Repositioning Resistance in the Workplace: Reframing Relationality and Risk in Contemporary Work and Employment

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THURSDAY 14 SEPTEMBER PAPER SESSION 4 9:00-10:30

Room W010A – Gender and intersectional inequalities within workplace resistant discourses

From 'Lady Clerks to CEO': A biographical narrative exploration of the challenges, opportunities and educational programmes for female bank workers since the lifting of the Irish Marriage Bar

Kate O'keeffe, Aisling Tuite, Zeta Doole

(South East Technological University Ireland (SETU))

This particular research sits within the interpretivist paradigm, aligned with the relativist ontology, social constructivist epistemology and axiology of the researcher. Alongside the anniversary of Ireland's joining the EEC (now EU), 2023 marks 50 years since a further historic event. The Irish Marriage Bar was a legislative basis on which women were dismissed (on marriage) from certain occupations. Although it only legally applied to those working in the Civil Service, it was implemented in both the Public and the Private Sector.

Ireland was not the only jurisdiction in which a Marriage Bar existed, but it was by far the longest-lasting. The Irish societal context, specifically the pervasive (cultural) influence of the Catholic Church, gives insight as to how the bar endured for so long. The literature traces the establishment of the Marriage Bar, the society in which it survived and thrives, and its eventual abolition in 1973. However, there is a notable knowledge gap whereby the voices of the women affected can be heard. This researcher considers the application of this 'institutionalised gender discrimination' (Mosca and Wright, 2020, p. 6) in banking organisations and financial institutions particularly. The research methodology stems from the philosophical foundations, as outlined above.

Primarily, the study sits within a phenomenological space; the researcher is concerned with the 'meaning of lived experiences for [research participants]' (Creswell, 1997, p. 51). An inductive inquiry approach is undertaken, whereby 'primacy [is given to] understanding people's everyday experience of reality… so as to gain an understanding of the phenomena in quest.' (Braun and Clarke, 2006, p. 8) The primary focus is the 'emergent data themes, concepts and dimensions.' (Gioia, Corley and Hamilton, 2013, p. 21)

However, the researcher is cognisant that she must acknowledge her own 'epistemological commitments' (Braun and Clarke, 2006, p. 12) at each stage of the research process. It is therefore necessary to act as reflexive practitioner, critically evaluating the approach to and interpretation of data which is collected.

Wengraf's (2001) iteration of the Biographic Narrative Interpretive Method (BNIM) forms the basis of the semi-structured interviews whereby primary data is collected. These interviews are divided into two sub-sessions, with the option for a third sub-session post preliminary data analysis. In the first sub-session, the research intervenes as little as possible.

An open question invites the participants to recall the important events over the course of their career. On foot of this, the researcher takes notes on which the questions of sub-session two are based. The purpose of sub-session two is to delve deeper into the concepts and themes which are introduced by the participant. An iterative approach to data analysis involves the application of the six phase approach described by Braun and Clarke (2006).

The research is concerned with exploring the scarring effect of the Marriage Bar and its limitation of women's participation in leadership roles within banking organisations, thereby identifying the challenges, pathways and gatekeepers to career advancement.

Women in leadership and mothers in leadership in Europe from a comparative viewpoint using QCA

Paul Sinzig

(Goethe University, Frankfurt)

Women are underrepresented in most sectors and countries in leadership and management, but the proportion of women in leadership and management positions in Europe varies vastly by sector and country. The social contexts in each country are unique, which makes it difficult to explain the varying percentages using only covariational analyses (Abendroth et al., 2013; Dämmrich and Blossfeld, 2017; Ellingsæter, 2013; Yaish and Stier, 2009). This paper takes on that challenge and looks at the interwovenness of cultural, legal, demographic, and institutional forces constraining women from access and contributing to the path dependency of their exclusion from leadership in a comparative and innovative way. By deploying a fuzzy set qualitative comparative analysis (fs-QCA), I translate complex societal contexts into conjunctions of conditions that can account for equifinal configurations, which means that multiple pathways of interwoven conditions can lead to the same outcome. The qualitative nature of this method enables the conditions to consider all kinds of struggles and forces hindering women from attaining leadership positions that vary among national contexts, for example: educational developments in women's and men's degree-holding, female labor force participation proportion over time, legal requirements (e.g., female quotas) and when they were implemented and how they have developed, motherhood timing (such as average age of mothers at first birth) over historical time, gender culture (egalitarian or gender-segregative attitudes) over time, and proportionality of public to private sector employment. Temporal processes and delayed impacts are considered for calibrating the conditions to account for historical change. The analysis will show which configurations of these conditions are necessary or sufficient to explain gender (dis)parity in leadership. The research results will help to understand under what conditions parity exists, in which societies women are able to resist norms and exclusions, and finally which countries have similar patterns in their configurations.

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Cultural capital, job performance and gendered governance in Indian academia

Renu Yadav

(Central University of Haryana)

The governance framework of every nation impinges upon innovative practices, overall economic growth and Political strategies (Maher & Anderson, 1999). It assures the relevance of working employees in the landscape of governance by providing well-managed regulations, creating conscience, opportunity to engage in decision-making process and meeting the expectancy level of all stakeholders (Nmai & Delle, 2014; Supra, 1987; Donald & Dowling, 2000-2001). The study aims at contributing to a precise understanding of the 'Quality of Governance' by discussing the impact of socio-

cultural environment on the role of females heading powerful and leadership positions in academic sector in India. The study is based on empirical evidence collected using a convenience sampling technique from 250 female experts working at eminent positions like Dean, Directors, Deputy Directors and Heads of concerned Departments in various Universities and affiliated colleges in Delhi NCR region, India. TThe response rate was 81.4 percent, where total number of survey forms distributed were 350 and survey forms received back were 285. Majority of the female respondents (See table 1) were from between 50 to 60 years of age group (54.4 %), working in private universities or colleges (74.8%), at the post of head of directors (62.8%), having more than 15 years of leadership experience (48.4%) and earning monthly income of 1 to 2 lakhs (60.8%). he findings revealed that socio-cultural environment significantly and positively affect the quality of governance. In furtherance, the study foregrounded the positive relationships among socio-cultural environment, work-life balance, job satisfaction and quality of governance. Results of the study reflect that job performance partially mediates the relationship between socio-cultural environment and quality of governance. The theoretical and practical implications could be utilized to strengthen the governance in the academic sector. From the perspective of research, the findings have enlightened the core transitional perspectives and aspects of the highly educated civil society, which have greater level of expectations in terms of effective governance and service delivery, wherein the transformational leadership acts as catalytic creating and guiding practice by the employees to attain successful governance (Mohamad et al., 2014). On one hand, Quality of governance in terms of good governance has been acknowledged as the initiatives that aims at promoting development opportunities, empowering its citizens, bringing decisions making institutions closer to the commoners and providing the platform to community members to engage in the decision making process by opting for higher and dignified leading positions. On the other hand, the global practices act as push factors whereas existence of traditional and cynical approach work as pull factors forcing the women to alight the prominent roles. The level of inculcating women in the important sectors of nation like education has been perpetuating due to higher level of their resilience and versatility as well as influence of global environment. Women are holding many prominent positions in the academic sector in the present scenario, their quality of government in terms of taking adequate decisions in highly influenced by the presence of transitional social, cultural and economic indices.

Women career growth, and divorce rate in Kenya

Ndirangu Ngunjiri

(University of Nairobi)

This study aims to deepen our understanding of the nexus between women's career growth, and the divorce rate. We use data from the generations and gender surveys to examine women's growth and divorce in Kenya. We surveyed 90 women from executive leadership networks who held high-status roles and were in common-law relationships. Our results controlled for several variables such as age, whether they had children, and initial status levels when they first met their partners. We asked the women if we could contact their husbands, and were able to obtain data from 6 husbands. Using retrospective and longitudinal data, we show that all else equal, there is a propensity to divorce among families in which the wife is a career woman. We found that women's career growth facilitates an increase in the divorce rate in Kenya, wives who believed they held higher status positions than their husbands were indeed more likely to experience feelings of resentfulness or embarrassment, feeling that their status was decreased by their husbands' lower status position, which increased the likelihood of divorce or already divorced. Husbands experienced greater marital dissatisfaction and thoughts about divorce if their wives were outwardly unhappy with their marriage. Findings are relevant for organizations and for individuals, a reminder that women who seek a successful career and family life still find it challenging to achieve both. Organizations have an important role to play by providing family-friendly policies to all employees, important for those in dual-career couples to have open and honest conversations about their career ambitions and their marriage expectation. Notwithstanding our findings, other questions remain to be answered in future research. For example, might women who hold higher job status than their husbands be penalized for violating gender role prescriptions in their workplaces? And would we find similar effects of status spillover on marital instability for LGBTQ couples?

Room W010B – Marginalised work and workers, risk and resistance in precarious places

The work environment of algorithmically managed workers in the logistics sector: Preliminary results from the Amosh Project

Karin Nilsson, Carin Håkansta, Nuria Matilla-Santander

(Karolinska Institute)

INTRODUCTION: The on-going digital revolution is by many considered the greatest disruptive event to the world of work since the industrial revolution. Algorithmic management (AM) uses Artificial Intelligence and data collection to remotely track and manage the workforce. Potential harmful effects of AM on the workers and their work environment has garnered growing attention in recent years. However, most research focuses on digital platform workers and phenomena such as deskilling and dehumanization of the workplace. Few studies address the topic presented here: the tangible effects of AM on the work environment in the logistics – one of the sectors outside of platform work where AM has grown most in recent years.

OBJECTIVES: The aim of the presented study is two-fold. First, to gain a greater understanding of how workers, managers and safety representatives perceive the effects of AM on workers' physical and psychosocial work environment in the logistics industry. Second, to identify workplace factors that can mitigate potential harmful effects, through workers experiences and perceptions of AM.

METHODS: The presented qualitative study is a two-stage, multi-case analysis comparing two very different company settings using AM in warehouse and transportation activities. The first stage is a comparative analysis of the application of AM in a relatively young e-trade company and a relatively old food production company, drawing on information gathered from conversations and observations on-site. The second stage draws on semi-structured interviews from 2022 with 34 workers and managers at the two companies about how AM affects different aspects of the organization of work and the psychosocial and physical work environment.

EXPECTED RESULTS: In our preliminary findings we identify inter-case similarities in how AM is used to manage the workers, parallel to inter-case differences in their safety and health (OSH) management that lead to different effects of AM on the perceived health and wellbeing of the employees. We also detect phenomena resulting from AM that have been discussed in earlier research on platform workers, including surveillance, the 'black box' phenomenon, standardization, and deskilling. Although a reduced sense of coherence and lower levels of control seem to manifest in an overall feeling of stress and anxiety, we also identify potentially mitigating factors, including a positive workplace culture and well-functioning systematic OSH management. Our results indicate a wish for improved understanding of systems and access to data, which would strengthen workers' involvement in the technology's implementation and development. This could potentially lead to more transparent, person-centered applications of AM that not only generate trust and prevent OSH risks, but also possibilities to use data gathered via AM to improve the work environment.

CONCLUSION: The findings suggest that AM has disruptive potential for job quality and can have negative implications for the work environment in the logistics sector. To mitigate these negative effects, we suggest that well-functioning OSH management, better understanding of the AM systems and transparency, could increase the sense of coherence and trust in the organization and reduce the power imbalance between workers and managers.

Job-related distress among young paid workers in India during COVID-19

Jihye Kim, Wendy Olsen

(University of Manchester)

In India, youth unemployment due to the growth of joblessness has been a clear concern (Bisht and Pattanaik, 2020; Singh et al., 2020). Another issue is about addressing NEET (not in employment, education or training) problem and providing decent jobs to those outside the workforce. A research gap is found in measuring the quality of jobs and employment of young people who are already at work and how their job quality has been transformed after the pandemic. This study aims to estimate the level of job distress of young people in high and lower-risk groups and reveal its transition during and after the pandemic.

Background: The impact of COVID-19 on job distress could be more severe on the youth who work in low-skilled and low-paid areas. In particular, we are concerned that young people from 'lower' social groups could have 'higher' job distress. Tribal youth have been severely affected by COVID-19 because of economic inequality and social stigma (Kasi and Saha, 2021). Circular migration is another factor whereby young people are put at risk of harmful forms of work (Olsen et al., 2020). Also, we want to see how gender influences the allocation of work. Girls' heavy reproductive roles could lead them to distressing jobs during the pandemic (Kim and Olsen, 2023; Naidu, 2021).

Methods: The main datasets are the Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS) of 2020/21 and 2022, which involve large random samples. We define young people between 15 and 24 years old, based on the standards set in Sustainable Development Goals 8.5 and 8.B (UN, n.a.). We select two-time points to compare the job distress index right after the pandemic and after two years of it. The distress index for each individual is based on indicators of low-waged work, overtime work, and working in hazardous occupations. In our model, we can discover how the distress index in 2020/21 and 2022 responds to three protective factors (a "higher" social group; parents' education; and wealth) and two risk factors (degree of COVID-affectedness of the district in 2020; illness of either parent), including standard covariates.

Findings: Focused on those who have a wage or salary for their work – less than 20 percent of the young labour force – we examine the signals of economic distress in work. A gendered pattern can show how female and male youth's work in informal and formal jobs makes a different outcome in job distress. The change in job distress over two years can show how Covid-19 impacted young people at work directly. It is expected that Covid-19 has impacted rural, migrated, and tribal youth more significantly in India, sustaining them in low-quality jobs. This study brings significant implications: ensuring the quality of jobs is as important as providing jobs to young people; any labour-market strategy needs to reflect gender, structure, and cultural dynamics regarding job distress. We discuss policy measures such as the national minimum wage and national rural employment guarantee scheme in light of the findings regarding young workers' distress in work.

Everyday lives of Roma workers as the sites of struggle within post-socialist racial capitalism

Barbora Cernusakova

(Goldsmiths, University of London)

In this paper, I articulate a theory of Roma as racialized surplus population of post-socialism, whose situation is characterized by underemployment that involves informal and otherwise precarious work. The key argument that I develop, is that the Czech state reproduces Roma marginality and precarity to keep the wages low; to mute the class struggle; and to discipline the working class as a whole using Roma as the cautionary tale, which in turn "justifies" their surveillance and precarity.

Drawing on my interdisciplinary research, that involved an 11-month ethnographic fieldwork in 2016, during which I lived and worked alongside Roma workers in the Czech post-industrial city of Ostrava; and an analysis of the state policies and legislation in the field of housing, long-term unemployment and credit, I present a counter-narrative to the generalized tope of Roma unemployment and stigmatizing culture of poverty. I show the entrapment of Roma in low-income and precarious jobs, dilapidated neighbourhoods and a cycle of unpayable debts. Engaging data from my ethnography with socio-legal analysis, I propose that the state labour and housing market policies, as well as the under-regulation of the credit industry are all instrumental for this racialized containment.

My work is an intervention in the leading-edge of academic theory bringing together surplus population, racialization and employment relations. It builds on Marx's arguments about workers who lack regular access to employment due to the decrease of capital's demand for labour. I provide an empirical response to work of Aaron Benanav (2020), the Endnotes collective (2010) and most recently also Mau (2023) who centre their analysis on the chronic labour under-demand in the 21st century on the global manufacturing overcapacity. This theory emphasizes the growing exposure of laborers to job insecurity and their fall outside the protection of standard labour law or the social security system. My aim is to show how the post-socialist state—which is not part of the Global South but not quite in the global North either (Müller, 2020)—targets the surplussing policies on Roma. Focusing the analytical gaze on the post-socialist context, characterized by accelerated introduction of market mechanisms and institutions, presents a unique opportunity to unpack the deep embeddedness of racial logic in capitalist structures.

The question that initially animated my research was whether and how do Roma workers organize against these forms of racialized oppression, how do they foster solidarities in a socio-spatial configuration that relies on creating fractions in their shared experiences of injustice and exploitation. The inconclusive answer provided by this paper is that organizing starts in struggles of everyday lives—in workplaces, in households, in the neighbourhood. It is in these struggles "against everyday toxicities" when Roma workers, often women, defend themselves in a system that keeps them in a state of surplus population.

Embodying long-term unemployment: Theorising jobseeker resistance from an embodied perspective

Helen Tracey

(Northumbria University)

This paper proposes that a more explicitly embodied theorisation of the lived experience of unemployment can support a greater understanding of jobseeker agency, and thus resistance. Specifically, the paper draws on Merleau-Ponty's phenomenology to focus on the body and subjectivity as central to experiences of unemployment. This counteracts the dominant perspective on unemployment, which is embedded in activation approaches to welfare, as a psychological experience that can only be successfully navigated through individualised rational thinking. This includes the expectation that jobseekers undertake identity work (Riach & Loretto, 2009), correct perceived psychological and character deficits (Friedli & Stearn, 2015; Taylor, 2018) and perform emotional control (Peterie, Ramia, Marston & Patulny, 2019). The agency of unemployed people to exercise choice according to their own perceived needs and preferences is severely restricted (Egdell & Beck, 2020). In particular, job search is an integral part of activation which is recognised as a disembodied approach that privileges middle class experience (Gist-Mackay, 2018). This disregards barriers faced in more precarious unemployment situations such as the stigma of long-term unemployment.

There are some insights into the benefits that a more embodied perspective on unemployment could bring especially in relation to increased interest in the temporality of lived experience. For example, jobseekers are obliged to aspire towards future 'employment-to-come' (Gerrard & Watson, 2021), yet an embodied perspective reveals this future as conditioned by the past and present and thus is not open to psychological control (Paju, 2019). However, experiences of unemployment and jobseeking have not been fully explored from an embodied perspective and would benefit from a more coherent embodied theoretical framework. Merleau-Ponty's (1968) notion of embodiment, and particularly his theory of reversibility of perspective, supports the recognition of different experiences that challenge the apparently secure meanings of activation's discourse. By applying Merleau-Ponty's (1962, 1968) concept of intentional threads it can be understood how past experience conditions current action, and therefore how employment loss cannot necessarily be forgotten as activation's discourse requires. Research into jobseeker resistance to date has focussed on rejecting unemployment stigma, with an emerging understanding of resistance in this context as small, often disguised, individual acts. Recent research has demonstrated that a more relational approach is required, such as Garcia-Lorenzo, Sell-Trujillo and Donnelly's (2021) typology of responses to unemployment stigmatisation. Merleau-Ponty's relational phenomenology has potential to provide a more holistic and nuanced account of experiences of unemployment that do not align with the idealised and compliant jobseeker. This will be demonstrated in this paper by drawing on observations of job search activities and photo interviews with long-term unemployed men developed as part of ethnographic research prior to the coronavirus pandemic. The example of the men's embodied relation to historic industry and their preference for learning 'real things'

at school is contrasted with the psychological model of learning and work they are required to follow as jobseekers. Through these stories the men criticise activation and resist some of its stigmatising effects. Thus, the main contribution of this paper is to support the theorisation of jobseeker resistance.

