Abstract

This chapter aims to expand the existing knowledge about cultures, attitudes and opinions of young adults aspiring to work in the knowledge-based, digital economy. Based on findings from a questionnaire administered to 19- to 25-year-old students enrolled in university courses in Milan, we give account of the broad range of expectations and perceptions towards working in this emergent domain by this cohort, exploring notions of flexibility, independence and career aspirations in a context, Italy, that is dominated by high youth unemployment. Results question the often-unchallenged assumption that so-called 'millennials' are more interested in the pursuit of independence and flexibility, as opposed to job stability, than previous generations. Independence and flexibility emerge as an important but not discerning aspect in a balance between job security and individual passions. These insights suggest that any generational differences that

may exist about cultures of work should be seen as be more

nuanced than how these are often portrayed.

Chapter 7

The myth of flexibility

Young adults' expectations of work in the digital economy in Milan

Alessandro Gandini and *Luisa Leonini*

(ORCID ID: 0000-0002-7705-7625)

(ORCID ID: 0000-0002-1313-6965)

This chapter aims to expand the existing knowledge about cultures, attitudes and opinions of work of young adults who aspire to pursue a career in the knowledge-based, digital economy. Often referred to in the popular press as 'millennials' – a term that is controversial in and of itself, due to the flexible demographic boundaries by which it is connoted (see Howe and Strauss, 2009) – this generational cohort is invested by a popular narrative that describes it as broadly characterised by a 'different' approach to work if compared to older generations, being largely uninterested in 'jobs for life' and instead aspiring to greater independence and flexibility (see Macky, Gardner and Forsyth, 2008). This, however, goes as an unchallenged assumption also in the existing research on the topic, that is connoted by sparse empirical analyses and a largely oversimplified approach to the issues at stake (Deal et al., 2013; Hershatter and Epstein, 2010; Myers and Sadaghiani, 2010).

To the aim of unpacking and questioning this assumption in greater detail, this chapter presents an empirical exploration of the cultures of work among young adults in Milan. Considered the 'economic capital' of Italy, a country

that has among the highest youth unemployment figures in Europe (Eurostat, 2018), Milan is an important hub for what concerns the tech economy, digital innovation and creative work in southern Europe (Gandini, Bandinelli and Cossu, 2017). The main questions this chapter asks are: what are the attitudes towards work that young adults seeking to pursue a career in the knowledge-based, digital economy in Milan display? What are their values, beliefs and expectations of work and the work life? How do these reflect in their personal and professional choices, and the way they see their future careers? To answer these questions, we administered a questionnaire to a group of 19- to 25-year-old students enrolled at various universities in the urban area, who take academic courses in disciplines such as communication, digital culture, management, sociology, political science, advertising and public relations. The questionnaire remained open for four weeks, circulated in the form of an online link, and it received 397 complete responses.

Findings put under question the often-unchallenged assumption that so-called 'millennials' are more interested in the pursuit of independence and flexibility, as opposed to job stability, than previous generations. Young adults aspiring to work in the knowledge-based, digital economy in Milan see independence and flexibility as one important aspect in a broader trade-off they seek to strike between job security on one side, and professional aspirations, passions and interests on the other. Despite the popular narrative that proclaims their disinterest in 'jobs for life' and a 'native' predisposition to exploit the chances of mobility and flexibility offered by the digital economy, their ideals and expectations about work seem in fact to be more nuanced than how they are often portrayed. The young adults surveyed in this study value independence and flexibility but not at all costs, and are fully aware of the constraints posed by the pursuit of a career in a context they recognise as highly fragmented. They see themselves as part of a 'transitional generation', being the first cohort that fully experiments the work-life balance options offered by the digital economy, and thus take a realistic stance about their future prospects. These insights suggest that cultures of work in the digital economy among younger generations appear to be more complex than what existing accounts about millennials and work tend to promote, and henceforth deserve more rigorous investigation and analysis.

The chapter is structured as follows. In the next section, we present a review of the emergent issues about the cultures and meanings of work in the knowledge-based, digital economy, as these appear in the international scholarship on the topic. Subsequently, we illustrate the design and administration of the survey at the centre of this work, while at the same time providing greater justification of the context in which this research was undertaken. Then, we look at the main findings emerging from the survey, and finally, we reflect on future research on this issue.

