions of the industry’s origins and neoliberal practices? Foregrounded by a historical inquiry into the origins of anime labour practices and the rise of Japanese neoliberalism, this paper explores attempts to answer these questions. Through case studies, industry data, and published interviews, this paper examines current precarious labour conditions for animators in Japan, and how animators often consent to exploitative working conditions through misconceptions about artistic labour. This paper will also highlight some small but substantial ways animators resist exploitation and present some recommendations for combating the rise of precarious work in this sector of the cultural industries.

The 1960s: Trends and Tribulations

To talk of the anime industry today, we must first discuss the historical precedents set by studios Toei Dōga and Mushi Productions, some of the first prominent television animation studios in the early 1960s, and their historical influence on labour organization. As Jonathan Clements (2013) notes, while Toei’s previous film output took

deep aesthetic inspiration from Disney, Toei television prospects eventually took inspirations from Disney's division of labour as well (p. 99). The studio, in severe arrears post-WWII, adjusted their industrial model of animation production in conscious imitation of Disney's apprentice program. The assembly style of animation production combined with the Disney style of organizing also coordinated with Japan's post-war Americanization. By adapting the Disney model of "apprenticeship," this system helped train the large number of inexperienced animators, while also creating a hierarchical model within the studio to justify the pay disparities between salaried and freelance animators.

It was this staffing policy, however, that stirred up the underpaid animators, recognizing this system not as a means of training but a justification for low wages through classifying younger animations as "students" or "low ranked" employees. The harsh working conditions at Toei even produced the phrase "anime syndrome," a condition that still plagues Japanese animators today, where animators had to be hospitalized for exhaustion as a result of the "unremitting late nights, irregular diets of junk food and cramped, repetitive labour" (Clements, 2013, 103). While Toei workers successfully went on strike for better working conditions, after the union ratified, Toei changed its recruitment of animators, overwhelmingly favouring freelance workers over full time staff. This important change in staffing cemented the anime industry's labour practices for the future, as Toei's basic model of freelance work still dominates the industry today, with few salaried animators working amidst a swathe of freelance animators who are overworked and underpaid.

While union agitation and negotiations were still in process over at Toei Animation, Osamu Tezuka's new studio Mushi Productions was poaching many of Toei's best and brightest with offers of good pay and a kinder environment. Tezuka's kindness, however, belied his business inexperience. While paying his staff members better pay than Toei, as a new studio with only one property in play (*Astro Boy*), decent pay meant losses were covered through cheaper animation and risky investments. As a new production company, Mushi Pro also suffered from understaffing, with some of these problems temporarily fixed through outsourcing. But this did not fix the labour problems, as this "'outsourcing' often involved overtime by staff members who already had day jobs in the industry" (Clements, 2013, 123). Mushi Productions eventually collapsed in the 1970s, but as Clements (2013) notes, "Tezuka's arrival in the industry created a series of structures, assumptions and expectations that Japanese TV animation in particular would never shake off" (p. 130). His devaluation of anime has

left a lasting legacy of tight budgets, hurried productions, and overworked staff.

Alongside Toei's reliance on freelancer labour, Tezuka's cost cutting measures made an indelible mark on the anime industry, creating a culture of precarious work. These labour models continue today, with worker precarity the norm for most animators in the anime industry, augmented by the expansion of neoliberalism in Japan in the 1990s.

The Rise of Neoliberalism

While precarious freelance work has already become a standard in the anime industry, the rise of neoliberalism in Japan particularly exacerbated the exploitative working conditions in anime studios. After the Japanese bubble economy burst in late 1990, Japan turned to neoliberal policies to combat the following recession. Prime Minister Ryutaro Hashimoto (1996-1998) embarked on a neoliberal project of privatizing industries and deregulating the economy, invoking "the rhetoric of freedom to offload what up to the moment had been responsibilities of the state and corporations onto citizens" (Hayashi, 2011, 180). As part-time, contract, and temporary employment rose dramatically, labor laws were "systematically loosened to benefit companies wanting to replace their full-time regular workers with less expensive temporary employees" (Hayashi, 2011, 181). Today, at least 30% of Japanese employees are non-standard workers, including part-time, contract, or temporary workers. As precarious work increased throughout Japan, the culture of neoliberalism served to strengthen the proliferation of non-standard work in the anime industry, a legacy that still continues today.