Room W001 – Marginalised work and workers, risk and resistance in precarious places

Invisibility, relative deprivation and social stratification in Greece: A study of migrant women's perceptions of inequality at work during the crisis

Paraskevi - Viviane Galata

(Hellenic Open University)

Invisibility and inequality in the subjective experiences of Albanian migrant women in the Greek labour market have not been sufficiently studied. In times of crisis, mechanisms and social processes of marginalization are being strengthened and push women to new roles, expectations, and social positions. The paper investigates how migrant women understand invisibility within their occupation, to what extent they feel relative deprivation and injustice when comparing their situation with others, and what this means for the reproduction of inequalities and the boundaries of social stratification. The study is informed by feminist standpoint theory (Collins 2019; Yuval-Davis, 2015) with a focus on intersectionality. It will examine the socio-historical context of invisibility of female migrant workers in Greece; present the theoretical framework for invisibility and social inequality; and identify different kinds of inequality. The theory of relative deprivation will also be used to analyze subjective perceptions of inequality and social comparisons in times of crisis (Runciman, 1966; Pettigrew, 2015). Qualitative research is conducted through a case study and 10 work history biographical interviews with Albanian migrant women, living and working in the Artemis community. Findings are analyzed in light of the socio-historical context of invisibility of migrant women workers in Greece, while the statistical analysis of changes in the occupational distribution provide a picture of the social landscape. Findings show evidence of the ethnic and gender segregation of the Greek labour market and a significant increase of informal and temporary work in low-status jobs in services. Invisibility is mainly experienced through the degradation of working conditions, flexibility, insecurity, and the concealed process of alienation. The economic crisis increases the dependencies; meanings and perceptions change towards reduced expectations. Comparisons with reference groups show increasing inequalities within the same social group, but feelings of injustice are felt more due to administrative barriers and discrimination. Overall, the paper offers insights on the process of invisibility of migrant women and its significance for social stratification.

Unpaid labour, stigma and resilience: theorizing adaptations to precarious work in employment research

Valeria Pulignano

(KU Leuven - Center for Sociological Research)

Theorists often stress the 'paid' dimension associated to precarious work – understood as 'uncertain, unstable, poorly paid and insecure work in which employees bear the risks' (Kalleberg, 2018: 3) - inside the market. In so doing, they forget to assess the consequences of precarious work conditions for unpaid (socially reproductive) work, outside the market (for an exception see Pulignano and Morgan, 2022). At the same time, whereas scholarly work considers that unpaid labour time (Cole et al., 2022) contributes to precarious work (Moore and Newsome, 2018), however, researchers still need to explain how precarious work unfolds from unpaid labour. Here unpaid labour is understood encompassing not only socially reproductive work but also, and more importantly, non-compensated labour time spent to undertake tasks as part of person's job description. We argue that explaining how precarious work unfolds from unpaid labour requires a broader examination of the dynamics and structural conditions under which people undertake unpaid labour, in different forms, across (and within) different industries and national labour markets. Whereas unpaid labour can entail precarious work, however, precarious

work may not automatically unfold from unpaid labour due to that only those with the highest resources may be able to afford to make that unpaid labour.

We are informed by concepts and theories of social norms around stigma and social resilience, which it connects to structural histories of power reflected through hierarchies at work (e.g., class, privilege status, patriarchy) as in the political economy of work and employment in sociology, to explain why exploring the conditions of exploitation which triggers unpaid labour in relation to paid employment, and to examine how it relate to households and families in the form of unpaid (social reproductive) work, is worthwhile to appreciating precarious work. Mackenzie and MacKinlay (2020) define unpaid labour as a resource because someone undertakes non-compensated labour in the present, with the hope that future work may follow. We broaden the conceptual relevance of hope in relation to precarious work by illustrating how unpaid labour not only shapes the expectations of someone towards a rewarding future but it also serves a punishment (stigmatising rhetoric) by reducing the likelihood to be penalized in both the present and the future. Thus, we associate unpaid labour to stigma, which we recast as a type of co-existing penalties and rewards, rather than being seen as a separate dimension from rewards and penalties.

This theoretical argument is empirically grounded on 170 autobiographies and almost 80 working audio diaries (for a duration of 10 working days) with workers in paid employment within three distinctive areas of work or service-based industries (i.e. creative dance, social residential care and crowd-work gig), in a selection of countries in Europe (i.e. creative dance in Sweden and the Netherlands; social residential care in the United Kingdom and Germany; crowd-work gig in Italy, Poland, France, The Netherlands and Belgium).

Dynamics of power-building strategies amongst precarious gig workers in the UK: A comparative study between native British, EU and overseas undocumented migrants

Pedro Mendonca, Nadia Kougiannou

(Heriot Watt University)

This article examines how different groups of precarious food delivery gig workers develop and sustain different strategies to cumulate collective and individual resource powers, in terms of institutional, associational, structural, and mobility power. Drawing on qualitative data from 36 semi-structured interviews with 34 food couriers, it provides rich empirical evidence on groups of gig workers based on their nationality, dependence on gig work, and right to work in the UK. Particularly, this article is interested in exploring how variations of precarious working lives of documented (British and EU citizens with right to work in the UK) and undocumented gig workers (overseas migrants without right to work in the UK) and with different levels of engagement towards gig platform work shape their capacity of building power resources. The research question are:

(1) What are the differences and similarities of precarious work experiences across native and migrant labour in the food delivery in the UK?

(2) Comparatively, what is the role of precarious working and living conditions for native and migrant workers in developing power resources in the food delivery sector?

(3) How does digital platform-based work contribute to embodied experiences of varied precarity through workers' capacity to differently develop power-building strategies?

By answering these questions, this article draws attention and aims to contribute to (i) the platform economy's reliance, and its disposability, on various forms of precarious work to answer to the demands of platform capitalism; (ii) the significance of gig workers' power resources as both a central characteristic of the variety of precarity experienced by gig workers and also for labour agency.

By intersecting aspects of relational life that go beyond work and working (Peticca-Harris et al., 2020; Vickers et al., 2019) – particularly experiences that are policy-constructed – this article explores the significant role that digital platform-based work has in embodying experiences of varied precarity through workers' capacity to differently develop power-building strategies. In so doing, it outlines the importance of workers' position in the productive system and labour market has potential to disrupt or production and to amass coalitions cross-sector and cross-country. At the same time, the different forms of precariousness experienced by participants provides opportunities and constraints for collective experience, which give rise to new trajectories and strategies of organising to resist precariousness and

build a better working and family lives life. As a double-edged sword of insecurity and aspiration for better working and family life, precarious gig work is seen by undocumented workers as a step up from non-work to informal waged work. Finally, the article concludes that understanding precarity through varying power-building strategies can identify points of connection and disconnection among today's increasingly heterogeneous working class.

Room W002 – Open stream one

The 'psychologisation of employment relations': An evaluation of the utility, limitations and adaptability of psychosocial work design models to a broader, interdisciplinary framing

Eva Jendro

(University of Strathclyde)

The paper explores what has been described as the growing 'psychologisation of industrial/employment relations (I/ER)' (Godard, 2014) drawing on the example of an increasingly influential occupational health and work design model (Boxall, 2021). The JD-R model as, according to Lesener, Gusy and Wolter (2019), an at the time of writing highly popular occupational health and work design model illustrates the influence of psychosocial perspectives beyond the disciplinary boundaries of Work and Organisational (W/O) Psychology, such as across wider job quality debates (see, for instance, Holman, 2013; OECD, 2013; Eurofound, 2019; Marin-Cadavid, 2022). While it is argued that occupational health and work design models can offer useful, inter-dynamic frameworks for understanding experiences of characteristics of work and employment and their individual outcomes, from an ER-informed perspective two central issues reside in such models, and theorising in W/O Psychology more broadly. First, the unitarist view of the employment relationship (Bal and Dóci, 2018) and, second, methodological individualism in reducing wider social phenomena largely to acontextual, within-person explanations pose limitations (Harley, 2015; Townsend et al., 2019), which studies seeking to adopt such psychosocial work design models need to address. This necessitates reflecting on the potential influence of macro-level context and meso-level institutions in dynamic terms (for example, Parker, Van den Broeck and Holman, 2017; Simms, 2017), alongside social mechanisms, such as conflict and cooperation (Harley, 2019). In the sociology of the professions, for example, the ambitions of the 'professional project' in terms of gaining occupational control over various job quality dimensions so to influence these broadly to an occupation's favour are more generally acknowledged (Abbott, 1988; Suddaby and Viale, 2011; Williams and Koumenta, 2020), while professionalism as an institutional, occupation-level influence in relation to shaping (experiences of) characteristics of work and employment in multifaceted ways remains underexplored in occupational health and work design models (Dierdorff, 2019).

These dynamics were examined in an empirical study consisting of two qualitative case studies situated within the Scottish public sector. The public sector context was taken as an illustrative example of the potential influence of macro-level change (namely, reform in the light of austerity) and dynamics with meso-level institutional structures (professionalism and collective interest representation institutions) further in relation to experiences of work and employment. The two case sectors, namely Fire and Rescue Services and Further Education, were selected for being characterised by workforces dominated by a single (semi-)professionalised occupation, if yet of a contrasting nature of work (emergency and knowledge work, respectively). The paper evaluates the potential for an interdisciplinary adaptation of an occupational health and work design model drawing on literatures from beyond W/O Psychology (and mainstream OB) that is building on their popularity, while offering a more pluralistic, contextualised view of the employment relations in which the jobs and individuals psychosocial models seek to understand are ultimately embedded.

The higher, the better? Testing the relative impact of social capital on high- and low-skilled immigrants' labour market integration

Julia Ruedel

(University of Göttingen)

Recent scholarship has increasingly paid attention to the advantages and disadvantages of inter- and intra-ethnic social contacts for immigrants' labour market integration. While contacts to natives is commonly seen as beneficial, the impact of contact to co-ethnics on labour market integration is rather debated. Linking social integration theories more closely with general social capital theory, I argue that the effect of social capital on immigrants' labour market integration differs for high- and low-skilled immigrants but also depends on the social position of the social contact. Specifically, I argue that for low-skilled immigrants the impact of social capital on labour market integration does not follow the dogma 'the higher positioned the highest contact, the better the social capital return'; rather, contacts in similar social positions provide the best resources. For high-skilled immigrants, by contrast, it is indeed the highest social contacts that particularly benefit their labour market integration. To establish these differences, I use data of the National Educational Panel Study (NEPS) and its position generator that allows for operationalizing social capital and testing its impact on employment and occupational status. Estimating fixed effects models with lagged independent variables, the results support my hypotheses for low-skilled and high-skilled immigrants with respect to both economic outcomes. This article advances the understanding of social capital in migration and integration research and specifies the kinds of social contact most beneficial for different immigrant groups.

Occupational licensing and social mobility: Professional dynasties in action

Maria Koumenta, Mark Williams

(Queen Mary, University of London)

Concerns about growing inequality in many economies have drawn attention to the notion of social mobility, understood as a categorical form that has parents passing on a big-class position to their offspring or a gradational form that has parents passing on their socioeconomic standing. In this paper, we study the important role that occupations may play in transferring opportunities from one generation to the next. In particular, we ask whether there is a degree of intergenerational transmission of occupational status such that, while being a general phenomenon, is also particularly relevant in the presence of professional licensing, the strongest form of occupational closure in the labour market. Family connections are important in transmitting human and social capital from established family members in the profession to newer generations. Several studies for example have shown that children receive occupation-specific human capital from their family (Heckman 2007; Laband and Lentz 1992). In light of the extensive evidence on rent-capture in licensed occupations and the centrality of professional networks in granting a competitive advantage to those wishing to enter regulated occupations, we explore the effect of licensing in creating occupational dynasties that benefit from this intergenerational transmission of occupational status. Our data source comes from the Understanding Society Survey (USS), a large longitudinal household panel study in the UK conducted since 2004. The survey allows us to observe the parents' occupation and match it to that of their children, alongside other demographic and human capital observables commonly found in labour force surveys. We match the USS to the UK's Database of Regulated Occupations. The resulting dataset provides us with rich information on family background and the regulatory arrangements that pertain each occupational code. In our analyses we find strong evidence of a substantial increase in the propensity to follow the same career as one's parents when the latter work in a licensed occupation. The impact of licensing on the likelihood of being employed in the same occupation as one's parents is greater in professional and highly skilled/highly paid licensed occupations such as medicine, finance, law and engineering, and in occupations where licensing hurdles are greater. We conclude that licensing limits the equality of opportunity amongst less privileged individuals in the society and that the removal and relaxation of entry barriers to occupations may significantly increase social fluidity.

Effects of Public Employment Services' activation intensity

Markus Wolf

(Institute for Employment Research (IAB))

Unemployed welfare recipients may suffer from social exclusion and low social mobility. Labour market integration is a key mechanism to overcome such disadvantages of benefit receipt. OECD countries acknowledged this by emphasizing labour market activation over the mere provision of benefits. In their function as street-level bureaucrats, caseworkers and public employment services are at the forefront of implementing this activation strategy. The active labour market policy measures (ALMP) they implement may influence labour market integration through different mechanisms: workfare measures or sanctions stress quick labour market integration, whereas training and counselling measures aim at enabling labour market integration through e.g. human capital development. Research has shown that different ALMP vary not only in their success to increase employment, but also affect employment quality.

Research mainly focused on the effect of participation or implementation of ALMP, i.e. on the treatment effect. Scholars argue that the possibility of treatment can influence the behaviour of unemployed people before treatment implementation: rational agents anticipate the treatment probability - which may result from the variation in public employment service treatment intensities - and change their behaviour before treatment is implemented. For example, if a caseworker threatens to sanction, a welfare recipient may increase the job search intensity before the sanction is applied, thereby leaving welfare receipt more rapidly.

This paper analyses regime effects of different ALMP for welfare recipients in German public employment service agencies using large-scale administrative data and applying duration analysis. The first results show that the sanction probability increases transitions to employment; the effect is exclusively driven by uptake of employment with comparatively low quality. The training probability, in contrast, decreases transitions to employment, which suggest that welfare recipients aim to prolong unemployment duration in order to increase chances to participate in training.

Room W003 – PhD Showcase

Trans women and 'gender discipline': Understanding transmisogyny as a theoretical framework for worker inequalities

Sylvia Mccheyne

(University of Sheffield)

This paper will investigate the concept of 'transmisogyny,' or, the specific intersections of transphobia and misogyny directed at trans women. By expanding transmisogyny as defined by workplace relations, undermined by the constant precarity unique for trans women, this paper will analyse employment trajectories for trans women and how they function as a form of 'gender discipline.'

Contextually, this paper emerges from a rising trans-antagonism in Britain, including increases in reported transphobic hate crimes, preventions to legislative reforms on legal gender recognition and an ongoing process of withdrawing equality and diversity schemes by LGBT+ charities in academic and political institutions. This paper draws on preliminary data from ongoing PhD research on investigating everyday experiences of trans women working in LGBT+ charities in the UK.

This paper draws upon the theories on precarity for trans women and their communities, as well as social reproduction theories and theories on (trans)feminism and labour relations in charity and non-governmental organisations (NGOs). The idea of the charities as potential 'employment sanctuaries' will be explored. This concept, based on the PhD research, intends to showcase both the potentials of trans women in these specific forms of work and the realities of facing increasing trans-antagonism from outside the charities which will hinder, and impact services provided as well as investigate potential disparities within the workplace. Workplace inequalities will also be explored by theorising around the potentials of precarity in defining trans women's workplace navigations as well as concepts on 'trans survival' and the potentials of social reproduction theories in exploring the roles of trans women as service providers in communities and workplaces.

This paper also draws on preliminary data from the PhD project. The methodology of which is qualitative in nature, utilising mixed approaches, including in-depth interviews and ethnographic observations. Participants will include trans women and those who consider themselves 'affected by transmisogyny,' working in various LGBT+ charities and different positions of employment.

In conclusion, this paper hopes to contribute towards understandings on transmisogyny in workplace inequalities and to build a critical political economy to situate the positions of trans women in the workplace. This paper will hope to understand how transmisogyny as a concept can be applied to labour relations and social movements between trans women employed in advocacy amongst themselves and the wider LGBT+ population.

Neurodiverse youth identities: Ecologies of impairment, disability, and affectivity in digitalised workplaces

Martina Lippi

(University of Glasgow)

In an increasingly digitalised world of work, how do structural and social forces impact neurodivergent youth identities during their workplace transition? Recent evidence shows that from early childhood, disabled identities and subjectivities shape through intensive demands and negative encounters (De Schauwer et al., 2016) that also pervade the workplace (Jammaers and Zanoni, 2020). However, those with neurodiversities, including autism and dyslexia, may have to contend specific contextual and biographical dimensions that shape patterns of social regulation, medical recognition and lived experience of neurodevelopmental conditions (Doyle, 2020). These are experienced through a range of sociomaterial dynamics that serve to 'entangle' (cf. Hodder, 2011) individuals' negotiations of the psycho-emotional experiences of work within neuronormative organizational conditions (Thomas, 1999). Yet, to date, little is known about the processes that constitute, influence or shape youth transition in and around work against the backdrop of these conditions. This, contextualised within the new post-covid hinterland of digital modes of working, has also to account for technologies' negative or

prohibiting role that may shape work transitional trajectories whilst also affording possibilities to shape engagement and recognition terms that neurodiverse youth experience.

This paper develops work that considers technologies as actively shaping disabled employees' workplace experience (Kulkarni et al., 2022) that come to constitute 'assemblages', and contribute to disability (de)territorialisation (Gauci, 2020). While possibly holding designers' 'disabled bias' (Tilmes, 2022), these technologies are also inextricable from other symbolic, political and historical influences that require adaptation (Biersack, 1999) shaping how neurodiverse employees orientate themselves and their work. Such work requires attention to spatiality and temporality to fully account for the situatedness of neurodiverse workplace transitions given that emotions, changes to technologies and affordances are all inextricably related "to particular historical paths and political struggles of domination and resistance, at the edge between control and empowerment" (Petani and Mengis, 2021, p. 1540). While aware of positive stories of online self-advocacy (Bertilsdotter Rosqvist et al., 2015), and negative ones of colleagues' expectations of neuronormative online behaviours (Das et al., 2021), how these have layered since childhood in terms of economic, social and cultural capital (Newman et al., 2017), and thus constitute, alongside other experiences, benchmarks to workers' adaptation (Petani and Mengis, 2021), is ambiguous.