Chapter 7 The myth of flexibility

Millennials and work in the digital economy

An interdisciplinary body of research has questioned the evolving meanings and cultures of work in the rise of the 'new economy' (Castells, 1996). Between the late 1990s and the early 2000s, the idea of a radical change in the way people work, following the diffusion of email communications and, later, of the World Wide Web, seen as harbingers of a new era of innovation and prosperity (Leadbeater, 1997) gained popularity together with an emphasis on entrepreneurialism and the necessity to develop a personal brand as key aspects to establish professionally in a dynamic context (Gandini, 2016).

Scholars in areas such as cultural sociology and critical theory soon raised a critique to the enthusiastic accounts portrayed by this narrative, noting how these implied the prominence of individualistic values applied to work, principled on an 'entrepreneurial ideology' that was deemed to bring cultural and artistic labour closer to business and management professions (McRobbie, 2002, 2004, 2016). This also entailed a critique to the loosening of the boundaries between leisure and work (Neilson and Rossiter, 2005) and to the increased instability, insecurity and precarity (Ross, 2009) of work that characterised this emergent context.

Later, with the rise of social media, this further evolved in an interpretation that envisaged how work was undergoing a process of delocalisation, displacing and 'untethering' (Johns and Gratton, 2013). The mere fact that work could be executed anywhere, anytime as long as an Internet connection is available led some to proclaim an upcoming 'shift' in the cultures of work (e.g. Botsman and Rogers, 2011). As a consequence of this 'shift', workers were suggested to become a 'startup' of themselves and to make full use of digital media for professional promotion (Hoffman and Casnocha, 2012). Work in the 'new economy' of the Internet was deemed to be a case of 'venture labour' (Neff, 2012), with this notion intending the outsourcing of the economic risk on individual workers who engage in rampant entrepreneurial ventures. This coincided with the rise of co-working spaces and their popularisation as alternative, non-hierarchical workplaces that cater to the needs of a workforce that seeks to be independent and to escape established professional pathways to pursue their passions and interests and engage in collaboration and 'sharing' (Gandini, 2015; Gandini et al., 2017). Some imaginative categorisations of new categories of workers also emerged, such as 'nomad workers' (O'Brien, 2008) and, more recently, 'digital nomads' (Reichenberger, 2018), a term that identifies a group of young, highly educated international workers who exploit the mobility offered by the digital economy and work remotely, on a global scale, in sectors such as digital marketing or the tech industry.

In the midst of this debate, less attention was posed instead on whether this *actually* constituted a broader cultural shift about work and workers aspiring

to pursue a career in the digital economy. This has resulted in the widespread assumption that, because of their digital savviness and their somewhat 'natural' disposition towards taking advantage of the opportunities offered by mobile digital media, the younger generations of workers would by definition be more interested than its predecessors in pursuing the available option of a flexible, independent, entrepreneurial and international career. The few empirical studies available on this matter are, however, contradictory at best. Deal et al. (2010) argue that '(m)ost of the research on employed adults that examines attitudes at work among generations at the same age over time finds a few small statistical differences' if compared to younger generations in terms of work centrality, and conclude that 'what you do not see in the literature is evidence of the types of sweeping differences in attitudes, orientations, and work ethic that populate the popular press'. Others have suggested the existence of a set of assumptions around the changing relationship with work across generations, with older generations being more engaged and committed to the workplace, and younger generations being described as more collaborative but also more impatient, disloyal and disengaged (Myers and Sadaghiani, 2010). Some (Cennamo and Gardner, 2008) instead have pointed at the paucity of empirical data to support the claim of a generational divide on the basis of work values. More recently, Pyöriä et al. (2017) have evidenced how young adults appear to be more flexible in terms of changes to their occupational field than older cohorts, but do not seem to be less work-oriented than previous generations.

These, however, are still contested claims that require further empirical verification, as they seem to suffer from excessive generalisation and oversimplification. This chapter aims to contribute to this ongoing debate, providing a baseline of empirical data on cultures of work characterising young adults in a context of high youth unemployment that might shed further light on the criticalities behind the categorisation of workers and their attitudes, perceptions and aspirations on a generational basis.