Contemporary Labour Conditions

In 2015, The Japan Animation Creators Association (JAniCA) published the results of its new study of the working conditions, average income, and working hours of animators in the Japanese animation industry. Surveying 759 animators, the results were staggering. 84% of animators (both full and part-time) report working more than 8 hours a day. 15.9% of animators work more than 350 hours per month. Data about pay, hours worked, and more all indicate the same conclusion: those in the most precarious positions often provide the most work for the least pay. What's more concerning is that these results are nearly identical to JAniCA's study in 2009, illustrating the continuity of these exploitative labour practices. Individuals within the industry, however, are beginning to speak out about their precarious working

conditions, giving further insight into the working conditions of the anime industry while also demonstrating resistance to neoliberal ideals.

One of the most egregious comments comes from Henry Thurlow, an American animator working in Japan. Thurlow notes that he was advised by industry professionals that the industry is harsh, later noting that such a comment was an understatement:

It's not a 'tough' industry... It's an 'illegally harsh' industry. They don't pay you even remotely minimum wage, they overwork you to the point where people are vomiting at work and having to go to the hospital for medicine. They demand that you come in whenever they realize a deadline isn't going to be met. That probably means about a month and a half of nonstop work without a single day off. Then you will be allowed to go back to your regular six-day workweeks of 10-hour days (Meth 2015).

Other animators speaking out illustrate more labour problems within the anime industry, highlighting the egregious amount of overtime often expected by the lowest wage earning animators as reported by JAniCA. For instance, one animator at Studio Xebec for instance posted an image of his pay stub online in 2015. The animator was expect to work "as much as you can in 24 hours" (Loveridge, 2016), and for three months of work, the animator received a dismal pay of 131,330¥ (USD \$1,103). Such low pay for an egregious amount of expected hours highlights how "overtime rules remain so nebulous and so weakly enforced that the United Nations' International Labor Organization has described Japan as a country with no legal limits on the practice" (Harden 2008). This connects to larger cultural practices of overwork and other labour issues that also structure exploitation in animation studios.

Cultural Challenges

Further compounding problems, particularly in the cultural industries, is the cultural acceptance of precarious labour conditions, particularly overwork, due to workers achieving their dreams as animators. When JAniCA's asked why animators continue to do their current job, 65.1% of respondents said, 'because the job is fun,' and 60.9% said 'in order to earn money.'

Henry Thurlow highlights this emphasis on doing what you love in his interviews about the anime industry, noting that when working at Japanese animation studios,

“everything about my life is utterly horrible, however the artist in me is completely satisfied” (Meth, 2015). As Miya Tokumitsu (2014) explains, the mantra of “do what you love” is a means of extending neoliberal individualization and obfuscating collective labour struggles. As Masahiro Abe (2012) notes, in Japan “hobby-like labour . . . triggers overwork” (p. 250), with the anime industry serving as a key example of this. Animators in Japan are cultural workers, however, their self perception as “artists” ignores workplace struggle and fails to recognize the toxicity of such highly individualized, neoliberal notions of work. As Thurlow’s comment highlights, such perceptions can lead cultural workers to accept pain and suffering as a necessary component of making good art. Stahl (2012), however, debunks this myth, illustrating that there is “a legacy of the proliferation in and appropriation of Romantic myths of the artist as rebel and outsider by our culture” (p. 4), and that mystifies the (exploitative) labour involved in artistic endeavours. This mystification of cultural work enables greater exploitation in the animation industry. By focusing on the “art” instead of the “labour”, animators such as Thurlow subsume horrendous labour practices under the pursuit of art, seeing these workplace issues as part of the artistic process rather than problems of labour exploitation.