Consequently, relying on accounts of organizational sociomateriality and dis/ability relationality within workplaces' technological assemblages (Gauci, 2020), this paper sets up a conceptual framework to understand the phenomenon of neurodiverse youth transitions into digital workplaces in conversation with Kranzler et al. (2020)'s 'biopsychosocial ecological' processes that constitute lived experiences. It suggests that individuals shape and are in turn shaped by their immediate environment, in terms of who they are and their patterns of behaviours. This happens within a triadic reciprocal causation where impairment, disability and psychological constructs interact with the persons' behaviour and their surrounding environment, the latter being symbolically, historically and politically produced through the various ecologies (Biersack, 1999). Thereby, this paper will explore the various entanglements that over time contribute to workplace power relations, shaping identity, and how these may change when technologies enter the assemblage.

Feminist political economy of women's work and health: an exploration of gendered health experiences of working women in Sri Lanka

Kowsalya Duraisamy

(University of Galway, Ireland)

Women's employment and health play a critical role in promoting gender equality (UN, 2015; WHO, 2019). However, women's occupational health issues have long been counteracting the benefits of women's work (WHO, 2019). But still there is dearth of gender-disaggregated data and sociological investigations on women's occupational health in many countries resulting in inadequate policy responses (Morgan et al, 2018; ILO, 2009; Payne, 2009). Recognizing this, the current study, using feminist epistemology, seeks to understand social aspects of women's occupational health in Sri Lanka, a developing South Asian nation with sizable Female Labour Force Participation (FLFP) rate (30%-35%) (Department of Census and Statistics, 2020; 2018; ILO, 2016). The percentage distribution of employed women in Sri Lanka is primarily concentrated in service sector (46.2%) with relatively equal shares in agriculture and industrial sectors (27.7% and 26.0% respectively) (Department of Census and Statistics, 2020). Research shows that women in all these sectors are vulnerable to occupational health issues (ILO, 2022, 2018, 2016 & 2013; World Bank, 2017; Gunatilaka, 1999 & 2013).

In this background, this study aims to (1) understand working women's lived experiences of health, with special attention to their triple-role, multiple burden and workplace conditions; and, (2) establish gaps in the Sri Lankan labour legislations in understanding women's occupational health issues with reference to their social determinants. In this endeavor, it acknowledges perspectives of Feminist Political Economy, Intersectional Feminism and Standpoint Feminism that treat health as a gender-sensitive area and prioritize women's standpoint in policy responses (Meagher et al, 2021; Syed, 2021; Smith et al 2021). Currently, the study is in the data collection phase. Drawing upon explorative field research, it employs an intra-paradigm qualitative mixed-method approach (Qualitative Questionnaire Survey, In-depth Interviews, and Semi-structured Interviews) in compliance with feminist methodology. It extracted a diverse study sample of sixty women workers and twelve managerial level staff from the above mentioned three key employment sectors in four districts with relatively high FLFP (Kandy, Nuwara-Eliya, Colombo and Gampaha).

Based on the findings so far, this study highlights that in Sri Lanka, women's life outside workplace and their gendered health aspects have key impacts on their occupational health. However, there is considerable gap in the Sri Lankan labour legislations in recognizing gendered health issues and their social determinants. For example, there is considerable lack of reference towards reproductive and maternal health issues, need for flexible work arrangements, and factors originating from outside work, such as, violence against women, nutritional deficiencies, stress of triple-role, multiple burden and time poverty. There are also issues associated with legislative coverage and anomalies of health benefits across different work sectors that severely affect women workers, as highly feminized work sectors in the country are either informal or considered as secondary thus not properly regulated and monitored. Therefore, this study insists the need for key stakeholders to recognize working women's healthcare needs at and beyond workplace and respond effectively through expedient methods and innovative tools to establish gender-based health justice at work.

Succession planning and gender: A systematic literature review

Gabi Round

(Leeds Beckett University)

I am a PhD student in my second year of full-time study at Leeds Beckett University. My study focusses on finding solutions that work to solve the 'succession problem' for SMEs whilst seeking gender equality in these succession events. Succession planning is one of the biggest issues that face SMEs and it is widely unsuccessful, causing long-term problems. Gender equality in SME leadership has a long way to go to catch up with larger companies, and even further to find equality. With multiple studies showcasing the organisational benefits of a less homogenous leadership team my study aims to target these problems collectively. Having finished an in-depth systematic literature review and commenced primary research I would like to present my literature review findings (which focusses on characteristics of good successors and characteristics of coveted successors) the presentation will also begin to touch on early primary research findings.

Methodology: This PhD study is mixed method, within this presentation I will present the systematic literature review compiled using literature from accounting, human resources and business and management. Within each discipline, the top 10 journals (defined by their H index, as per Scimago's database) were searched for the terms 'succession' and 'partnership', in titles, key terms and abstracts. This method created a broad and varied picture of the subject. Articles that met the above criteria but are not relevant to the study were omitted. This resulted in 198 articles used.

Main findings: This literature review raised interesting questions around what makes a good successor in comparison with the features that are actively looked for, showcasing a substantial gap which could help answer some of the failings in succession planning.

From the review it is clear there is a succession problem, with a many of the texts citing alarming figures of lost money and failed successions.

Relevant to the particulars of this study, it is poignant to note that discussion of SMEs was limited in this study, though the findings highlight that a small firm is twice as likely to hire an external successor than an internal one – a fact that is useful in my further primary research. There are many reasons for this, including availability of talent, lack of entrenchment, reduced requirement to report gender pay gap. Another key factor highlighted is market reaction, which is hugely important in successor decisions. It is key to refer to the findings of Huang and Kisgen (2013) that highlight male successors are more likely to be chosen in external hiring situation, making female successors at a disadvantage in smaller firms, where more external successions are conducted. This is important information as this study focusses on smaller firms showcasing in SMEs females are at a disadvantage in succession.

The key findings that I will present are the mismatch in what is looked for in a successor compared to what makes a successful successor, these elements focus on 'soft skills' such as empathy and integrity, which make the best successors but are not actively coveted in the process.

Room W004 – Platform capitalism, hybrid work and digital resistance

Migration frameworks and the experience of app-based food delivery work in China and Australia: A comparative study of international and internal migration regimes

Jiayi Sun

(The University of Sydney)

The on-demand 'platform' or 'gig' economy has boomed since the COVID-19 pandemic, with the number of individuals engaged in this type of work rapidly growing. In China, for instance, the number of platform workers increased from 50 million in 2015 to 84 million in 2020, representing almost 10% of China's employed population (China Labour Bulletin, 2022). While variegated, most of this work is plagued by low pay, lack of social welfare and protection, and relatively high levels of precarity (Goods et al., 2019). Previous studies have examined the digitalised working process and workers' experiences in platform-economy, workers' rationale for undertaking this type of work remains however relatively underexplored. Temporary migrant workers, for instance, are overrepresented in the platform economy in many countries (Chen, 2020; van Doorn et al., 2022). This study seeks to engage with this gap by answering the research question: How do migration regimes and social networks shape migrant workers' decision to engage in on-demand platform-work? This study contributes to the extant literature by providing cross-country comparative case study insights on different migration regimes, namely international migration (Australia) and internal migration (China).

The paper draws upon the 'dual frame of reference' theory (Piore, 1979) and the concept of 'immigration control' (Anderson, 2010) to explain migrant workers' precarity and their high tolerance of precarious work in receiving societies. Social network theory is applied to explore the influences of migrants' co-ethnic networks in migration process and on their work experiences (Bian et al., 2015).

This study uses a cross-national comparative case study design and draws upon 60 semi-structured interviews with riders in food-delivery sector in Australia and in China (30 riders in each country) collected between October 2022 and May 2023. More specifically, the targeted participants are international temporary migrant labour in Sydney, Australia and rural-to-urban migrant workers in Guangzhou, China, two major metropolitan areas with considerable uptake of food-delivery services and migrant workers undertaking the work.

Drawing upon data collected in Australia and China, the findings suggest that the migration regimes shape the workers' choices by restricting the options available to them, while the platform-work provides new economic chances to migrant labour to work around the migration rules. In Australia, for instance, many migrant workers use bridging visas/student visas to circumvent the restrictions that have been placed upon them. In this case, platform work is opening up a new avenue for migrant workers to enhance their labour market position, and work around their working rights restrictions under the migration regime.

The study contributes to the existing platform economy literature by exploring the workers' migration profile and the extent to which this informs their decisions to engage in platform-work. It also contributes to the migration literature by exploring the impacts of two different migration regimes on workers' work choices in different national contexts by comparing two different migration regimes in China and in Australia. It enables us to better understand migrant workers' labour market conditions in receiving societies, and thus to improve policies surrounding labour protection of temporary migrant workers.

Beyond the 'gig economy': Towards variable experiences of job quality in platform work

Alex Wood, Nick Martindale, Brendan Burchell

(University of Bristol)

Hundreds of thousands of people in the United Kingdom (UK) make a living by selling their labour via platforms. The growth of this work has frequently been referred to as constituting a 'gig economy'. In fact, in little over a decade this assumed unified 'gig economy' has risen from obscurity to become

synonymous with the contemporary digitalised labour market. Yet, the gig economy is comprised of a heterogeneous mixture of platform workers spread across numerous industries (transportation, food and parcel delivery, domestic and digital services etc.). Given the diversity of this work it is perhaps unsurprising that while some in policy circles praise the flexibility of the gig economy, others highlight the insecurity and safety risks it entails – risks that were amplified during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Digital platforms are being used in the UK to enable paid work both locally (Deliveroo, Uber, TaskRabbit, Amazon Flex etc.) and remotely (Upwork, Fiverr etc.). Locally undertaken work requires workers and customers to be physically proximate to each other and includes: delivering food, packages and messages; driving passengers to locations (often referred to as ride-hailing); as well as cleaning and handyperson work. In contrast, remote gig work entails work such as data entry, graphic design and writing gigs which can be delivered remotely over the Internet via web-based platforms. As such remote gig work does not require physical proximity between workers and customers. Whether local or remote this gig work usually entails working alone on the city streets or at home, rendering those undertaking this work a hard-to-reach population for traditional social survey techniques. As a consequence, most gig economy research has tended to be qualitative. Where quantitative studies have been undertaken they have been hampered by a traditional survey methodology which results in small samples that render meaningful investigation of within-population relationships difficult (i.e. Lepanjuuri et al., 2018). Alternatively, research relies on case studies of particular platforms or sectors and is unable to consider differences across types of work in the gig economy (i.e. Berger et al., 2019; Griesbach et al., 2019; Maffie, 2020). Given the diversity of work and backgrounds and the varying attachment and dependency of workers, there exists a clear need for quantitative research that can better account for social complexity. This paper seeks to fill this gap by using an innovative survey methodology to reach both local and remote platform workers.

In this paper, we make use of a strategically targeted non-probability sample of UK gig workers recruited via advertising on Facebook/Instagram and Upwork (N=510). While unable to produce population-level estimates this data enables us to investigate within-population relationships. Our data highlights substantial differences in job quality (i.e. pay, insecurity, discretion, influence, intensity, autonomy, health and safety risks) across the local or remote platform work divide. We argue that these findings suggest that it is unhelpful to conceive of platform work as constituting a unified gig economy entailing homogenous experiences of job quality.

Behind the wheel: a photovoice study of job characteristics and wellbeing among digital platform taxi drivers in Stockholm - The GIG-HEALTH project

Nuria Matilla-Santander, Filippa Lundh, Signild Kvart, Manuel Franco, Carin Håkansta, Julio C Hernando, Bertina Kreshpaj, Sherry Baron

(Unit of Occupational Medicine, Institute of Environmental Medicine, Karolinska Institutet, Sweden)

Digital platform workers, especially taxi drivers, have been extensively studied in the literature regarding their job quality and platform practices. The employment status of platform taxi drivers (e.g., self-employment) combined with the practices of the platforms (e.g., algorithmic management) poses challenges for occupational safety and health. Despite this, little is known about the characteristics of platform work for taxi drivers that relate to their health and well-being. Moreover, recommendations for improving workers' conditions are rarely consulted with the drivers themselves. Therefore, this study aims to provide evidence on the perceived job characteristics of taxi platform workers that relate to their health and well-being and describe their recommendations for improvements.

This Participatory Action Research was conducted as part of the GIG-HEALTH (http://gighealthproject.com). A group of 5 taxi drivers working through digital platforms was recruited through social media. The inclusion criteria were: (i) to be older than 17 years old, (ii) to have been working for more than 3 months as platform workers, (iii) to speak English, Swedish or Spanish, and (iv) to work in Stockholm. The study design was based on photovoice methodology, a participatory action research method that allows participants to use photography and group discussions to document their working experiences related to their health and well-being, provide recommendations and foster change. By fostering change, we mean empowering individuals to document and reflect on working assets and concerns, invite critical dialogue and reach relevant stakeholders. The photovoice study was conducted in September-October 2022. The group met for 1,5 hours in a series of 5 sessions. During the first sessions, participants discussed the photos and coded the issues and topics that arose from them (why they took that picture, what they wanted to show with it, what was the story behind the

photo, and how this story was linked to health). In the last session, following a problem-tree analysis, participants provided recommendations to improve their job conditions and health. Participants chose the final themes and photos.

The participants took a total of 32 photographs. They identified 73 sub-themes based on the discussions of each photograph. These sub-themes were then organized into 5 themes: (i) App & technology, (ii) Income vs expenses, (iii) Service, (iv) Space in the city, and (v) Occupational safety and health. Although certain positive aspects of their work environment were present, many workers experienced characteristics of their jobs as stressful and suffered from mental strain. Based on these stressors, they provided recommendations aimed at the platforms, the traffic administration, and other Swedish authorities. These recommendations were aimed at making their occupation profitable, providing the same rights as other jobs in public transportation (e.g., better access to sick leave), and ensuring that platforms follow the existing working standards in the taxi sector.

This study shows that taxi platform workers consider many aspects of their jobs stressful and harmful to their psychological well-being. Moreover, they provided recommendations that could solve the health impact of their jobs, which are mostly based on better access to workers' rights and ensuring income levels.

Content production within the algorithmic environment: A systematic review

Yin Liang, Jiaming Li, Jeremy Aroles, Edward Granter

(Durham University Business School)

Developments in ICTs have created a "new" world of work. The creative industry is increasingly embedded in the digital economy, as evidenced through the growth of content creative platforms that enable individuals to create, disseminate and commercialise various forms of content. Essentially, content producers leverage their creativity to generate virtual contents in the form of services or products. As with other gig workers, content creators tend to be associated with many hyperbolic and positive qualifiers, seeking to both glorify and romanticize their experience. It would appear that creators have a great deal of autonomy over their work. While this might be true at the more creative level, one should not overlook the power dynamics between creators and algorithms and the impact of algorithms on the work of creators. Algorithms achieve soft control over creators by managing the visibility of their contents. Content creation in a complex algorithmic environment thus poses a great challenge for content creators.

While research on platform work has grown exponentially over the past few years, we still know relatively little about the contested working normativity of content creators under the algorithmic environment in the context of content creative platforms. Through a systematic review of relevant literatures, we seek to address the following question: How does algorithmic power shape the working features of content creators? We used three databases (Scopus, Web of Science and EBSCO Business Source Ultimate) with a series of keywords related to algorithms and creators. This yielded 2859 articles. After excluding duplicates and irrelevant articles and by applying strict inclusion criteria, this study ultimately included 47 articles.

Through a systematic analysis of our sample of 47 articles, we identified four core themes, namely visibility, control, reflexivity and idealisation. We explore each of these four themes in detail. Our paper then draws from two dimensions proposed by Tirapani and Willmott (2023) in their theorisation of conflicts in the gig economy: Individualisation (responsibilisation and quantification) and Hegemonic ideology (universalism and disembeddedness) to critically explain the relationship between content creators and algorithms. This study makes a two-fold contribution to research on the future of work. First, it systematically reviews and organises previous research on creators and algorithms, and suggests future research directions, highlighting the need to investigate their complex interrelations. Second, it critically revisits the relationship between creators and algorithms through the lens of power, laying the groundwork for further research on domination in the context of content creative platforms.

Room W005 – Academia, academic activism and resistance in the academy

Stop all the clocks: Narratives of independence, interdependence, and resistance in digital teaching when the everyday is every day

Frances Myers, Dr Hilary Collins, Dr Hayley Glover

(OU)

This study offers an account of HE business and law teachers' responses to increased ambiguities and anxieties provoked during the 2020 Covid-19 pandemic. Respondents chronicled the abrupt transition to online-only teaching and learning during the early weeks of pandemic lockdown, using a mix of self-chosen photographs and other images, and accompanying narratives. These reflective accounts uncovered a series of emotionally heightened reactions, identity challenges, and new independencies to enforced autonomies from a lack of institutional direction and communication at this time.

Whilst pre-pandemic, institutional and sector manoeuvres, and encroaching authoritarianism (McCann et al, 2020) were producing diminishing terms and conditions and increased precarity for those in digital teaching roles, (Collins et al, 2020), the lockdown period offered a pause in expected workplace relations. Widespread confusion accompanying an abrupt breakdown of routines and role definitions led to a vacuum in management presence alongside both an intensification of workload and temporary emancipation from expected performance metrics. Consequences of this 'absence of leadership' (Cai et al 2021:392) and workplace extremity in other public-facing sectors has already been reported on from early pandemic research outputs, such as healthcare (Ford et al, 2022) and retail (Cai et al, 2021).

Research process undertook a content analysis of responses to three themes recommended to our participants as starting points: 'precarity and security', 'time' and 'communication'. We asked them to describe emotional rather than operational aspects of transition to a complete shift to online rather than blended workplace. Accompanying images were used by participants as a focal point for the changes to everyday teaching encounters they valued.

Pandemic conditions (March – May 2020) produced a liminal state (Turner, 1982) at the micro level of teaching interactions. Individuals became separated from their regular lives. They entered a newly ambiguous state, freed from well-worn customs, regulations, and management control measures, before in due time being reaggregated into new, hybrid teaching roles as longer-term outcomes of the crisis. Multiple and conflicting communications from the institution offered opportunities to individual academics who took student learning into their own hands, producing a wide range of narratives ranging from fear and doubt to new self-determination and a growth mindset.

Early conclusions point to intense and emotive phases of work producing positive impacts on work identity as well as negative. We noted the mitigation of psychological impact on those respondents who kept busy during the lockdown period and took control of online learning classrooms, filtering and translating myriad communications, providing clarity for students. The importance of continuing to nurture positive aspects of individual and collective identity, such as autonomy and professional emancipation (Beck and Brook, 2020), should not be diluted. We noted, like Czarniawska and Mazza (2003:272), that although the pandemic threw up major challenges and difficulties for those teaching in the digital sphere, liminal states also resulted in 'a sense of freedom', a 'possibility of creation' and shared sense of community with fellow teachers and learners.