Case justification and methodological note

In this section we detail findings emerging from a questionnaire distributed to young adults aged between 18 and 25, enrolled in various university courses in the areas of sociology, digital culture and media-related disciplines at the University of Milan, Milan Bicocca, and the Catholic University of Milan. The survey consisted of 22 questions written in Italian, was distributed between October 2017 and January 2018 via a web link through the platform 'eSurveysPro' and gathered 397 complete responses.

There are particular reasons as to why Milan was chosen as the context for this research. Milan is historically considered an important city for the 'new economy' as here framed, due to the presence of a notable creative and cultural

sector (Arvidsson, Malossi and Naro, 2010; d'Ovidio, 2010) and has been a lively centre for communications work since the 1980s (Gandini, 2016). In recent years, the local municipality has dedicated attention to the digital economy and the processes of innovation around it (Bonomi and Masiero, 2014), as exemplified by a public co-working scheme that lists shared work spaces 'approved' by the local authority (see Mariotti, Di Vita and Limonta, 2015).

A lively conversation around the impact of atypical work and precarious forms of employment on the younger generations has also animated the Italian public debate for more than a decade (see Armano and Murgia, 2012).. In the tradition of the Italian sociology of work, a number of researchers looked at the features and specificities of the Italian labour market (see for instance Biagioli, Reyneri and Seravalli, 2004; Barbieri and Scherer, 2005), also focusing specifically on the changing notions of work for young adults (Bertolini, 2012). This showed the decline of permanent employment opportunities in a context in which the ideal of 'jobs for life' is historically strong (Accornero, 2001) but where self-employment is also among the highest in Europe (Ranci, 2012).

Another interesting aspect that characterises the Italian context is the existence of a highly felt public discourse around the 'crisis' that emerged in the aftermath of the 2007-08 economic recession, and particularly after the 2011 state debt crisis (see Sacchi, 2015). The aftermath of the recession has particularly impacted the Italian population, both in terms of the actual shrinking of employment opportunities as well as in the public perception as a permanent condition of economic downturn (see Gallino, 2013). As part of this project, therefore, we also wanted to explore the extent to which this popular narrative has penetrated in the cultures, expectations and attitudes towards work that characterise the younger segment of Italian working population.

Findings

Sample and demographics

The sample is composed of 61% females and 39% males. In terms of age, the vast majority of respondents belong to the target cohort of young adults, with the youngest respondents being 19 and the oldest respondents being 28 (median values 19 and 20). While the study is based in Milan, and almost all respondents are Italian, many of them are actually not originally from Milan, having migrated from other parts of the country to study, especially from the so-called 'hinterland' (suburban areas surrounding Milan) and from the southern regions of Italy. This, therefore, reflects an ample picture in terms of geographic variation across the Italian context. The sample mainly consists of

undergraduate students (79%), with a smaller representation of postgraduate students (20%). Only 1% of participants already have a postgraduate degree.

In terms of familial demographics, the majority of respondents declared that their parents have a high school diploma as the highest education title (28% for both parents, 22% for one of them). Around 22% of the surveyed participants say at least one of their parents has a degree (22% at least one, 11% both of them), but almost 14% of respondents declare their parents' education title is inferior to a high school diploma. In terms of occupations in the family, fathers of respondents work or have worked a clerical job ('impiegato', 31.5%) or as self-employed (28%), with an equal percentage of factory workers and managers (18%). Regarding mothers, 51% work or have worked a white-collar job (mostly administrative or clerical occupations), while around 14% were reported as 'teachers'.

What kind of work?

Concerning the respondents' existing work experience, a relative majority declare (42.5%) to be a full-time student with some previous work experience. A 37.5% of participants both study and work at the moment of answering the survey. This fits the narrative of working students who either develop work experience during their studies or work to earn money and sustain their income while studying. A minority (19%) of participants have never worked. Among those with work experience, a majority work or have worked part-time (66%), while 34% have worked or are working full-time. Internships seem to be a common route to work in the sample (25%).