Labour issues such as overwork not only proliferate in the anime industry, but are culturally structured in Japanese society. *Karōshi*, or “death from overwork,” is a visible trend among Japanese workers, a cultural expectation where individuals workers are expected to work hard with determination as the company burdens them with intense workloads. It is the negative result of Japanese cultural expectations of diligence and hard work, whereby “doing one’s best and enduring difficult situations patiently in order to achieve one’s goals—to *gambaru*—is considered to be one of the highest virtues” (Davies and Ikeno, 2002, 88). It is also a cultural force that is no doubt at work in Japanese animation studios today.

Industry Challenges

This kind of labour exploitation has also been exacerbated by the industry's failure to adapt to contemporary anime aesthetics in terms of waged labour, as certain labour and wage practices do not reflect current workloads created by aesthetic innovation. In the past few years, there has been controversy surrounding the workload and wages of in-between animators, animators that draw transition frames in between key animation. Historically, these frames often hold less detail and thus often devalued as artistic labour. But as veteran animator Akihito Kanayama identifies, anime aesthetics today

are often very detailed and therefore more work for animators to draw, including in between animators. Kanayama describes how “movement and action was more prominent in [animation from the 80s and 90s]. . . [Today,] you see that the characters and art are very, very intricately detailed... but the actual motion, the animation, looks relatively stiff in comparison to the past” (Kemps, 2014).

While anime aesthetics, and the resulting workload for animators, have changed, the compensation for such work has not. In-between animation positions are entry level and low wage, and Sachiko Kamimura, another veteran animator, argues that living on these entry-level wages are nearly impossible. In a blog post in 2015, Kamimura notes how animators tend to be paid per frame of completion, rather than by a fixed salary or an hourly wage. She notes that while low wages were more livable earlier in the anime industry when aesthetics were less detailed, contemporary anime styles focused on intricately detailed character design means animators can rarely earn above Japanese hourly minimum wage (888¥, or USD \$7.45). JAniCA reported that the average yearly income of in-between animators as as low as 1.113 million yen (USD\$9,259) in 2013. Furthermore, it’s historically been rare for in-between animators to be promoted to other animation work, as in-between animation is often devalued, meaning in-between animation positions are poorly paid with little hope of promotion. In short, while the amount of work per frame has increased, the compensation per frame has not, creating a culture of precarious work where animators are overworked and under paid.

Potentials for the Future

When asked about the low wages in the anime industry, Kanayama shifted blame to the production committees taking a substantial portion of the profits from a show, rather than address the systemic problems of precarious work in animation studios. This kind of obfuscation must be resisted if animators are to struggle and improve working conditions. As Studio Ghibli director Hayao Miyazaki (2009) noted, “it’s false to assume that just because animators love their work, we can keep their wages so low. That just isn’t right” (p. 89). Instead, animators must recognize themselves as cultural workers at the intersections between art and labour, and that the latter needs strategic organizing in order to improve working conditions in the anime industry.

From the anime industry’s beginnings within Toei Dōga and Mushi Productions, to the rise of neoliberalism in the 1990s, to the precarious working conditions today, animators in Japan have worked in exploitative environments with low wages,

egregious workloads, and precarious employment. While there are large institutional and cultural impediments ahead, outcries on social media and initiatives like JAniCA are starting to build labour consciousness among animators, the reality is that a large portion of overtime is unpaid and obscured. Animators will need to own their roles both as artist and worker, and unite together to push for better labour conditions. The aforementioned JAniCA serves as one form of action, forming in 2008 with the sole purpose of improving work conditions in the anime industry. Initiatives like these are a vital site of further investigation, as they critique labour conditions and will hopefully serve as a stepping stone for organized labour struggles in the future.

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