Academic freedom in the digital university: An exploration of how technology-enabled management practices mediate power relations between academic staff and university employers

Chavan Kissoon

(University of Lincoln)

The move towards digital transformation by UK universities is altering all aspects of academic life in the UK higher education sector. Beyond highly visible changes to business processes (e.g., online enrolment, online exams), staff-student and employer-employee communication mechanisms (e.g.,

email and Teams) and the digital student experience (online classes, continuous online evaluations of staff performance), there have been important but lesser-known esoteric shifts in managerial oversight of workers (e.g., worker analytics). These changes can fundamentally alter the relationship between management and workers, and are beginning to challenge long-established worker freedom norms, albeit in ways that can be difficult for workers to pinpoint due to the obfuscation associated with technological transformation. Boosted by powerful discourses rooted in the concepts of progress and digital transformation, digital transformation of work is threatening to disrupt existing worker-management relations in profound ways.

As such, new understandings of how power is mediated, exercised and resisted in the contemporary digital university are needed. Yet, existing research on the digital transformation of the UK HE sector has largely taken a pro-business approach and focussed on the efficiencies and affordances of technology. Few studies have been undertaken from a critical or worker-centred perspective or looked at how digital technology mediates workers' experiences of agency, a gap this study addresses.

A quantitative methodological approach was adopted, using the survey method. The survey comprised 50+ questions that mapped to key dimensions of academic freedom. The survey was distributed to all UCU (the union for UK academics) members in May 2021. It received 2,100 responses over four weeks, making it one of the largest surveys of its type in the UK higher education sector. The survey design, which had input from the Equality and Policy team at the UCU, was developed to facilitate statistical testing of relationships between demographic variables and perceptions of agency in the digital university.

Our measured worth: A working paper on professional practice, autonomy, and measurement conventions in academia

Thomas Rodgers

(University of Sunderland)

The entrenchment of metrics into the everyday workings of Universities across the United Kingdom has been the subject of much debate and discussion over the last few decades. Social scientists have made a considerable contribution to these discussions, especially regarding the performativity (Burrows, 2012), dynamics and operation of metrics underpinning the Research Excellence Framework (REF), Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF), workload allocation systems, student satisfaction, among many others as they annually play out within the broader 'marketisation' of academia (Bendixen and Jacobsen, 2017; Wilkinson and Wilkinson, 2023). A key point of contention within these discussions concerns the ways in which increased measurement and metricisation as indicators of professional quality have been met with feelings amongst academics of 'quantified control' (Burrows, 2012), posing a direct challenge to academic autonomy as a foundational value and motivating force of professional academic practice (Nash, 2018). Situating these points of contention within broader debates regarding neoliberalism, marketisation dynamics, and the embedding of competition within institutional evaluation frameworks of "worth", this paper will present the initial design of a research project being undertaken within a UK University into the ways in which working professionals across the institution engage with – or disengage from – measurement conventions in their working lives. The achieve this, the paper will draw together two distinct strands of literature that inform the design and development of the research project. Firstly, empirical research and literature on the introduction, development, and implications of 'metric assemblages' in the contemporary academy (Burrows, 2012) and the 'marketisation of higher education' (Wilkinson and Wilkinson, 2023). Secondly, the paper will draw upon recent developments in 'convention theory' and its mobilization within the extant literature on neoliberalism, competition, and marketisation (Boltanski, 2006; Davies, 2017; Diaz-Bone, 2016; Wilkinson, 1997). Drawing from these areas of literature, the paper will present some underlying points of inquiry regarding how academics involved in research and teaching, administration staff, and university management (dis)engage with measurement conventions across their respective institutions and navigate the strategies of the neoliberal academy in their everyday professional practices. Finally, the paper will highlight the broader challenges posed to professional academic life by the increasing quantification of teaching and research quality and "worth".

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Stories of empowerment, resistance and identity work: Relational reflexive accounts of academic engagements with policymakers and practitioners

Anne Mcbride, Jenny K Rodriguez, Maria Hudson

(University of Manchester)

How do academics navigate relationships with policymakers and practitioners? This paper problematises agency and resistance in the context of academic-policymaker/practitioner relationships, providing insight to develop new research directions.

The relationship academics have with practitioners and policymakers is fraught with tensions, dialectics, and paradox (Bartunek and Rynes, 2014). As vividly illustrated by Empson (2013), academics can experience "intense identity conflict" when choosing to work with practitioners. This conflict can have a substantive impact on the situated context of impact orientated work and, in turn, the prospects for success. In the last decade, the pressures and higher rewards for demonstrating research impact has led to an increase in academics engaging with practitioners and policymakers. This raises professional dilemmas for the academic as to whether (in the potential context of an institutional support gap), and how, to become engaged. Moreover the academics' limited understanding of the political nature of policymaking at some point becomes apparent (Oliver & Carney, 2019).

Despite the importance of these relationships (see Lewis et al., 2012; Spiel & Strohmeier, 2012), including making a difference to societal wellbeing, there is limited discussion about the emotional, embodied dynamics that emerge from academic-policymaker/practitioner relationships. For example, the intensity of internalised conflict that results from practitioners resisting academic contributions, or the use of strategies, such as holding back or restricting the use of data, remain largely unexplored.

In this paper, we draw on data from reflexive accounts about our engagement with policymakers and practitioners to explore this intensity by focusing on our agency and resistance. We use Haug's (2008) memory work and Hibbert's (2021) framework of reflexive activities, to consider how "our thinking is shaped by the influence and insights of others, and how we influence them in turn" (Hibbert, 2021: 3-4). This paper is motivated by our interest in understanding what academics do within a framework that juxtaposes conflict and collaboration. Our initial discussions about working with policymakers and practitioners highlighted a range of conflicting emotions and our reflexive accounts draw on the contexts and relations where that intensity was felt.

The paper makes two contributions. First, it contributes an understanding of how dynamics of agency and resistance play out in academic-policymaker/practitioner relationships by showing the strategies different actors mobilize as part of their engagement. Second, the paper contributes a more nuanced understanding of academic-policymaker/practitioner relationships, showing the usefulness of problematizing them as multi-layered sites of simultaneous conflict and collaboration. In terms of practical implications, this paper encourages academics to think reflexively about the ways they engage with policymakers and practitioners, focusing not just on expected outcomes but adopting a more holistic approach that includes the co-construction of relational dynamics. Here insights from action

research may be beneficial (Hersted et al, 2019). Furthermore, the paper can inspire academics, policymakers and practitioners to collaboratively develop rules of generative engagement to frame their interactions; and foster positive social change rather than inertia.

Hanging Lantern Room – Open stream two

The bona fide academic: A disciplinary perspective

Toma Pustelnikovaite, Ruth Woodfield

(Cardiff University)

Academics today are expected to be "everything to everyone" (Pitt & Mewburn 2016:12), conforming to universities' strategic priorities all the while flexibly fulfilling operational needs. Individual work is increasingly assessed through performance metrics, using standards that are deeply embedded in university structures and cultures (Kalfa et al 2018). The focus on performance measurement and management has had an impact on perceptions of what counts as success in academia, and who can be considered a bona fide academic. Although performance and promotion criteria focus on research, teaching and service, universities tend to grant greater credibility and rewards to research performance such as peer-reviewed publications and income generation (Sang et al 2015; Fagan and Teasdale 2020).

However, academics also work within the context of their academic disciplines, understood as intellectual and social communities rooted in clearly identifiable fields of knowledge and methodologies, 'practiced' by similarly-minded people with their own sets of values and tasks (Becher and Trowler 2001; Trowler 2012). Disciplines remain a largely overlooked area in studies of academic work, which is surprising because disciplines embody their own sets of standards and strategies which may sometimes be at odds with those prevailing within a university.

In this context, our paper focuses on how academics understand and navigate the terrain of academic life as it is mediated by broad disciplinary area. We are particularly focused on how academics understand what is a high-quality contribution to academic research, through the lens of discipline. We are further focused on whether this understanding varies between disciplines with strong and explicit indicators of the quality of published work (albeit often contested) and those that have more diffused and perhaps more openly contested indicators. In doing so, we provide a more nuanced understanding of who is considered a bona fide researcher in academia.

Our data-set comprises interview data from 69 academics originating from a range of 11 disciplines: Media/Communication Studies, Divinity, English, History, Human Geography, Modern Languages, Linguistics, Philosophy, Economics, Finance & Accounting, Business & Management.

We are breaking the sample into two groups: 1) those who work within the broad disciplinary area of Business & Management and who have reference to the international Academic Journal Guide for supporting the perception of what constitutes a high-quality contribution to academic research and 2) those who work in Social Sciences and Humanities disciplines where there is not the same level of explicit identification of outlet hierarchy and an arguably more diffused perception of high-quality contributions to academic research.

Preliminary findings suggest that academics in Business & Management do experience a discipline-specific understanding of what it is to contribute to research endeavours as a bona fide academic, and that this differs from academics from disciplines with less determinate journal hierarchies. By contrast, perceptions of research quality among scholars in social sciences and humanities are more fluid, with participants' accounts highlighting tensions between the instrumental requirements of the Research Excellence Framework, permanent employment and promotions, and wanting to establish themselves within the discipline.

Variation in the nature of occupational communities and their role in the navigation of post-redundancy transitions in the Swedish, British and Australian steel industries

Christopher Mclachlan, Robert Mackenzie, Martin O'brien, Roland Ahlstrand, Alexis Rydell, Jennifer Hobbins, Mark Stuart

(Queen Mary University of London)

The steel industry has been characterised as having a strong occupational identity and community (MacKenzie et al, 2006; McLachlan et al, 2019). We draw on data from 96 work-life biographical interviews with workers made redundant in the steel industry in UK, Sweden and Australia to explore the relationship between occupational identity and occupational community and the implication of differences for (ex-steel) workers across the three countries. The paper draws on these contrasting contexts to explore the differing nature of occupational identity and the roles played by occupational community in the navigation of change in the life-course following redundancy.

Occupational community members share a set of values born of common experience and histories, which underpin a sense of distinctiveness from non-members (Salaman, 1971; Nye et al, 2023). Occupational communities are defined by insider–outsider status often associated with inter alia, idiosyncratic skill, hard or dangerous work, geographic isolation and specificities of the labour process as a common experience shared with others (Jenkins, 2014; Salaman, 1971; Strangleman, 2012).

The perception of distinct attributes and values shared by members of an occupational community provides a basis for occupational identity, which in turn is supported and reproduced by the occupational community (Bechky, 2006; Salaman, 1971; Strangleman, 2012). The importance of occupation to an individual's identity is reflected in a strong emotional attachment to work, which may be heightened by physically demanding or dangerous work (Metzgar, 2001; Turnbull, 1992). Work-based relationships permeate into lives outside of work, which provides for socialization into the shared values and norms that make up the occupational identity (Salaman, 1975; Strangleman, 2001). Previous research has highlighted how occupational communities can serve as a collective resource helping with social isolation and mental health issues (Nye et al, 2023), coping with the effects of job loss (McLachlan et al, 2019), post redundancy transition (MacKenzie et al, 2006) and navigating transitions in the life course (MacKenzie and Marks, 2019).

The UK data demonstrated familiar characteristics of an emotional attachment to work and pride in the occupation, reflecting in a strong steelworker identity embedded in an occupational community: The occupational community provided emotional and material support in the post steel transition, and was sustained as part of a broader collective resistance to an increasingly individualised and hostile socio-economic environment. In contrast, whilst the Swedish data reflected many objective traits of occupational community, members demonstrated a more transactional relationship with the community and a weaker attachment to the steel worker identity. Although contact with ex-colleagues played some role in the post redundancy transition in Sweden, there was not the same imperative as in the UK to maintain an occupational community as a source of protection from a hostile socio-economic environment. The Australian case offers interesting insight into the relationship between occupational identity and occupational community. The strength of the occupational identity had been weakened over time by changes in aspects of the occupational community. A more fragmented occupational community played little role in the post redundancy tradition and dissipated sooner than in the other cases.

Room W119 – The future of resistance at work

Think service improvement - Do as social movements in the workplace!

Musharrat Ahmed-Landeryou, Emily Kemp, Juliette Dias, Jennifer Burton, Megha Kashyap

(London South Bank University)

This presentation shares a case story regarding experiencing service improvement as a social movement to implement a higher education's organisational vision of decolonising the curricula. The presentation will be delivered by students, an academic, and the decolonising research fellow of the university. Social movement is referred to here because the planned changes are born out of struggle

to deliver improvement in experiences, progression, and success for Black, Asian and Minoritised students. The struggle is ongoing institutional and systemic racism causing power imbalance and creating racial hierarchies in the university, the end outcome being the continuing racial awarding gap, but also additional barriers to emotional and financial wellbeing, and perceptions of belonging during Black, Asian, and Minoritised students' time at the university (Ugiagbe-Green and Ernsting 2022). The socially constructed hierarchies and barriers also cause distress to these populations' students and staff members. In critical race theory, stories enable counter narratives where racism continues, or occurs, for critical exploration of the situation, to then learn and develop disruptive actions for change (Delgado and Stefancic 2017). Paolo Freire (1970 reprinted 2017, p.18), a Brazilian socialist and educator, stated that "The greatest humanistic and historical task of the oppressed: to liberate themselves and their oppressors as well." Meaning that Black, Asian, and Minoritised populations' students and staff know what change is required and possess agency and collective power to change their workspaces, and by doing so they show the managers, seniors, and leads of the organisation how they also benefit from supporting the changes raised. Decolonising the curriculum enables collective collaborations facilitating people to act as a social movement for service improvement, working towards a shared purpose for impactful sustainable change for the benefit of all, and for equity. This contrasts with a top-down directed service improvement action plan and process for change that is traditional (Waring and Compton 2017). Decolonising the curriculum as service improvement in this case's university is framed around an evidence-informed decolonising the curriculum wheel model (Ahmed-Landeryou, 2023) which incorporates the principles and concepts of social movement. The wheel model proposes ongoing change as generative collective of collaborations, bringing together different departments, staff, and students across the university. Working collectively enables the coproduction of change from the grassroots in organisations, furthering engagement in decolonising the curriculum as a social movement, which relates back to Freire.

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Passion rather than a partner: The embodiment of sector norms in the UK film industry

Pippa Denny-Gelder, Dr Siobhan Wray

(University of Lincoln)

In a highly competitive and precarious industry visibility and social relationships are key to survival, with a sense that 'if you're a loser in the new world of work it must somehow be your fault' (Fleming, 2017, p. 703). The experiences of film workers are akin to those of Neely's (2020) "Portfolio workers', to work they must firstly, build and market their own brand or identity, secondly, express a passion and love for the industry, thirdly accept risk. Responsible for building their own networks and finding opportunities, film workers are part of the neoliberal economy of self (Lane 2011; Anteby and Occhiuto 2019). Only as good as their last job (Blair 2001) they enact and perform fragile identities (Kinghts & Clarke, 2014) embodying and complicit with regimes of control.

Evidence suggests that there is a movement of informally organised resistance developing within the creative industries in the form of "issues based collectivism" (Dent, 2022). The current study explores the nature of precarity, and the role of identity in understanding relations of control and resistance (Alevesson, Ashcraft and Thomas, 2008).

Methods: A purposive sample of three early to mid-career film production staff were approached and invited to take part in the study. Two female and one male participant aged between 22 and35 years old agreed to an initial interview to discuss their experiences of working in film. Participants were interviewed via Teams and the interviews were recorded and transcribed. Transcriptions were checked for accuracy by a second researcher and sent to each participant to review. After taking part in the first interview, participants were invited to take part in follow up interviews at three - and six - month intervals.

The first stage of analysis was to thematically analyse the interviews within time point one. Each researcher initially coded each stage one interview independently and initial codes were compared. Where there were differences, these were examined jointly, and a consensus decision made. Codes were then reduced and organised into themes and sub themes. Key themes were then used to inform the interview schedule for time point two. This process was subsequently repeated for time point three.

Results and Discussion: The experiences of workers in the film industry, reflect the "norms for workers in the new economy, such as facing precarious work (Kalleberg 2011; Williams and Neely 2015) embracing risk -taking (Pugh 2015) engaging in "everwork" (Wynn 2018; Ross 2004), expressing passion for the work (Rao and Neely 2019; Morris et al 2023) and networking to secure advancement (Williams, Muller and Kilanski 2012)".

Participants expressed awareness of changes within the industry and at times reflected on how these changes may influence their future selves. However, this narrative was often in conflict with the neoliberal self and the reality of the now. These tensions are discussed with reference to embodied identity and resistance.

THURSDAY 14 SEPTEMBER
PAPER SESSION 5
11:00-12:30

Room W010A – Gender and intersectional inequalities within workplace resistance discourses

'Never a right time, never a right place': How Chinese single working women negotiate professional identities through intersectional identity work approach

Ne Ma

(University of Leeds)

The term "leftover women" was coined by Chinese mass media around 2001 to respond the trend that more and more women chose to postpone and/or forgo marriage for career development or further education at their young age. This derogatory label targets women beyond their mid-twenties but still unmarried or unpartnered, sarcastically implying that they are "losers" because of the failure to establish a stable heterosexual relationship at the "best age. In 2007, "leftover women" was officially added in Chinese Language Situation Report to signify government's concern about the increase in number of single women of marriageable age, which was considered as a distasteful tendency jeopardising country's birth rate and future labour force (Gui, 2020). Ever since then, it has been commonly used in the Chinese media and people's daily life to blame single women's career ambitions for their "irresponsible singlehood". Moreover, the growing societal alarm at the trend of population aging have compounded the derogatory connotation of this artificial category, and evoked public hostility towards those career-orientated professional bachelorettes.

The government's keen desire to boost the population sustainability, reflected by President Xi Jinping's speech of emphasizing women's "central role in the family" in 2013 and the abolish of One-Child Policy in 2016, renders women's effort in workplace less important than their "obligation" to become wives and mothers, leading that "leftover women" face intensified discriminations and marginalization in their daily work and the process of job seeking. Women's singlehood is frequently regarded as extra HRM costs related to their future maternity by employers and connected with such unfavourable personalities as selfishness, irresponsibility, and immature, which put their employability into question and cause many problems over their perception of self-value at work.

Previous studies indicated that stigmatized social identity would create a puzzle in the construction and reconstruction of one's professional identity (Slay and Smith, 2010). Thus, how the pressure from unfulfilled gender expectation and label of "leftover women"— a socially constructed stigmatization based on intersectional discriminations against gender, age, and marriage status— affects Chinese single working women's professional identity and work experiences should be a question worth further investigation. This question should be emphasized in current post-Covid era, as the UN states that the pandemic reduces women's equal opportunities to participant in labour market and reconfirms the traditional gender division of labour. By deploying biographic narrative interpretive method (BNIM), this research is expected to identify unique forms of discriminations against Chinese single working women and to discover the explanatory factors and solutions through life stories of 66 unmarried Chinese women who are now working and living in China, UK, and US, seeking to exert impact on social culture and public policy to promote gender equality.