In terms of employment relation, 46% of participants work or have worked as dependent employees while 37% are or were employed as external collaborators ('lavoro parasubordinato'). A minority (9%) of students surveyed declare to work or have worked as self-employed. Concerning the channels through which they accessed work in their existing experience, a vast majority of participants seem to have found their job via personal or family ties (61.5%), while 32% responded to a job ad (either offline or online). Interestingly, online networking was also mentioned as a quite important channel to find work, albeit in relative terms (7%).

Perceptions, attitudes, values

The vast majority of participants declare they have chosen their discipline of study according to their passions and interests (84%). Only 7% of participants say they decided their academic path on the basis of career perspectives and irrespective of their personal interests. In many cases, however, the work experience they achieved seems to be related to a field in which they do not want to end up working.

Chapter 7 The myth of flexibility

The vast majority of the young adults surveyed in this study (66%) actually aspire to work in a different sector from the one they have worked in already. Around 9% of participants want to work a different job in the same sector they already experienced, while only 15.5% of the students surveyed want to continue with the exact same job. A vast majority want to work in the corporate sector, that remains a considerably attractive option to many (57%). Interestingly, the portion of students aiming to work in the Third Sector or for an NGO (30%) also seems to be relevant in relative terms. Only 10% aspire to work for the public administration.

In terms of employment status, an equal number of the participants surveyed in this study declare they have a preference for dependent work as well as to work as self-employed (27%). This is an interesting insight considering that this figure is higher than Italy's already higher-than-average figures for self-employment, which sit between 14% and 17%, (see EEOR, 2010; Ranci, 2012;). This furthermore shows that interest in self-employment is actually high in the younger generations. However, it is also interesting to note that 43% in fact do not have a clear preference. This may indicate, on the one hand, that young adults in our sample aspire to work no matter what; nonetheless, it might also suggest a deeper disillusion towards the search for permanent employment (more on this later).

In terms of channels to get work, the internship route remains strongly perceived to be a key pathway to employment opportunities (37%). Also, personal contacts remain strongly perceived as important (22%). Job centres (18.5%) and university career centres (12%) seem to be perceived as less important or useful; however, it is interesting to note that online social networking stands at a high 10.5% as a channel that participants expect to use in order to find a job (this is consistent with Pais and Gandini, 2015).

In addition to closed, multiple-choice questions, the survey included two open-ended text questions aimed to gain a broader set of qualitative insights on the expectations, aspirations and perceptions of young adults towards work aspirations. The first of these questions, in order of appearance in the survey, asked participants to specify what kind of job they aspire to, and in which sector. The body of text containing all responses to this open-ended question has then been polished and processed to the aim of producing a mapping 'content cloud' (see Cidell, 2010) and thus devises an exploratory semantic content analysis. Figure 7.1 displays the outcome of this analysis. Word size identifies the recurrence of the tag (the bigger the word, the more times it recurred).

Figure 7.1 What work do you aspire to do?

The elaboration presented suggests a widespread interest in our sample around two broad professional areas: socially related work and communications/marketing. While this does not come as a surprise considering the academic courses our respondents are attending, a few things are interesting to note. One is the relevance of the tag 'azienda' (corporation), which suggests that working a white-collar job remains a desirable option for young adults in their future career. A second aspect concerns the words 'internazionale' (international) and 'estero' (abroad), which grasp both the aspiration of working in a transnational, global environment and the perceived necessity to emigrate abroad to pursue a successful career.

On this same topic, the survey subsequently included two questions where participants were asked to determine the degree of agreement they had with the statement proposed, in a range between 1 (I strongly disagree); 2 (I partially disagree); 3 (Indifferent); 4 (I agree); 5 (I strongly agree). Answers to these questions, taken together, unveil some important insights.