BSA Work, Employment and Society Conference 2023
Glasgow Caledonian University

Intersectional identities and the future of work: Perspectives of young women

Dr Shehla Khan, Dr Sandra Dettmer

(University of South Wales)

This conference paper explores the intersectional identities of young women negotiating their identities between race, culture, and faith in the workplace. Based on research findings from a thesis examining the construction and expression of second-generation Muslim Welsh women's identities within everyday spaces and places, this study utilised a mixed-methods approach to gather data from 30 participants through interviews and focus groups. Key themes investigated included the construction and embodied experiences of gendered identities.

The study explored the challenges faced by young Muslim women in Wales as they navigate their identities in the face of societal and workplace obstacles, including racism, Islamophobia, and gender discrimination. According to Pain, et al. (2001), social identities are not entirely changeable but are heavily influenced by power dynamics and resistance. The participants sought to resist exclusion by seeking out support mechanisms and building positive relationships. However, misconceptions and biases held by colleagues proved to be significant barriers to their sense of belonging in the workplace. It highlights the complex intersection of power dynamics and resistance in shaping social identities, particularly in the face of Islamophobia and marginalisation.

The study interrogates the assumed relationality between the resisted and resistant and how this manifests in the workplaces for these participants and their employment experience while also examining the wider impact on their sense of belonging to society. The participants draw boundaries to protect their gendered, religious, and cultural identities while attempting to find commonalities with wider workplace culture. The resistant work identity creates difficulties for balancing everyday embodied experiences through intersectional inequalities faced. Intersectional identities specifically focus on the disadvantageous positions caused due to the negotiation power of these multiple identities (Valentine, 2007).

This research paper forms part of an ongoing investigation of current practices of employers in recognising the importance of having a diverse workforce. It aims to evaluate progress towards equality and diversity at work, considering the rhetoric-reality gap between employers' stated commitment to diversity and their practical achievements at an organisational level. The paper will focus on the practical experience of women from different backgrounds in their workplaces and the impact of robust policies in turning the dial on diversity, creating positive workplaces where employees can embody their intersectional identities without resistance. The research paper will take the theoretical position of examining the practices surrounding career progression in the context of intersectional studies and how various factors such as gender, race, and ethnicity intersect and contribute to the creation and perpetuation of advantages and disadvantages across multiple dimensions of difference at the individual, organisational, and societal levels (Castro and Holvino, 2016).

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Feminization and resistance in the Global South: An anatomy of three strikes

Arya Thomas

(South Asian University)

Informalisation in the global south is a key characteristic of contemporary capitalism. In fact, even in the global north today, precarity and casualization of workers have come to characterize the nature of

employment in today's times. With rising political and ecological instability, informal labour also has the bearings of politically charged identity markers, including, 'refugees', 'illegal' and 'migrants'.

Informalisation has often always been discussed with feminization in the context of global south, especially in South Asia. The fact that expansion of work has taken place in paid domestic work has also led to this conflation. Even within the formal sector, informalization and casualization has been the dominant nature of employment contracts.

I look at the instance of three important strikes in India, across three different worksites- retail, automobile and plantation, to suggest that even with widespread informalization, first, that the regimentation/disciplining in the workplace is being challenged in quotidian and insurgent moments. Secondly, all three strikes brought forth issues of representation and inequalities of women workers within their respective unions, and a reckoning that issues of gendered difference and agendas are hardly being addressed by mainstream trade unions. In fact, this precise failure by unions led to radical reimagination of resistance within each of these workplaces that led to pivotal moments in labour resistance in the last decade in the country.

Designing inclusive remote and hybrid working to support disabled workers

Calum Carson, Melanie Wilkes, Alison Collins, Rebecca Florisson, Jacqueline Winstanley, Paula Holland

(Lancaster University)

One-fifth of working-age people in the UK is disabled and this proportion is increasing. Despite this, the diversity and inclusion agendas of many organisations place greater emphasis on protected characteristics other than disability. The disability employment gap stands at 29.8 percentage points and is largely driven by organisational inflexibility and non-inclusive workplace policies and practice, including inequitable access to effective reasonable adjustments.

Employers have been conceptualised as resisting implementation of reasonable adjustments that are perceived as disruptive to organisational routines and structures (Gewurtz and Kirsh, 2009; Harwood 2016). Working from home is a reasonable adjustment and can be positive for disabled workers, enabling them to schedule work around fatigue or pain, and to reallocate energy used for commuting. Despite this, prior to the pandemic remote working was not widely available and employers were often reluctant to allow disabled staff to work from home even as a reasonable adjustment.

In 2022, we conducted a mixed-methods study of disabled workers' experiences of working remotely during the pandemic. Participants almost overwhelmingly reported that remote working gave them more autonomy and control over their working environments, which was positive for their physical and mental health, productivity and job satisfaction (Taylor et al, 2022). The importance of having access to remote working related to identities: it was particularly highly valued by disabled women, younger disabled people, individuals with multiple impairments, and disabled carers.

Although inaccessible digital technologies and lack of duplicate specialist equipment at home hampered the work participation of some participants, 82% wished to work remotely for 60-100% of the time in future (only 2% did not want to work remotely at all). Despite this, only 47% of participants currently worked their preferred number of days remotely. Some participants had resisted returning to in-person working, expressing concerns for their health and wellbeing if returning to office-working reduced their flexibility and autonomy.

Building on these findings, our larger-scale mixed-methods study funded by the Nuffield Foundation explores how remote and hybrid working can be designed to be inclusive of disabled workers' needs and preferences, so that it actively promotes their job retention, recruitment and progression. Underpinned by the Job Demands-Resources model and an intersectional framework, we explore, through a national survey and in-depth interviews, disabled workers' perspectives on the benefits and challenges of remote and hybrid working in relation to their employment, health/wellbeing, productivity and work-life balance, and the factors they perceive as enabling inclusive remote/hybrid working. Through organisational case studies, we will identify whether and how employers are implementing inclusive remote/hybrid working. We will produce Good Practice Guidance for employers on the design of inclusive hybrid working and management of remote/hybrid teams.

The pandemic instigated possibly permanent change to working practices: three years on, remote and hybrid working is still widely available to workers and job-seekers. However, remote/hybrid working will not help narrow the disability employment gap unless employers consider disabled workers' needs and preferences in its design and management; failing to do so will create further employment and health inequities for disabled people.

Room W010B – Marginalised work and workers, risk and resistance in precarious places

How workers' employment trajectories are affected by insecure employment at the early career stage

Rebecca Florisson

(Queen Mary, University of London)

This contribution forms one of the empirical chapters of the author's PhD thesis, currently in her third part-time academic year, combining this with her full-time role as Principal Analyst at the Work Foundation where she leads the Insecure Work Programme.

The paper explores how engagement with insecure work during the early career affects UK workers' longer-term employment trajectories. Much of the prior literature around insecure and precarious work is divided between public health literature, which explores the effect of subjective insecurity (the perception of being insecure) on mental and physical health and wellbeing (Kim & Knesebeck, 2015); and literature on objective insecurity (ways in which people may experience insecurity without necessarily feeling themselves to be insecure), focussing on the impact of employment precarity on future earning potential and risk of unemployment. This latter strand has often focussed on a single aspect of insecurity, such as temporary work, or part-time work (Booth et al, 2002; McVicar et al, 2019). However, it is becoming increasingly apparent that several forms of insecurity can coincide, creating a greater intensity of insecurity (Florisson, 2022). Therefore, this article explores the extent to which 'cumulative insecurity' during the early career impacts on worker's longer-term employment trajectories.

This paper uses a holistic measure of labour market insecurity across three dimensions derived from the literature (as outlined in Florisson 2022, this uses among others Olsthoorn, 2014, Kalleberg, 2018, Richardson, 2022):

• contractual insecurity, where people are not guaranteed future hours or future work

• financial insecurity, where people experience low pay or unpredictable pay

• and (lack of) access to rights and protections within the UK context, for example by virtue of employment status or due to failure to qualify for certain benefits.

As a new contribution, these three dimensions of insecurity are represented by eight indicators for insecurity selected from an ESRC-funded longitudinal data source: the British Household Panel Survey and Understanding Society (1991 to present). The paper exploits this data source by classifying employment across different levels of intensity and duration of insecurity at every point of observation, and tracking individual outcomes over time using descriptive analyses, regressions and sequence analysis.

The analysis demonstrates there are clear employment penalties for young workers who engage in insecure work that persist for some time. Furthermore, the analysis finds that young workers were increasingly more likely in the 2010's to start their work experience in insecure jobs than they were in previous decades. Although the overall prevalence of higher intensity insecure work has remained relatively stable across the decades, this analysis shows that when young people engage in insecure work, they are more likely now than previously to spend increasingly protracted periods in insecure

work. Previous research may have underestimated the consequences of insecurity by focusing only on a single aspect of insecurity at a time, rather than the longer cumulative impact. This paper shows that experiencing insecure work in the early career has implications for long term individual outcomes as well as wider implications for the UK labour market.

Always somebody else's horizon: Lived religion and the power of work

Mark Read

(Currently unaffiliated)

Max Weber asserted that the modern, capitalist ethic emerged from within the Western, Christian Protestant traditions. These non-conformist religious worldviews, he argued, underpinned rational capitalist expansionism across the globe. Quakers and other similarly dissenting Christian sects were seen as instrumental to the fomenting of these Western modes of industrialised power.

Yet, in the early twenty-first century, the tectonics of economic, industrial and technological change has presented Quakers, and perhaps other religious traditions, with a peculiarly contemporary challenge: where lies the boundary now between the ambitions of work organisations inter alia to improve the world and a religious authority transcendent of the mundane? In the organisational workaday, how heterodox is lived religion and, moreover, who decides?

This paper draws upon qualitative research into Quakers' experience of the twenty-first century workplace. It argues that Quakers' religious claims – lived out mainly in services sector jobs – are seen to be aligned similarly with those of the work organisation. At work, Quakers don't so much contend as blend whilst they mend the world. The liberal Quaker tradition as practice, in this context, appears fundamentally a product – rather than a determinant – of the social particular.

Whilst the interviewees aspire to move the world towards a more charitable horizon, today's work organisation exercises its worldly power to sculpt intimately - and otherwise - Quakers' other-worldly ends.

Room W001 – The resistant self: Work, identity work and wellbeing reconsidered

Strategizing exposure: A qualitative understanding of professional sport, work and privilege

Martin Roderick

(Durham University)

In the field of sport and mental health, research is comprised predominantly of large-scale quantitative studies of type and prevalence, identifying performance-specific risk indicators, barriers and demands. Although many studies implicitly involve conditions of labour, such studies overlook key sociological concerns such as 'work', 'class' and 'privilege'. My interpretivist approach to the problem of athlete-as-worker wellbeing is different and foregrounds the idea that, as Sartre (1944) states, for some, 'hell is – other people'. This presentation stems from a British Academy–funded project examining the effects of public recognition on the private selves of high-profile sports workers. In this presentation I focus on an emerging uneasiness with 'social' spaces – proposing the idea of a sportive politics of agoraphobia – examining the ways in which professional athletes cope with the highly visible aspects of their daily lives, importantly their fears of others' attention.

26 semi-structured interviews were undertaken with a purposive sample constructed of male (18) and female (8) full-time, U.K.-based professional athletes from seven sports. The selection criteria were that interviewees were (a) current professional athletes, (b) had been written about in the U.K. national press, and (c) generally recognizable in the "public eye" (I acknowledge the difficulty of operationalizing this criterion). Qualitative data were collected, the principal objective of which was to investigate how sports workers experience role visibility. In constructing the interview schedule, an emphasis was placed on conceptual ideas related to "space," "place," "identity," and "emotional performances": a key

goal for this project was to examine if, where, and how "work", their paid employment, spilled over to other realms of their lives and how, on an everyday basis, they strategize exposure.

Every day, non-performance doubts and concerns seem hardly ever to be brought to consciousness, but this qualitative study of professional athletes' lives indicates that such troubles come to be problematized as an ineluctable source of existential disquiet. The data indicate that professional athletes feel constrained in their abilities to bring anxieties to a more public surface because of assumptions regarding the privileges that wrap round their work-life existence. There is a vocational orientation to their careers that they are aware is well entrenched in public understandings of the job of athlete. A 'look' of recognition from others may solidify an athlete's athletic sense of self, yet also come to disturb and decompose the very foundation of their social self. So, professional athletes' strategies to cope with their 'being' in public involve a combination of (i) conveying normalness, (ii) performing positive affect, and (iii) adjusting to being interpreted in public. I conclude the presentation by highlighting the interdependence between the personal and the public for professional athletes that underpins a Millsian sociological imagination by asking to what extent this distinction holds in the context of an intense fascination with public figures, self-promotional social media, and struggles to protect the private in public realms.

"Nah, not today": Resisting grind culture and re-orientating endometriosis temporalities at work

Victoria Williams

(The Open University)

This paper discusses how UK women navigate chronic, invisible, and fluctuating symptoms of endometriosis in the context of labour market practices built upon normative and ableist conceptualisations of time. Empirically, this paper draws on interviews and diary data from twenty one women working across twenty one UK industries. It investigates how participants re-orientate the temporalities of living and working with endometriosis against grind culture, where they are expected to minimize their symptoms and conform to productive worker expectations in line with the normative pace of performance (Wendell, 1996). Three key acts of 'rebellion' against 'Capitalism's temporal bullying' (Fazeli, 2016) emerged from the data. Firstly, participants' 'self-sustainability sacrifice' of navigating endometriosis and employment is explored. The capitalist construction of work, with the expectation of a continuous stream of capacity, creates a tension for participants between balance and burnout, flexibility and flare ups, and pleasure and productivity. Secondly, in the absence of an ethics of care for people with chronic illnesses within the labour market, participants engage in their own '(in)activity of soul care'. This represents a form of resistance to the objective of grind culture that glorifies rewards at the refusal of rest. Thirdly, participants engage in vulnerable, political, and active/passive sites of resistance as a means for re-imagining a more malleable temporality for singular and collective futures of people working with endometriosis. Theoretically, this paper contributes the concept of endo(metriosis) time to advance the limited knowledge on the experience of chronic and fluctuating gynaecological health conditions in the labour market and within work, management and organization literature. The central argument of this paper is that working under endo time, being the amalgamation of gender, crip, and queer time (Halberstam, 2005; Shildrick, 2009, 2019; Freeman, 2010; Kafer, 2013), is a vulnerable non-normative temporality that requires greater levels of understanding and support in the labour market to combat toxic productivity. In the absence of supportive intervention, women with endometriosis are left little choice but to battle against the body or engage in a 'third shift' (Seear, 2009) of normative resistance and rebellion. Data presented in this paper is part of a PhD thesis in its final year of completion.

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A healthy response?: Resisting corporate wellbeing

James Wallace

(Cardiff University)

The paper presents findings from an empirical study which sought to understand the way in which corporate wellbeing discourse shapes the subjectivity of employees. Specifically, the paper examines the role which resistance plays when employees seek to manage their identity in relation to neoliberal wellbeing discourse.

The paper is based upon a qualitative case study of two organisations with award-winning workplace wellbeing programmes. The first of these organisations, InsureCo, is a large insurance company with a large number of desk-based employees who work in a call-handling role. The second organisation, Aero, is a large engineering company which maintains commercial aircraft engines; employees at Aero were mostly shop-floor workers. A total of 62 semi-structured interviews were carried out, 36 at Aero and 26 at InsureCo.

The initial findings demonstrate, in keeping with extant critical wellbeing literature (Zoller 2003; Kelly et al. 2007; Maravelias 2009,2016; Hull and Pasquale 2018), that corporate wellbeing discourse prioritises the production of neoliberal subjects who become 'healthy' through taking responsibility for, and managing wellbeing, in order to ensure productive ability. Against this backdrop the question emerges: what counts as resistance in the context of neoliberal workplace wellbeing? (Mumby et al. 2017). In answering this question two key forms of employee resistance are identified. The first of these involved a refusal to engage with the wellbeing programme (Thanem 2013; James and Zoller 2017), often accompanied by expressions of cynicism (Fleming and Spicer 2003). Whilst this appears to offer a substantial means of resisting the problem of wellbeing, it is argued that non-participation and cynicism towards the corporate wellbeing programme falls short of refusing the subjectivity of the 'healthy' employee, i.e. the employee who assumes responsibility for being well. Contrary to this, a second form of resistance is identified, which involves engaging in collective resistance through trade union pressure in order to push responsibility for wellbeing back onto the employer. It is argued that this pushing-back of responsibility offers a more promising means of resisting neoliberal wellbeing discourse.

Examining the effects of violence on labour market trajectories

Vanessa Gash

(City University, of London)

This paper seeks to determine the effects of violence exposure and fear of violence on labour market outcomes, allowing for an expanded analysis of the resistant self and well-being at work. While there is an extensive literature on the effects of violence on both psychological and physical well-being, see Hughes et al. (2017) and Yon et al. (2019) for systematic reviews, assessments of the consequences of violence on workers' labour market attachment is comparatively under researched (MacMillian 2016). Moreover, many of those who do examine the effects of violence on socioeconomic outcomes do so with small-scale and/or cross-sectional samples with consequent lack of clarity on the causal order of effects. Notable exceptions include the work of Kaufman and Walsh (2022) who use a follow-up survey of American high and middle-school students to determine the long-term effects of interpersonal violence on socio-economic outcomes in adulthood. Our paper is one of the few papers which provides a cross-over from the field of criminology to labour market analysis using nationally representative data for the United-Kingdom. We deploy the panel structure of the United Kingdom Household Panel Survey (UKHLS) to offer approximate measures of the causal effect of violence on the labour market trajectories of workers. We measure the effects of violence exposure alongside other key controls, with independent variables lagged to t-1. We determine the effects of violence on transitions between t-1 and t to approximate causal pathways. We test the effects of four violence variables, allowing us to

operationalise fear of violence and violence experience. Fear of violence is determined using variables which determine if respondents had felt unsafe and/or if they had avoided specific places. Violence exposure asked respondents if they had been insulted, threatened or shouted at, and also ask if respondents had been physically attacked. The first outcome looks at the effects of violence on occupational change, to determine whether those who experience violence are at risk of declining occupational rank. The second looks at the effects of violence on labour market retreat, to determine whether violence increases the risk of reductions in working-hours from full-time employment, and of drop-out from both full-time and part-time employment. We also look at whether violence exposure limits integrative transitions from inactivity to employment and to full-time work from reduced hours. We find violence exposure to be predictive of labour market drop-out for both women and men, and also to be predictive of occupational downgrading for men. The findings suggest important productivity effects of violence on the economy and on labour market dynamics which deserve greater recognition. Our findings also underscore how fear of violence, a so-called soft variable in the fields of both criminology and socioeconomics, has important negative effects on workers' trajectories. This finding allows us to justify greater attention to the effects of violence outside the realms of illegal behaviours.