First, the vast majority continues to see a permanent, full-time job as something to aspire to, for a combined 76% (option 4 = 30%; option 5 = 46%). This, however, is counterbalanced by the overwhelming relevance of one's passions and interest, that score a combined 91.5% (option 4 = 24.5%; option 5 = 67%). At the same time, there seems to be a degree of scepticism among

participants for what concerns whether they will be able to apply on the job the skills learned in their studies. Respondents seem to be confident about this, for a combined agreement of 64.5% (option 4 = 44.5; option 5 = 28%), yet we see also a relevant portion of responses indicating indifference to the topic (option 3 = 22%). Economic safety is also perceived quite strongly as a very important element in the mix, thus partially disproving the flexible and entrepreneurial narrative described earlier (combined value of 84%, option 4 = 28.5%; option 5 = 55.5%).

In line with the content cloud presented earlier, the portion of participants who aspire to do a job that has some kind of societal impact is relatively high (options 4 and 5 to this question account together for around 50%). At the same time, there seems to be limited interest in developing a career only for the sake of social prestige (option 3, 'indifferent', was the most chosen one for this entry, at 32%, followed by option 2, 'I partially disagree', at 26.5%). While these results must be taken with caution due to a possible social desirability bias, they nevertheless suggest a more nuanced attitude towards individualism than what the literature on young adults and work actually suggests, particularly in regards to the debate on 'social innovation' and 'collaboration' (e.g. Bandinelli, 2015).

For what concerns the question of whether participants prefer full-time employment over a less stable but more fulfilling job in an area of interest, the answers are quite mixed, with options 2 ('I partially disagree', 32.5%) and 3 ('indifferent', 35%) being the most selected ones. Independence seems to be an important value for many participants – however, it is not a predominant or exclusive one. Participants seem to value autonomy in a permanent, full-time job (answer 4, 'I agree', the highest in relative terms at 34.5%) but to slightly prefer the security of employment as opposed to the complete independence given by self-employment or entrepreneurship, with their related risks and insecurities (all middle values roughly equivalent). At the same time, the possibility to work a 9-to-5 job in order to have free time over the weekend is not perceived as highly attractive (option 3, 'indifferent', the highest value at 30%). On the contrary, the innovative options of 'smart working' and co-working seem to be moderately attractive (option 4, 'I agree', at 38%, and option 5, 'I strongly agree', at 24.5%, for a combined 62.5%). All in all, results seem to suggest that independence and flexibility do not appear to be a straightforward preference for the sample of young adults here surveyed. Yet, the option to undertake a totally independent, entrepreneurial activity (e.g. managing one's own company) is connoted with nuances of insecurity, and remains a scattered aspiration.

It is also interesting to note that the prospect of emigrating to another country in order to pursue one's dream job is perceived as a favourable option for many of our participants (option 5, 'I strongly agree', the highest value at 35%). This seems to be more preferable than looking for any job close to one's

family or place of birth (option 3, 'indifferent', the highest value at 32%). Finally, when asked about their perceptions of work in the present, if compared to the context of work in the past and particularly the career options available to their parents, results are also mixed. A significant 39% of participants declare that in their views, the present context is more stimulating and engaging that that of their parents, but also underline that permanent employment is no longer an option to count on. An equally significant 32.5% believe that it was easier to find work in the past, but this often entailed contenting with 'any' job, a compromise that seems to be overall uninteresting for the vast majority of the sample. Yet, around 18% of participants believe the context of work was more favourable in the past, because it was easier to find jobs. Slightly less than 10% believe it is too difficult to find work at all in the present scenario.

A second open-ended question (the last question in the survey) asked participants to describe the work scenario from the perspective of a young adult. Similar to the other open-ended question, the body of text originating from this entry was processed to produce a 'content cloud' and an exploratory semantic analysis was performed. The word cloud in Figure 7.2 visually represents this analysis. Likewise, word size identifies the recurrence of the tag (the bigger the word, the more it is recurrent).

Figure 7.2 How would you describe work today?

Chapter 7 The myth of flexibility

The visualisation ostensibly displays the trade-off between independence and job security discussed in this chapter. The words 'difficile' (difficult), 'complicato' (complicated), 'precario' (precarious) and 'incerto' (uncertain) juxtapose to the tags 'stimolante' (stimulating), 'opportunità' (opportunity) and 'possibilità' (possibility), to render a scenario that evidences how young adults in Milan are largely aware of the difficulties and constraints they are likely to face in their professional life, but equally recognise the stimulating and engaging side of starting a career in spite of these constraints and, overall, seem to aim to strike a balance between these two broadly opposite poles.

Conclusion

This chapter has sought to expand the existing understanding of cultures, meanings, expectations and values about working in the knowledge-based digital economy displayed by young adults, commonly referred to also as Millennials and often advocated as a 'different' cohort, that aspires to independence and a flexible worklife. The observation of the Milanese case as an interesting example of a lively digital and tech context in a country that is marked by high youth unemployment and diffused precarity suggests that, contrary to the generalisations and oversimplifications connoted by the popular narrative (and sometimes by research), the notions of a generational difference between younger workers and older cohorts should not be taken as an uncontested assumption. Data offer, instead, a rather nuanced and complex spectrum of opinions by young adults about work that sometimes contradict one another. On the whole, young adults see themselves as in search for a trade-off between independence and flexibility on one side, and job security on the other, as they seek to start a career that gives them a stable future but equally fulfils their passions and interest. These attitudes blend with the continuing significance of the 'jobs for life' ideal, which remains strong in the Italian context, and seem not to have been replaced completely by a narrative of independence and digital mobility, despite the discursive framework of innovation and collaboration by which this generation is connoted and that is also, to some extent, present in this sample.

In an open-ended conclusion, this chapter suggests that wider, rigorous empirical examinations of the issue of a 'cultural difference' in approaches and expectations towards work on a generational divide are strongly needed. It seems interesting, for instance, to investigate further – perhaps in qualitative terms, through interviews or focus groups – why permanent employment remains so relevant in the Italian context (and perhaps beyond) *despite* at least two decades whereby the younger generations have been exposed to a 'cool' narrative of entrepreneurialism and flexibility that advocated the irreversible evolution towards an entirely mobile, flexible and 'nomad' workforce. Also, it may be interesting to question the extent to which, in the Italian case, the

media discourse around the economic crisis – which has been strong and extensive for a decade and especially across the Italian state debt crisis of 2011 – may have had an influence in these perceptions, on a par with established familial expectations and class backgrounds.

References

Accornero, A. (2001). Pezzi di lavoro. *il Mulino*, 50(1), pp. 102–114.

Armano, E. and Murgia, A. (2012). *Mappe della precarietà*. Vol. 1 e 2. Bologna: Odoya.

Arvidsson, A., Malossi, G. and Naro, S. (2010). Passionate work? Labour conditions in the Milan fashion industry. *Journal for Cultural Research*, 14(3), pp. 295–309.

Arvidsson, A. and Peitersen, N. (2013). *The ethical economy: Rebuilding value after the crisis*. New York: Columbia University Press.

Bandinelli, C. (2015). *Il miglior lavoro del mondo*. Milano: Doppiozero-cheFare Books.

Barbieri, P. and Scherer, S. (2005). Le conseguenze sociali della flessibilizzazione del mercato del lavoro in Italia. *Stato e mercato*, 25(2), pp. 291–322.

Bertolini, S. (2012). *Flessibilmente giovani: Percorsi lavorativi e transizione alla vita adulta nel nuovo mercato del lavoro*. Bologna: Il Mulino.

Biagioli, M., Reyneri, E. and Seravalli, G. (2004). Flessibilità del mercato del lavoro e coesione sociale. *Stato e mercato*, 24(2), pp. 277–314.

Bonomi, A. and Masiero, R. (2014). *Dalla smart city alla smart land*. Venezia: Marsilio Editori.

Botsman, R., & Rogers, R. (2011). What's mine is yours: how collaborative consumption is changing the way we live (Vol. 5). London: Collins.

Castells, M. (1996). *The rise of the network society*. Cambridge: Blackwell.

Cennamo, L. and Gardner, D. (2008). Generational differences in work values, outcomes and person-organisation values. *Journal of Managerial Psychology*, 23(8), pp. 891–906.

Cidell, J. (2010). Content clouds as exploratory qualitative data analysis. *Area*, 42(4), pp. 514–523.

Deal, J.J., Altman, D.G. and Rogelberg, S.G. (2010). Millennials at work: What we know and what we need to do (if anything). *Journal of Business and Psychology*, 25(2), pp. 191–199.

d'Ovidio, M. (2010). Network locali nell'economia cognitiva-culturale: Il caso di Milano. *Rassegna italiana di sociologia*, 51(3), pp. 459–484.