Room W002 – Open stream one

Plus ça change…. Becoming an employee-owned company

Dimitrinka Stoyanova Russell, Jonathan Preminger

(Cardiff University)

This paper examines the confusions and uncertainties engendered within companies as they transition to an employee ownership trust (EOT) structure. The uptake of EOT, spurred by tax benefits anchored in the Finance Act 2014, has positioned this alternative organisational form on the radar of scholars as a novel employment context with potential to impact positively job quality and workplace democracy (Jenkins & Chivers 2021). Research to date however has signalled its limited capacity for major improvements at company level (Jenkins and Chivers 2021) serving instead as a vehicle for formalising already existing good practices (Preminger and Stoyanova Russell 2022a, 2022b). Here we focus specifically on the transition stage from privately owned to EOT business to understand the challenges influencing work-related outcomes.

Practitioners and employees involved in EO often describe the transition to an EOT as 'Everything changes yet nothing changes'. Drawing on 20 semi-structured interviews with key respondents in EO businesses and two in-depth qualitative case studies, all part of an ongoing project, we explore aspects of change, continuity and related uncertainty with regards to work context. Findings show confusion around new governance structures and roles, management responsibilities and the understanding of 'ownership'. This is particularly so for employees: for most of them the transition is an imposed rather than self-initiated process and the final organisational form is vague. Uncertainty exists for owner-founders, too, albeit not in equal measure: the end for them is clear (exit from the business on beneficial terms), and the steps to achieving this objective are stipulated in the agreement with the EOT.

To unpack the above we use the notion of 'liminality' (Turner 1969/1996, Van Gennep 2019) and analyse the transition as a liminal space: the state 'betwixt and between' past and future social positions. We draw on Ibarra and Obodaru's (2016: 50) 'present day extensions' of such liminal transitions which outline the nature of liminality in less institutionalised settings. Previously used as a way of thinking about contemporary careers, this updated framework is useful here in building an understanding of the continuum of core contextual/structural factors and points of confusion over the new employment reality. Moreover, the allowance in the understanding of liminality as a subjective experience sensitises the analysis also to the interpretations and views of employees in different roles and parts of the organisations.

We focus specifically on three liminal aspects: the uncoupling of role and identity suspension, the self-guided process, and the incomplete/problematic narrative (Ibarra and Obodaru 2016). These allow us to analyse, respectively, the confusion around new or revised roles in the enterprise, including management roles; the tentative and almost exploratory nature of the direction and mechanics of the transition (imposed as a situation but often self-guided as a process); and the understanding of

'ownership' which is often confusing and in some cases, misleading. All these shape a liminal context of work and employment that influences the ability of workers to negotiate pay, progress in their careers, learn and gain more autonomy at work.

Shaping digital transformation in UK finance companies: Employee involvement and the introduction of automation technologies

Esme Terry, Mark Stuart

(Leeds University Business School)

Based on an empirical study of companies in the UK finance sector, this paper explores the role of employee involvement in the design and implementation of automation technologies. Our theoretical perspective is informed by the literature surrounding employee involvement in job redesign and workplace transformation (e.g. Cotton, 1993; Daniels et al., 2017; Knight & Parker, 2021; Morgan and Zeffane, 2003; Nielsen, 2013; Tims & Bakker, 2010). There is considerable evidence from research on digitalisation that employee involvement plays an important role in shaping digital change and associated outcomes (Eurofound, 2020; Ilsøe, 2017; Johnson et al., 2020; Litwin, 2011; Schraeder et al., 2006; Turja et al., 2022). For example, Garmann-Johnsen et al. (2018, p.55) describe employee involvement in co-creation activities as 'an important enabler of digitalisation and service improvements'. In the financial services context, however, the role of employee involvement in digital transformation is a distinctly under-researched topic.

The proliferation of digital technologies, robotics and automation systems in financial services organisations has been widely researched (e.g. Anagnostopoulos, 2018; Buchanan, 2019; Carreri et al., 2023; Kornelakis et al., 2022; Murphy & Cullinane, 2021; Regini et al., 1999; Stuart & Martínez Lucio, 2008). However, the effective adoption of digital technologies within finance sector organisations is subject to various barriers (Diener and Špaček, 2021). Diener and Špaček (2021) suggest that researchers should investigate activities within finance sector organisations, with a view to identifying best-practice approaches to digital transformation. Providing some insight into the benefits of employee involvement in digital change, Kornelakis et al. (2022) find that employees in banks may be empowered in their adjustment to digitalisation through collective voice and union representation. Indeed, authors have argued that union involvement and collective bargaining can play important roles in shaping digitalisation (see Haipeter, 2020; Klengel & Wenckebach, 2021; Kornelakis et al., 2022; Krzywdzinski et al., 2023).

Yet, missing from the extant literature on digitalisation in finance – and in professional work more widely – is an understanding of employee involvement activities outside of formal representation structures. Our paper aims to contribute to knowledge in this area by exploring employee involvement practices in finance companies undergoing digital change. We draw on a sub-set of qualitative data which was gathered as part of international case-study research led by the OECD. The authors undertook the UK-leg of finance sector data collection, conducting semi-structured interviews with managers, technology specialists, workers, union representatives and HR professionals working across our case-study organisations.

Our preliminary findings indicate that UK finance companies adopt a range of approaches to employee involvement in digital transformation processes. Among our case-study organisations, practices vary in terms of the methods adopted, the scale of employee involvement, and levels of structure and formality. There is also evidence of variation in the scope of employee involvement activities to impact digitalisation outcomes, mediated by organisational and managerial factors. Our analysis contributes to greater understanding of how processes of consultation, collaboration and co-creation between employers, managers and external partners may shape approaches to digitalisation and impact associated work and employment outcomes.

Counting green jobs: A new methodological approach

Pauline Anderson, Chris Warhurst, Jeisson Cardenas Rubio

(University of Strathclyde and University of Warwick)

Even as debate continues about the causes and solutions to the climate emergency (see Eckersley, 2021; Mann, 2021) governments are announcing routes to Net Zero plans to create sustainable

economies and create green jobs. One of the latest to do so is the UK Government. In 2020 the then UK Prime Minister, Boris Johnson, announced his Green Industrial Revolution which included a pledge to create a quarter of a million new green jobs by 2030 (Johnson, 2020) – a target subsequently increased to half a million jobs by 2030 (HM Government, 2022).

Whilst such policy shifts are welcome, they do raise two obvious questions, namely: 'what is a green job?' and 'how can progress towards green job targets be measured?' In this respect government policy announcements are running ahead of the evidence. As yet, there is no consensus on what constitutes a green job. Despite some progress on measurement (see Sofroniou and Anderson, 2020), a robust methodological approach to measure of the extent of, and changing demand for, green jobs is needed.

This paper outlines a new methodological approach that can be applied to any region to estimate and chart changes in green jobs over time. Using an adaptation of the O*NET classification of green occupations (Dierdorff et al., 2009), we show how labour market data (UK Labour Force Survey data) and web-scraped vacancy data (see Cardenas Rubio and Warhurst, 2022) can be used to measure the extent and demand for green jobs.

In its originality, the paper thus develops a new conceptualisation of 'green jobs', suggests a novel method by which these jobs can be measured and, finally, enables valuable evaluation of policy initiatives that seek to boost the number of these jobs. As the paper also demonstrates, it is an approach that can provide real time data on the quality of these jobs as indicated by skills and pay.

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Room W003 – PhD Showcase

A typology of content creative platforms: An empirical study of the UK, The US and China

Yin Liang, Jeremy Aroles, Bernd Brandl

(Durham University Business School)

Recent technological innovations, together with economic and societal changes, have laid the foundations for the gig economy which not only generated new jobs but also created new types of jobs. Working in the gig economy and for platforms is becoming more widely accepted and recognised, with digital labour platforms becoming an increasingly important ground for the work of the future. It is thus becoming increasingly critical to develop a fine-grained understanding of the ecology of digital platforms. In particular here, we are concerned with content creative platforms. Despite the rapid proliferation of content creative platforms and the paradigm shift in business models of the creative industries, our understanding is confined to a subset of these platforms (e.g. Instagram, YouTube, etc.).

In this article, we designed a two-stage study to explore content creative platforms. First, the article adapts Porter's (2004) 5P model to the context of content creative platforms, using data from 143 platforms in the UK, the US and China, in order to build a typology of content creative platforms. Doing so, we identity four types of platforms. The article then uses quantitative data from survey aimed at content creators to provide an in-depth picture of the characteristics of content creators in each platform category, thus identifying different perspectives on content creation-related work. Combining the four categories of content creative platforms developed in the first stage of the study and the characteristics of creators within each category in the second stage, this article highlights differences in terms of usage and perception; certain platforms and creators tend to perceive content creation as a leisurely pursuit, while on some platforms, creators engage in unconscious emotional labour alongside their recreational activities. In contrast, certain platforms and creators consider content creation as a creative work with a monetary incentive, whereas on other platforms, creators view it as task-oriented gig work.

This article contributes to research on the future of work, particularly gig economy and content creative platforms, in the following two aspects. First, by producing a typology of content creative platforms, this study develops a broader theoretical connection between content creative platforms. Second, by portraying the characteristics of creators across different categories of platforms, the study proposes a multifaceted perspective on the content creation work of different platform categories. This establishes a solid foundation for future research on the work and employment related aspects of content creative platforms.

The multiple discursive positions of online sex workers: Resistance, neoliberalism, and digital entrepreneurialism

Georgina Trace

(University of Leeds)

In the face of technological, social, and economic changes of the 21st century, online sex workers are alike may other online workers who are increasingly subject to neoliberal workplace logics of self-reliance, networking, and entrepreneurship (Caradonna, 2019; Easterbrook-Smith, 2022; Pezzutto, 2019). Broader debates around digital sex work are often concerned with the material conditions of sex work, exploring how platform infrastructures like algorithms and verification technologies have regulated sex workers, as well as exploitative working conditions online that are due in part to ongoing societal and institutional stigma and discrimination towards sex workers (Cunningham, Scott and Kendall, 2011; Jones, 2015b; Sanders et al., 2016; Stewart et al., 2018). I aim to contribute to the literature by bringing digital sex work into conversation with sociological theories on self-branding, popular feminism, and digital culture; literatures which have tended to overlook the experiences of sex workers. Specifically, this research investigates the contemporary working practices and strategies that sex workers employ in navigating a neoliberal, precarious platform economy whilst also attending to the discursive positions which structures their understanding and experience of their work.

This is a qualitative study using an innovative 'media go-along' (Jorgenson, 2015) technique that offers prompts and opportunities for interviewees to share, give tours of, and discuss their work on digital platforms and their physical workspaces. This contribution is based on the emerging findings from 10 initial interviews (20 hours of interviews) with women and non-binary people aged 18-35 in the UK who sell sexual content on digital platforms. I show how whilst participants' accounts reveal the presence of neoliberal logics in structuring their experience, there is also evidence of forms of resistance, manifest in queer discourse, sex work activism and anti-capitalist rhetoric. Furthermore, participants disrupt public discourse around popular sex work platforms like OnlyFans as easy money, instead highlighting the precarity of platforms and the amount of affective labour (Gill, 2014; Mendes, 2021) involved in maintaining a customer base. Using a feminist poststructuralist approach to develop a deeper understanding into how discourses (interconnected ways of being, thinking and acting) structure subjectivity (Butler, 1990; Gannon and Davies, 2012; Weedon, 1997), this paper analyses the discourses that women and non-binary people draw on in talking about how they experience and understand their work on digital platforms, considering why certain meanings are represented over others. A feminist poststructuralist perspective enables theorisation of subjectivity as fluid and often the product of many competing discourses, keeping in mind that other culturally and historically specific discourses (especially in relation to race, class, and queer identity) also give meaning and understanding to experiences (Weedon, 1997).

Creative destruction and meaningful work: An analysis of documentary constructions of translation work and digital translation technology

Ian Winstanley

(University of Liverpool)

With the ongoing development of digital technologies in conjunction with the business models and practices that utilise them under conditions of contemporary neoliberal capitalism, the production and adoption of digital technologies to facilitate and/or automate various kinds of work and the associated impact on the nature and quality of work undertaken by humans has emerged as an area of pressing interest and concern both for sociologists of work and for those whose work they study. This ongoing PhD research focuses on the case of translation as an area of work and employment traditionally regarded as relying on skilled human practitioners whose orthodoxy is increasingly challenged and disrupted by discourses and practices centred on digital technologies such as computer-aided translation (CAT) and machine translation (MT). As such, it is argued that the study of developments in this field offers valuable insights into some of the key issues and conflicts involved in contemporary processes of creative destruction that are mediated by digital technologies, including matters of power, resistance and meaningful work.

The research draws on Bourdieu's theory of practice and a case study methodology to explore how and why translation is meaningful in different ways to differently positioned groups of people within the field of translation and examines different kinds of interests and agendas with respect to translation and the digital technologies shaping this practice. Drawing on an empirical analysis of documents from language industry sources, this paper argues that the social positions occupied by agents in the field of translation are an important influence on the ways in which those agents tend to construct representations of translation and digital translation technology in language industry discourse. It is further argued that agents in different (though sometimes partially overlapping) occupational groups, such as translators, information technology specialists and business managers and administrators, as well as those in hybrid roles, are parties to an ongoing discursive and practical struggle over what it means to translate and to be a translator. The paper discusses how this is a struggle in which digital technologies play pivotal roles as socially constructed objects that give rise to practical affordances with implications for the quality of lived experiences of work in this area.

This PhD research thus extends the application of Bourdieusian practice theory to develop theoretically informed and empirically grounded insights into the process of creative destruction in a digital age and its impact on work in the translation field, revealing the social dynamics, cooperation and conflicts between key social groups involved in this process along with their strategies for exercising power and resistance in their relations with each other. In so doing, the project draws together research agendas in the sociologies of work, technology and translation and develops them in relation to questions of social justice concerning precarity, the meaning(fulness) of computer-mediated work and the scope for human flourishing in contemporary working lives.

Discourse embedded in digital platform 'on demand' healthcare

Pamela Hopwood, Ellen Maceachen, Ivy Bourgeault, Catherine Tong, Basak Yanar

(University of Waterloo)

The digital platform economy is rapidly expanding in the field of healthcare services. In this emerging area of research, I investigate experiences of healthcare providers working via digital platforms. There is little understanding of how platform capitalism and gendered care work intersect, and the consequences for caregivers' occupational health.

Utilizing institutional ethnography – a method to examine how dominant social organization orchestrates power relations in daily activities of work – this paper examines discourse surrounding the healthcare provider platform economy. Through interviews with workers, clients and platform company managers, and via critical examination of texts used by digital platform companies in Ontario, Canada, this study considers unfolding discourses about digital platforms for healthcare provision and the power structures reflected therein. This institutional ethnographic research is grounded in the experiences of workers, the textual discourses used by platform companies, and the socio-technological organization embedded in platforms. I draw on specific instances to identify and make explicit the power dynamics that extend

from platforms, and circuitously reinforce the platform structure to steer workers' action and impose certain social positioning.

Platforms' messaging conveys intent to combat healthcare worker shortages, increase health system efficiency, and meet client care needs; however, platforms contribute to the construction of gendered healthcare work as low-value, reproductive care. Early findings highlight that although platform companies invoke the legitimacy conferred by vetting workers through background checks, they paradoxically devalue professional healthcare by positioning workers as independent contractors who are ineligible for employee benefits and many social welfare programs. Amidst a prevailing discourse of offering choice to workers and clients alike, some platforms leave workers and clients to negotiate hours and pay - with each party seeking to achieve their own preferred schedule. When platforms intervene to 'match' workers and clients, this may be orchestrated via algorithms that weigh factors such as geography or language preferences. Within the structures of platform-organized care provision, clients may post personal health information presented as 'jobs', while worker ratings subject care providers to a myriad of feedback (or backlash).. These platform characteristics suggest a model of organizing caregiving that downplays the seriousness of information-sharing and privacy, potentially encouraging the display of clients' health information and workers' personal details (e.g., training, skills, cultural background).

These findings come from preliminary analysis of the discourse about platforms used for healthcare provision and experiences of informants. Data collection is ongoing and deeper analysis of platforms' structure, workers' experiences and the relations that rule the organization of platforms for healthcare provision is planned as part of this doctoral research.

This research will provide important insight derived from an institutional ethnography about an emerging field in platform economy work which is forecasted to grow as population needs increase and public care resources become or remain insufficient. Findings will be relevant where governments turn to platform capitalism to relieve burdened healthcare systems and reduce public responsibility for the organization of care provision. Findings will also be of interest for platform workers and users and the policy frameworks in which they operate.

Room W004 – Platform capitalism, hybrid work and digital resistance

Amazonism: A contested production regime

Georg Barthel

(Aalborg University)

The research on digital capitalism and the digitalization of labor spawned the diagnosis of new forms of control like algorithmic management and digital Taylorism. Especially the platform economy is to be said to implement direct control enhanced by digital technology. At the same time, new companies and sectors that have been made possible by digitization have been the scenery of widespread resistance and labor struggles. This is especially true for the delivery platforms and Amazon. These dynamics have to be understood against the background of the implemented strategies of management to control labor. This article contributes to that understanding by presenting an encompassing idea of control that reaches beyond the labor process. Referring to the concept of production regimes of Michael Burawoy, a specific ensemble of management strategies to control labor in digital capitalism can be diagnosed: Amazonism. Amazonism differs from Fordism by Lean Management and from Toyotism by its despotic labor regime. It combines a specific labor process, employment policy, handling of interest politics and a distinctive corporate culture. It is the despotic labor regime and the uncooperative attitude towards organized labor that has made Amazon one of the main spots of labor struggles in the Western World in the last decade. Amazonism is the form of control to be found in the warehouses of Amazon. The analysis presented are based on an extended case study of the production regime of Amazon and the culture of solidarity of workers in Leipzig, Germany. The data was collected through qualitative interviews and a long participant observation. The analyzed production regime, however, has relevance beyond this specific context and may help to understand the current conflict dynamics more broadly.

Injustice in platform work: Power hierarchy in the platform-based food delivery sector in Taiwan

Bo-Yi Lee

(National Yang Ming Chiao Tung University)

Platform workers sell their labour through digital platforms, and extensive research has been conducted on their job quality, labour process, and collective actions. However, more research is needed on their subjective perception of job quality, such as their perceptions of justice. The justice issue in business organizations has been examined through the theoretical framework of organizational justice, which consists of distributive, procedural, interpersonal, and informational justice. While this theory has been applied to examine traditional work, few studies have explicitly applied it to digitally connected work, such as platform or gig work. Some studies have found procedural and informational injustice in this newly developed sector.

Examining the issue of justice holistically is critical because distributive and interpersonal justice matter for platform workers. Overlooking the interrelated and dynamic effects of algorithms, which platforms rely heavily on, could lead to a failure to simultaneously address several issues of injustice. Additionally, given the growing number of people engaging in digitally connected work and being managed by algorithms, it is essential to examine their justice perceptions thoroughly. Therefore, this study adopts the widely adopted four-dimensional model of organizational justice to examine platform-based food delivery work, a common form of platform work.

This qualitative case study explores the perceptions of couriers regarding justice in the platform-based food delivery sector in Taiwan. Data was collected through semi-structured interviews with 26 couriers in July and August 2022. During these interviews, topics covered included compensation, bonuses, work processes, voice and participation, working environments, algorithms, motivations, attitudes towards worker classification, and collective actions. Data collection was followed by thematic analysis using a three-phase coding process.

The interview data show that platforms create injustice from many perspectives, leading to a power hierarchy in which couriers are the most powerless stakeholders compared to food providers and customers. Injustice perceptions stem from the opaque process for allocating courier slots (Foodpanda only), unknown logic for assigning orders to couriers, price determination (specifically a complex calculation of distance, bonuses, and penalties), rewarding policies (particularly rates going lower, policies becoming more complicated, and changes without consultation), system designs (including supporting staff), performance evaluations and due processes in which platforms tend to side with customers and food providers, and couriers' everyday experience of violence, harassment and discrimination.

Drawing on the research findings, this study argues for adopting an intersectional lens to examine justice issues in the platform work. Intersectionality refers to the interconnected social categories and multiple identities of individuals who experience oppression through the interaction of these categories. I borrow this notion to demonstrate how various categories can be interconnected and how their overlapping nature can contribute to individuals' injustice perceptions. Furthermore, the perceived injustices identified in this case study reveal a power hierarchy in which platforms exert control over couriers and other stakeholders, orchestrating an imbalanced power dynamic that places couriers in the most vulnerable position. This contrasts with other perspectives that characterize relationships in this sector as purely transactional, echoing platform companies' claims of offering neutral technology to match supply and demand.

Documenting the work day: Digital traces of work and resistance in gig work in India

Gayatri Nair

(Indraprastha Institute of Information Technology Delhi)

In India, both the expansion of gig work and the crisis of the pandemic have contributed significantly to the rise of organised resistance among gig workers in sectors such as ride hailing, food delivery and beauty work. Protesting conditions of work, low income and the insecurity of work, worker resistance has transitioned from spontaneous wild cat strikes to planned collective action through worker unions and associations. Mobilization strategies in both these instances include grassroot campaigns among

workers on the ground, but also on digital campaigns over social media platforms. It is the latter on which this article will focus, drawing attention to the ways in which a significant contribution is made by unions but also individual gig workers (typically male and typically in food delivery work) to document their work day. During times such as the peak of the pandemic (2020-2021), platforms such as Twitter and Instagram were widely used by individual workers to visibilize the control exercised by platforms over their work, sharing screenshots of the app to indicate instances of arbitrary algorithmic control and price reductions. This documentation was framed as evidence of the exploitation of gig workers. On platforms such as YouTube, gig workers- largely in food delivery and male- document the length of their work day. Through editing and interspersed with their own commentary, workers demonstrate what an average day of work is like, emphasising the time spent at work, what they earn, and provide tips for others.

Such acts of mapping the work day- both in its everyday form and its exceptional excesses- play a vital role in shaping worker resistance in platform economies. Supplementing the efforts of worker WhatsApp groups which are also widely used for mobilisation; such forms of documenting work practices undertake the task to visibilise that which is obscured by platform practices, and create the grounds for broader solidarities to emerge, especially as such posts are accessible to an audience wider than gig workers, and which includes consumers of platform services.

Building on a qualitative analysis of Twitter posts of gig workers and two Indian gig worker unions over the last three years; and video blogs (vlogs) by gig workers on YouTube, this paper analyses how a documentation of the work day plays a central role in driving resistance to platform capitalism in India. Such resistance, relies on both passive participation of viewing posts as well as active support from consumers to support strikes and protests and engage in platform boycotts. The paper contributes to our understanding of both digital resistance and labour process studies. It examines the conditions that enable such digital modes of documentation for individual workers and explores the gender dynamics of such efforts. The paper also highlights the significance of the labour process in not only building solidarities among the gig workers who are immersed in the process but also with those who bear witness to the labour process and exploitation of workers online.

Room W005 – Academia, academic activism and resistance in the academy one

Flexible working arrangements and presenteeism in the UK higher education sector during and post the COVID-19 Pandemic

Fotios Mitsakis, Anastasios Hadjisolomou, Amairisa Kouki, Gail Kinman

(Nottingham Trent University, University of Strathclyde, Birkbeck University of London)

Presenteeism has been defined by scholarship as an individual's decision to attend work while being sick (Lohaus and Habermann, 2019), whilst recent research on the impact of Covid-19 on the HE sector suggests the top-down pressure on academic and professional staff to work while being unwell (Kinman and Grant, 2020). This relates to Ruhle and Süß's (2019: 248) identification of an established 'presentistic culture' in academia, suggesting that academics are required to make commitments and sacrifices driven by feelings of job insecurity and aspirations for career advancement. The underlying, unitarist, assumption of this type of presenteeism culture is that the individual is loyal to the organisation and is responsible for the organisational goals and success, without job security, decent work or adequate health and safety protection (Bone et al., 2018). This study examines how the shift to flexible working arrangements, intra- and post-pandemic in the UK Higher Education reinforces the already existing, and problematic presenteeism culture in the sector, exploring this issue across the different types of work existing in the sector, including both academic and professional staff. The paper evaluates the range of personal and work-related factors driving presenteeism and the support, if any, provided by management to staff in relation to sickness and absence policies to prevent physical and "virtual presenteeism".

An online survey questionnaire was distributed across the sector and was completed by 332 participants. The questionnaire included a mix of open-ended and closed-ended questions to secure both qualitative and quantitative data. Research findings, unsurprisingly, highlight a significant increase

of remote working due to the pandemic, whilst a variety of flexible working arrangements was introduced to most universities, both for their academic and administrative staff.

As the data shows, 90% of the research participants have reported working under flexible arrangements after the breakout of the pandemic, compared to a respective 44% for the period before. However, such practices were associated with higher rates of "virtual presenteeism" as reported by Hadjisolomou et al. (2021). Alarmingly, although participants have reported their Covid-19 sickness to their line managers, 28% of them suggested that they have continued working while being unwell through flexible working arrangements (e.g., reduced hours or working from home to deliver teaching online, meet research deadlines etc.), thus supporting the established and problematic 'presentistic culture' in academia. Only 35% of our respondents (academics & professional staff) suggested that statutory sick leave was offered as an alternative, while 11% reported that no options offered at all, leaving the rest suggesting alternatives such as extra days off (10%), cover to allow recovery (12%), and mental health and wellbeing support (4%). Respectively, professional staff had to work while being unwell either due to lack of replacement or because of the fear of losing their work or being furloughed. Overall, this study argues that as flexible working arrangements are becoming the new working norm in HE post pandemic, presenteeism is worryingly to be established as the new attendance norm in the sector, affecting the well being of both academic and administrative staff.

Researcher inequalities at macro, meso, and micro levels

Naveena Prakasam, Ellen Hughes, Don Webber, Steven Pattinson

(University of Southampton)

There are increasing pressures on academics, some of which are attributed to managerialism (Kalfa et al., 2018) derived from exclusionary meritocratic principles resulting in widening inequalities. For instance, Cohen et al. (2023) propose an image of an ideal academic who are often stereotypically men, emerging from gender regimes within the university and the wider societal level resulting in some academics being valued highly, and others being marginalised, which is characterised by access to networks that are crucial for research success.

An academics' career stage is an important determinant of the inequalities with precarious Early Career Researchers (ECRs), leading to e.g., presenteeism (Hadjisolomou et al., 2022), which is often encouraged at the institutional level. Coping with increasing managerialist imperatives, such as performance appraisals, has led to ECRs having to play the game, characterised by increased competition. This involves increasing their capital, such as producing publications. Their steady (and cumulative) commitment to the game neutralises resistance by increasing competition between colleagues (Kalfa et al., 2018). While existing research points to inequalities, there is a gap in focussing exclusively on researcher inequalities. We explore the inequalities at a research-intensive university in the UK using 37 in-depth interviews with researchers. Findings indicate that inequalities occur at macro, meso, and micro levels, revealing inequalities due to career stage, gendered, racialised and class-based inequalities.

At macro level, the Global North versus South division was highlighted, including the devaluing of Global South doctoral degrees making it harder for candidates to be shortlisted for jobs. Gendered (old boys' networks) and class structures were revealed to be reasons for hampering research success where the success in grant capture was attributed to increased social capital and the "old boys' network". Class based inequalities, such as coming from a working-class background, and elitism by some universities are other macro level factors that highlight inequalities offset by career stage.

At meso level, precarious contracts experienced by ECRs contributed to barriers of research success. University structures such as internal processes relating to the Research Excellence Framework (REF) were seen as exclusionary. Other factors relating to university structures such as increased workloads were seen as contributing factors at the meso level.

At micro level, experiences of microaggressions and impostor syndrome were highlighted, and white male privilege was discussed. We highlight the importance of investigating factors at multiple levels in academia, which interact to reproduce researcher inequalities and identities. We call for the need to use an intersectional perspective in examining such inequalities.

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Orientation and overload in early career stages: On neglected functions of academic competition

Kathia Serrano, Julian Hamann

(Heidelberg University)

The concern with competition in academia has a history both in policy discourses and in research. Higher education policy has a long-standing fascination with competition as a governance instrument. It is no coincidence that, in higher education, competition is omnipresent: Higher education institutions compete for students and, in turn, students compete for college admission. Universities compete for talent and, in turn, talent competes for jobs. Academics compete not only for jobs, but also for funding, for journal space, and for attention and visibility. The examples convey that both individuals and organizations are simultaneously embedded in various different, interconnected competitions. And although there is vast literature on competition in academia, there is in fact little concern with this very interconnectedness of different forms and types of competitions.

In this paper, we want to shed light on one specific function of this multiplicity of competition and its impact on early career researchers – that is postdocs: Although the majority of the literature on academic competition conceptualizes it as a governance tool that allocates resources, competitions are also sites of socialization for early career researchers. That is, competition conveys what academics should work on to be considered a valuable member of their academic community, and academics learn through participating in different competitions (for funding, publication space or jobs) what is expected from them and what they have to do to be considered, for example, successful, or ambitious, or visible. The research questions that emerge from these preliminary observations are twofold: What are the values and expectations that different and overlapping types of competition convey to postdocs? How do these processes of learning and socialization affect the postdoc stage in general?

To answer these questions, our contribution draws on qualitative interviews with 68 postdocs in modern history and elementary particle physics working at German universities and research institutions. The paper showcases three findings: First, competition is not only a mechanism that allocates resources, it also conveys specific values and expectations. For example, funding competitions orient postdocs by conveying to them that funding is an end in itself, that they should be very pragmatic, if not opportunistic regarding their choice of topic when targeting these funds. Funding competitions socialize postdocs to become funding mercenaries. Second, the values and expectations competition convey are partly the same across very different disciplines. But our interviews also show that competition gives discipline-specific orientations, for example when it comes to publications. Third, as each competition comes with a specific value and expectation framework, it does not come as a surprise that early career researchers who are confronted with a multiplicity of competition will have to deal with contradictory expectations regarding their job and statuses. As such, competition is a site of both orientation and "role overload" for postdocs.

Hanging Lantern Room – Comparative and global perspectives on resistance

What do union members and leaders do for and against union revitalisation through inclusiveness?

Yooseop Chun

(King's College London)

Unions play a crucial role in organising and supporting workers' resistance, especially those in precarious non-standard employment, against labour market dualisation and precaritisation of work. This study compares two unions – Seoul National University Hospital Union (SNUHU) and Korean Teachers' and Educational Workers' Union (KTU) – in the South Korean public sector. The two cases exhibit differences in union responses towards outsiders and the outcomes despite similar union characteristics. The SNUHU organised non-standard employees, forming a virtuous circle of enhanced activism, increased union membership, and representation of outsiders. Conversely, the KTU failed to implement an inclusive strategy, which eventually led the union to fall into internal turmoil and reinforce exclusiveness towards outsiders. This paper investigates the elements explaining such differences focusing on the interactive political nature of union democracy between the reflection of members' preferences and the persuasion of leaders.

Existing studies on union revitalisation through inclusiveness have addressed its relationship's significance to a particular type of union democracy. Literature highlighting member-led union organising has underscored innovative experiments, the development of grassroots activists, and coalition to social movements and communities (Holgate, 2015). Alternatively, a top-down approach beyond a supportive role has been appreciated to negatively impact revitalisation through inclusiveness, as the bureaucratic procedure disempowers members (Humphrey, 2000; Marino, 2015). Few studies maintain that structured, traditional unions can rely on a top-down approach or reconcile top-down and bottom-up approaches for revitalisation, acknowledging the independent roles of union leadership (Voss & Sherman, 2000).

This study revisits the relationship between a top-down/bottom-up approach and union revitalisation through inclusiveness, based upon the extensive interviews with 46 participants, including rank-and-files, union representatives, activists, officials, and top leaders. The findings suggest that a top-down approach can contribute to union revitalisation through inclusiveness by persuading disinterested union members and outsiders, establishing multiple communication channels for deliberation, mobilising members, and developing activists. Furthermore, the finding highlights that members' recognition of and trust in committed leaders were critical to implementing the inclusive strategy. Conversely, KTU's case exhibited that the limited capacity of local union branches and staff, distrust of union leadership, and members' low efficacy of unionism led to the failure of persuading members and implementing an inclusive strategy. Furthermore, the case study demonstrated how insider members could rely on the organising tactics to tackle inclusive union strategy and competitive election to reflect their preferences. The findings contribute to employment relations literature by exploring diverse relationships between union inclusiveness/exclusiveness, union revitalisation, and union democracy.

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Fighting the petro-state: Lessons in civil disobedience and the "right to strike" in fossil-fuel capitalism

Andrew Stevens

(University of Regina)

In 2019, Regina's Co-operative Refinery Complex locked out the 730 members of Unifor Local 594 amid record profits in an aggressive drive for significant pension concessions. Marred by sweeping anti-picketing injunctions, an enormous scab operation, police repression, and general public enmity, the lockout suggests two overlapping trends. First, the union's adherence to conciliatory bargaining had left it ill equipped to confront—either in the workplace or the public sphere—management's cost-cutting agenda in the centre of Saskatchewan's now hegemonic petro-state (Carter 2020). Second, a marked tension developed between community outreach efforts and the circumstances in which legal industrial action was ineffective and civil disobedience emerged. Findings for this paper are drawn from interviews with workers, a detailed analysis of media coverage, and a historical examination of Unifor 594 and its role in advancing oil worker organizing since the 1940s in Canada.

Where oil unions have, historically, worked to chart an independent political and economic assessment of the oil industry, the current climate in oil-extractive regions like Western Canada is such that labour has aligned itself with the interests of oil companies. Breaking from this trend involves a two-fold strategy of using the ostensibly democratic framework governing co-ops as a contested terrain through which labour and community members can chart an alternative approach to labour relations. This, the paper, concludes required a re-orientation towards "community unionism", where labour's power is amplified by political and community engagement – as well as the capacity for unions to advance as "environmental actors" (Snell and Fairbrother 2010) in the context of ecological justice and the "just transition". Indeed, the lockout offers a vector through which workers and organized labour can examine and provide a catalyst for progressive economic and social transformation in the domain of fossil-capital hegemony (Huber 2013).

Logging into in-person protests: how Indian tech workers' unions grapple with remote work

Rianka Roy

(University of Connecticut)

Through Covid-19 lockdowns, remote work has become mainstream across labor sectors, most notably in the tech industry. Even after lockdowns, tech and tech-adjacent companies continue to operate either remotely or in hybrid format. Governments worldwide have introduced various regulations about remote work. But how has this change affected labor unions?

This paper explores the relation between remote work and trade unionism, as well as the new nuances of place, proximity and collective action in post-pandemic labor, by studying two tech workers' unions in India—the Forum for IT&ITES Employees (FITE) and the Union of IT&ITES Employees (UNITE).

Remote work has always been central to Indian tech companies. They fulfill over half of the world's outsourced work, as companies in the Global North hire cheap labor in the Global South. Over 4 million Indian tech workers remotely serve their employers and clients through 'virtual migration' (Aneesh 2006). This means, they physically remain in India, but digitally cross borders. This creates various ambiguities about labor rights. Indian tech unions have fought the challenges of such transnational remoteness by localizing their activism. They have focused on local labor laws, local governments, and organized tech workers in specific cities.

However, with the continuing practices of 'work-from-home,' remote work in tech has minimized the possibilities of interaction among co-workers in shared physical spaces, including tech hubs and office buildings. Existing studies on tech and platform workers' activism note that the deterritoriality of labor atomizes resistance and makes collective action more dependent on 'connective' tools like social media (Bennett and Segerberg 2012). Extending these critical dialogues, my paper looks into the transitional processes, which Indian tech unions have adopted to adjust to the effects of remote work since the pandemic.

I analyze 15 interviews with Indian tech unions organizers, and over 500 hours of virtual and non-virtual ethnographic data (including participation in union events for over 20 hours).

I find that FITE and UNITE use three strategies to combat the effects of remote work, including diminishing interest in physical protests among their constituencies:

- In-person membership campaigns
- Online coverage of in-person campaigns
- Rank-and-file members' virtual participation in surveys and events

These strategies show that to counter remote work, Indian tech unions do not fully rely on social media. Instead, they continue to rekindle interest in physical protests, albeit with realistic expectations. Therefore, only a handful of organizers join the events in person, while rank-and-file members are allowed the flexibility of remote participation. My data demonstrates that this response to remote work makes Indian tech unions more top-down and hierarchical, although they use various decentralizing techniques of 'social movement unionism' (Badigannavar et al. 2021).