EEOR European Employment Observatory Review. (2010). *Self-employment in Europe*. Available at: http://osha.europa.eu/en/publications/literature_reviews/self-employed [Accessed 28 February 2018].

Chapter 7 The myth of flexibility

Eurostat. (2018). *Unemployment statistics.* Available at: https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Unemployment_statistics#undefined [Accessed 26 September 2018].

Gallino, L. (2013). *La lotta di classe dopo la lotta di classe*. Bari: Laterza.

Gandini, A. (2016). *The reputation economy. Understanding knowledge work in digital society.* Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Gandini, A. (2015). The rise of coworking spaces: A literature review. *Ephemera, Theory & Politics in Organization*, 15(1), pp. 193–202.

Gandini, A., Bandinelli, C. and Cossu, A. (2017). Collaborating, competing, coalescing, coworking: Artists, freelancers and social entrepreneurs as the new subjects of the creative class. In: J. Graham and A. Gandini, eds., *Collaborative production in the creative industries*. London: University of Westminster Press, pp. 15–32.

Hershatter, A. and Epstein, M. (2010). Millennials and the world of work: An organization and management perspective. *Journal of Business and Psychology*, 25(2), pp. 211–223.

Hoffman, R. and Casnocha, B. (2012). *The start-up of you: Adapt to the future, invest in yourself, and transform your career*. New York: Random House Digital.

Howe, N. and Strauss, W. (2009). *Millennials rising: The next great generation*. New York: Vintage Books.

Johns, T. and Gratton, L. (2013). The third wave of virtual work. *Harvard Business Review*, 91(1), pp. 66–73.

Leadbeater, C. (1997). *The rise of the social entrepreneur*. London: Demos Publishing.

Macky, K., Gardner, D. and Forsyth, S. (2008). Generational differences at work: Introduction and overview. *Journal of Managerial Psychology*, 23(8), pp. 857–861.

Mariotti, I., Di Vita, S. and Limonta, G. (2015). Una geografia degli spazi di coworking a Milano. *Imprese & Città*, 8, pp. 72–80.

McRobbie, A. (2016). *Be creative: Making a living in the new culture industries*. London: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.

McRobbie, A. (2004). Everyone is creative: Artists as pioneers of the new economy. In: E. Silva and T. Bennett, eds., *Contemporary culture and everyday life*. Durham, UK: Sociology Press, pp. 186–199.

McRobbie, A. (2002). Clubs to companies: Notes on the decline of political culture on speeded-up creative worlds. *Cultural Studies*, 16(4), pp. 516–531.

Myers, K.K. and Sadaghiani, K. (2010). Millennials in the workplace: A communication perspective on millennials' organizational relationships and performance. *Journal of Business and Psychology*, 25(2), pp. 225–238.

Neff, G. (2012). *Venture labor: Work and the burden of risk in innovative industries*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Chapter 7 The myth of flexibility

Neilson, B., & Rossiter, N. (2005). FCJ-022 From Precarity to Precariousness and Back Again: Labour, life and unstable networks. The Fibreculture Journal, 5.

Pais, I. and Gandini, A. (2015). Looking for a job online: An international survey on social recruiting. *Sociologia del Lavoro*, 137, pp. 115–129.

Pyöriä, P., Ojala, S., Saari, T. and Järvinen, K.M. (2017). The millennial generation: A new breed of labour? *SAGE Open*, 7(1).

Ranci, C. (2012). *Partite Iva: Il lavoro autonomo nella crisi italiana*. Bologna: Il Mulino.

Reichenberger, I. (2018). Digital nomads – A quest for holistic freedom in work and leisure. *Annals of Leisure Research*, 21(3), pp. 364–380.

Ross, A. (2009). Nice work if you can get it: Life and labor in precarious times. New York: NYU Press.

Sacchi, S. (2015). Conditionality by other means: EU involvement in Italy's structural reforms in the sovereign debt crisis. *Comparative European Politics*, 13(1), pp. 77–92.