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Room W119 – Academia, academic activism and resistance in the academy two

The path to tenure: Why are women still lagging behind? An event history analysis of academic careers in Italian universities

Olga Gorodetskaya, Agnese Vitali

(University of Trento)

A vast body of literature demonstrates the existence of a gender gap in Academia: academic women are less represented in leading positions and have slower careers compared to academic men (e.g. Shauman, 2017; Webber & Canche, 2018; Fox & Gaughan, 2021), particularly in the Italian context (e.g. Marini & Meschitti, 2018; Picardi, 2019; Gaiaschi & Musumeci, 2020). Although considerable progress has been made in the last decades towards gender equality and gender policies aimed at creating equal opportunities for all groups of academics (e.g. Roberto et al., 2020), recent research demonstrates that in Italy, female doctorates are less likely pursue an academic path compared to male doctorates (Zabetta & Geuna, 2020), and the further transition from a precarious to a stable academic stage is more challenging for academic women than for academic men (Picardi, 2019; Marini & Meschitti, 2018).

Among the main factors contributing to the slower career progression of academic women compared to men, the literature frequently mentions career interruptions that women face due to childbearing during maternity leave, and due to further child-rearing, that remains a main responsibility of mothers. In support of such claims, previous studies found that promotions are postponed or reduced among mothers compared to non-mothers (Ginther & Kahn 2006, Wolfinger et al. 2008). Also academic women experience a great productivity penalty after taking maternity leave that essentially reduces their chances to be hired on tenured position (Antecol et al., 2018) and increases the time to promotion (McElrath, 1992). On the other hand, research from Italy found that attaining an associate professor increases the chances of having a child among academic women (De Paola et al. 2022) – a result that further supports claims that career advancement and childbearing are incompatible among academic women.

However, little previous research was able to measure the possible causal link between fertility and career progression due to lack of suitable data measuring both fertility and career histories (e.g. Lutter et al., 2022; Mairesse et al., 2020). Using unique original data on Italian academics, we explore gender differences in academic progression in terms of the time elapsed from obtaining a PhD to being appointed to a certain academic position, and estimate the role of childbearing in contributing to gender disparities.

Applying Cox Proportional Hazard model with time-varying covariates we found no gender differences in the rate of career progression from PhD completion to a precarious academic stage, while there is a significant gender gap in the rate to obtain tenured positions: women have about 28% lower chances to be promoted to associate professor and about 47% lower chances to be promoted to full professor, compared to men. However, our findings suggest that these differences cannot be explained solely by childbearing: after birth of a child is controlled for, gender gaps in academic promotions persist. Moreover, we discovered a significant fatherhood penalty during the first academic promotion, whereas there is a fatherhood premium during the transition to the stable academic ranks. For women, the effect of childbearing appears statistically not significant.

Making the impossible, possible: Optimism and refusal in the care-full obfuscations of academic motherhood

Mollie Etheridge

(University of Cambridge)

Academic work sits on a foundation of care. To fulfil their duties, academics must care about fields of study, education, and knowledge innovation. Even so, the seemingly care-full considerations that inform academic work have not translated into caring conditions for academic staff. Operating under what Kathleen Lynch (2011, 2022) calls a non-relational norm, institutions recognise and reward appearances of masculine self-sufficiency, marginalising the contribution and potential of staff with hands-on care responsibilities. Notwithstanding sector-wide commitments to improving equality, diversity and inclusion, there is, I argue, a lack of incentive to instil care-centric practices at a structural level, a reluctance compounded by processes enclosing academics and institutions in cycles of demonstrating excellence and output. To put it bluntly, being held up against care-less ideals is the trade-off academics make for caring about their work and the others this work impacts. With a focus on academic mothers, this paper critically analyses one of the ways in which this trade-off is negotiated, made sense of and even resisted.

The challenges of academic motherhood are well documented. As capitalist imperatives within the 'institution' (Rich, 1995) of 'intensive motherhood' (Hays, 1996) embolden the hegemonic influence of sexist and heteronormative archetypes on western domestic set ups, 'good' mothers are positioned as those thought to devote the majority their time, attention and financial resources to ensuring their children's development and wellbeing. In the context of academic work, this construct of the intensive mother clashes with both modern liberal ideals concerning the morality of independence and the current stronghold of neoliberal ideology and policy, influences which uphold the image of the successful academic as someone able and willing to devote all of their time, attention and financial security to being competitively 'excellent' (Rosewell, 2022). Unable to logistically and emotionally reconcile these expectations, academic mothers struggle to achieve the standards required to be 'good' in either their maternal or professional roles (Burford & Mitchell, 2022).

Here, I present one strategy for navigating the pulls of academic motherhood. Identified following PhD research interviews with 32 UK-based academic mothers and academic women desiring motherhood, 'care-full obfuscation' refers to the workplace conduct of hiding, underestimating, denying and/or lying about the influence of care-giving responsibilities on one's ability to fulfil professional obligations. Operationalising care-full obfuscation as a conceptual provocation, I draw from Lauren Berlant's (2011) Cruel Optimism and Bonnie Honig's (2021) Feminist Theory of Refusal to speculate the motivations and implications of this phenomenon. In the first instance, I question whether obfuscation functions as a temporary resolve, one which allows mothers to maintain the pretence of 'having it all'. I then take a different perspective. Through smuggling care-full orientations in to the academic realm, I consider whether obfuscation pushes against and so transforms normative measures of success. I end the paper by asking whether the intentional – perhaps even conspiratorial (Honig, 2015) – mobilisation of the obfuscation could legitimise the inclinations that rest behind academia's masquerade of self-sufficient brilliance.

Acts of resistance in academia: Postdocs rejecting exclusive-devotion "ideal worker" norms in the life sciences

Heather Hofmeister, Anne-Kathrin Kronberg

(Goethe University, Frankfurt)

Half a century after second-wave feminism, one main focus of inquiry still is the persistent underrepresentation of women in higher level academic science (Blickenstaff 2005; Ceci and Williams 2007; Hewlett et al 2008; Jacobs 2005; Krais 2000; Lincoln et al 2012; Martin 2000; Pollack 2016; Preston 2004; Riegraf et al. 2010; Scheikh and Zanesco 2015; Schiebinger 2007; Xie and Shauman 2003). The omnipresence of the "ideal worker" norm has been offered as one explanation for the underrepresentation of women in many fields.

The "ideal worker" norm (Williams 2000) is based on the idea that paid work is the primary, if not only, sphere of responsibility for employees and is reflected in the expectations for long work hours, relocation, travel, arranging other responsibilities around work, or avoiding those responsibilities altogether (Kelly et al. 2010). We examine the degree to which resistance to the "ideal worker" model may play a role in strategic career decisions and future expectations for the next generation of top scientists in the dynamic life sciences branch. Do they reject the long-hours work culture in favor of a future that includes personal interests and priorities? Using qualitative in-depth interviews with 22 life sciences postdocs (13 men, 9 women) in their final year from the same highly competitive research institution (thus controlling for aspects of their starting conditions), and follow-up interviews two years later, we found that all women and all but one man most felt internal personal resistance to the visualization of imitating the lives of their current supervisors. Some were committed to finding an alternative, but others were unsure whether they would be able to continue their resistance. Despite these postdocs being among the best and brightest scientists in a cutting-edge industry, and wanting an alternative path, they generally do not see themselves as holding negotiating power to demand the space for alternative ideal futures, at least not until they themselves have tenure. Our research may help predict the likelihood of change or continuation of labor market inequalities in one scientific field along gender lines. Intersectionalities of parenthood status, gender, and region of origin played a role in resistance or complicities to the existing system and will be discussed.

THURSDAY 14 SEPTEMBER
PAPER SESSION 6
13:30-15:00

Room W010A – Open stream one

Gendered productive subjectivities, transnational labour and social reproduction in uneven and combined Europe

Gregory Schwartz, Ania Plomien

(University of Bristol)

In this paper we explore the concept of _productive subjectivities_ in relation to differentiation and inequality experienced by migrant workers in marketised social reproduction in contemporary Europe. Various accounts of migrant labour take for granted the empirical reality of differentiated, unfavourably rewarded and treated, migrant workers. Poststructuralist and discursive theories focus on the disciplinary power of normative or legal discourses in the construction of the 'other', or on the constitutive biopower of neoliberalised institutions of labour markets as a conduit to fragmentation and differentiation of workers' subjectivities as 'natives' versus 'foreigners', with gender divisions playing a major role. Critical political economy research analyses differences and inequalities in the wages and working conditions of migrant versus local workers, including the exploitation of gender divisions, in terms of the folding of the global process of distribution of relative surplus value, including through the global labour arbitrage, into social structures of accumulation. In contrast, we approach the problem of migrant workers' differentiation and inequality from the perspective of social reproduction theories in terms of the complexity of the gendered division of labour wherein different spheres of provisioning (such as food, housing, and care) are shaped by the specific balance of the sources of provisioning (states, markets and households). Given globalisation and neoliberalisation that have unevenly combined Europe's labour markets, market-reach into social reproduction has resulted from the waning of state and household sources of provisioning. This has contributed to not only a proliferation of a more exploitable mobile workforce, but an _articulation_ of historically distinct forms of productive subjectivities (Starosta, 2011). When capital moves to take advantage of historically constituted difference across space, it takes possession of differentiated labour that proffers variegated human capacities for value appropriation. When migrant workers enact such dispositions in place, they articulate their productive subjectivities with the productive subjectivities of non-migrant workers into a unified (labour) market. Drawing on a research project on the marketisation of social reproduction in contemporary Europe, our extended case methodology combines in-depth interviews with Polish and Ukrainian migrant workers in the UK, Germany and Poland with secondary data analysis of labour market, sector and policy developments. We examine the gendered lived experiences of productive subjectivities of transnational migrant workers motivated by social reproduction provisioning of their households as they provision for the social reproduction needs of non-migrant households. We consider the ways in which differentiation and inequalities are reproduced, challenged or transformed as an aspect of the inscription of productive subjectivities. We assess the extent to which migrant workers' productive subjectivity formation perpetuates the uneven and combined capitalism Europe.

A crisis of energy: The multimodal precarity of the professional kitchen

David Hill, Gavin Maclean

(York St John University)

This paper draws on ongoing qualitative research in professional kitchens in the North of England and the Central Belt of Scotland to situate the already precarious working life of the chef at a confluence of

crises. This paper reports on a hospitality sector shuttered and then tentatively opened up after coronavirus lockdowns; a sector imperilled by a cost of living crisis that keeps diners at home and a fuel cost crisis that makes it too expensive to cook; and – not at all disconnected from pandemic and the burning of fossil fuels – a sector that is finally disrupted by the impact of climate change, producing record temperatures in already hot working environments and disrupting the growth and supply of the produce that customers want to see on their plates. Resistance to these overlapping crises is bigger than the professional kitchen and yet this paper insists that we begin from the precarity of the worker qua work and build out. Precarious work is here taken in an expansive sense, capturing not only the material conditions of insecurity in kitchen work but also the way that the soul of the worker is captured, such that precarity is also an assault on identity and value and being with others. This paper is inspired by mid-twentieth century attempts to tend to the spiritual needs of the industrial working class by entering their places of work and naturalising to their class position, while recognising the limitation of this approach in a world coming undone on a scale that both exceeds and maintains the precarity of the worker. It is therefore argued here that resistance to precarity must now be understood as resistance to the fossil capital that traps the energy of the worker in a system that is not only inherently unstable but fundamentally unsustainable. This is borne out by our early findings, where chefs describe the moral luck of whether or not their fuel bills were locked in before unbearable price hikes; where creating an identity in food is more difficult to sustain when menus are simplified in response to supply chain collapse; and where the community of the sector is undone by the thought that one of the surest ways to survive the collapse of the hospitality industry is for the others to go first. This race to survive is also a race to the bottom in terms of working conditions, worsening the sense that chefs are used up and treated disposably. We conclude that resistance to this precarious work can only be successful if it is understood as part of a resistance to the precariousness of the world system at large.

Green precarity and employee sustainable behaviour at work: An intersectional explanation of employee resistance

Sajia Ferdous, Shuang Ren

(Queen's University Belfast)

This paper explores the interdependent nature of organisational capitalistic greening efforts, employees' diverse capacities in demonstrating green behaviour and their implications for implementing and achieving sustainability targets for organisations. An implicit assumption in green human resource management (GHRM) is that once green initiatives are in place, employees would demonstrate desirable green behaviour automatically, which essentially overlooks the diverse attitudes and behavioural capacities employees have towards organisations' green efforts and UN SDG targets for businesses in general. Existing GHRM literature has rarely explored issues around employee perceptions of voluntary green behaviour, especially from a critical management perspective.

Drawing on a critical interdisciplinary review of existing literature on employee green behaviour in GHRM, intersectionality in HRM and employee resistance, this paper explores the ways in which pre-existing socio-economic inequalities affect attitudes and behaviour of employees towards voluntary green behaviour at work and how their reluctant behaviour might have long-term impacts on their work trajectories. In particular, it examines the role of structural inequalities, including race, gender, social class or geographic location, in shaping employee responses and resistance to green initiatives within organisations, which also may be defined as green precarity. The paper argues that green precarity can manifest in different ways, leading to a complex form of intersectional inequality and a geographically dispersed form of employee resistance. We explain how employees who experience economic precarity may be more likely to resist voluntary green behaviour as they may perceive such HR initiatives/approaches as additional burdens/costs. Similarly, other socially marginalised groups of workers, such as ethnic minority or gig economy/platform workers (often already emitting at the lowest level), may perceive green initiatives as tools for further policing their workplace behaviour rather than means for promoting sustainable organisational practices. Our paper highlights the potential for their resistance to voluntary green behaviour to develop into a form of collective action against the status quo as employees navigate the dynamics of green power struggle and also deal with seemingly contradictory inner motivations for adopting green lifestyles. Regardless of HR's unadulterated intentions or employees' self-motivations, marginalised workers will require additional support to be equally green as they often lack adequate access to resources, so expectations from and evaluations of their green behaviour should reflect their intersectional social realities outside workplaces.

The paper contributes to the ongoing GHRM debates around employee voluntary green behaviour and engagement with sustainable organisational practices through conceptualising their green precarity - itemphasises the need for more nuanced and intersectional approaches to understanding the challenges and opportunities of sustainable development. It further reorients our understanding of employee resistance from a relational intersectionality perspective by locating resistance as an inevitable outcome in the complex equation of green precarity with organisational/environmental sustainability goals and achievements.

Room W010B – Marginalised work and workers, risk and resistance in precarious places one

Women, work and care through the COVID-19 pandemic and beyond

Helen Norman, Jennifer Tomlinson, Nathan Archer

(Leeds University Business School)

Evidence shows that the Covid-19 pandemic exacerbated pre-existing gender inequalities in paid and unpaid work, particularly for parents with young children. As mothers comprise a higher proportion of low paid workers, they were more exposed to job loss and low pay, and were the most likely to have assumed additional care work following the closure of and disruption to schools and nurseries during 'lockdown' periods. While in some respects, experiences of the Covid-19 pandemic were similar, they have also been strikingly diverse (and unequal) – and this latter point about diversity of experience, is sometimes overlooked in the dominant narrative.

Drawing on a mixed methods UKRI/ESRC funded 'Rapid Response to Covid-19' research project (https://childcare-during-covid.org/), we explore the diversity of experience in managing work and care during the pandemic through data collected from 69 in-depth parent interviews and a survey of over 1,000 parents - both conducted over two waves, in 2020-21, across England and Wales. We explore (i) the gendered and socio-economic impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on parenting experiences of work, care and work-life intensification, (ii) how these experiences shifted during the early stages of the pandemic as work and care demands changed and (iii) the potential longer-term scarring effects, which the data indicates were starting to emerge. We consider this for parents from a range of socio-demographic and socio-economic backgrounds in order to understand the diversity of lived experiences during this period.

We adopt an intersectional analysis but also draw on Sen's (1992) Capabilities Framework as a lens through which to understand how different social and economic circumstances interact and shape the capabilities of different parents to reconcile work and care. The themes unpacking diversity of experience, which had the capacity to help or hinder capabilities through COVID included:

(1) work boundaries – the ability to work from home and re-draw or re-negotiate working time;

(2) income and access to organisational and government support – furlough and generosity or absence of employer paid carer leave;

(3) household relations and intra household gender equality/egalitarianism

(4) solo-parent status.

By adopting the intersectional-capabilities lens, this research, which is still undergoing analysis, contributes to our sociological understandings of how the Covid-19 crisis affected different parent capabilities to manage varying work, care, emotional and financial demands and the resulting structural inequalities that were exposed and heightened. We also explore the potential legacy (and scarring) effects that this has had for many families and their children, notably in the absence of adequate government support for families with young children and the childcare sector more widely.

Entrepreneurs with disabilities, ableism, and (the lack of) social justice

Sara Csillag, Anna Laura Hidegh, Carmen Svastics, Zsuzsanna Gyori

(Budapest Business School)

People with disabilities (PWD) represent a considerable minority group comprising 15 percent of the world's population (WHO 2021). In parallel with their growing social participation, there has been a growing awareness of the various forms of oppression PWD face: PWD are confronted by ongoing discrimination, marginalisation, injustice, and can only participate as second-class citizens in social, economic, and political life (Barnes and Mercer 2005; Oliver 1990).

The marginalisation and exclusion of PWD in the labour market is particularly harmful, as their right to meaningful and decent work is denied (Hästbacka et al. 2016). Research shows that, besides having lower rates of employment, PWD experience less success at work, including lower pay and fewer opportunities for advancement as compared with non-disabled people (Kulkarni 2016). Moreover, ableist ideas and practices embedded deeply within culture share and reproduce the widespread collective belief that 'impairment is inherently negative' (Campbell 2008, p. 6) and that PWD are the opposite of the citizen that is 'ready and able to work and contribute' (Goodley 2014).

One of the ways in which PWD respond to their limited organisational and employment options, as well as their ableist workplace environment, is by pursuing self-employment or starting their own enterprise (Martin and Honig 2019). Entrepreneurs with disability (EWD) represent a large and heterogeneous group that had been largely 'invisible' (Procknow and Rocco 2016), a 'forgotten minority' (Cooney 2008) in entrepreneurship and disability studies. Although existing literature views EWD scarcely through the lens of ableism, one common conclusion is that entrepreneurship offers an escape route from the traps of an ableist labour market, such as negative attitudes, ignorance and discrimination as well as the lack of opportunities for career development (OECD 2022). At the same time unfavourable employment and working conditions as well as the possibility of self-exploitation are likely to be harmful aspects of being EWD while leaving ableist mechanisms and injustices at work unchallenged.

In this study, we seek to examine the experiences of EWD and their responses to the injustices of their ableist environment using Nancy Fraser's Social Justice Theory as a theoretical framework. According to Fraser (2013), social justice is defined as parity of participation, and it requires social arrangements that permit all members of society to interact with one another as peers. Based on our qualitative interviews with 29 Hungarian EWD we present how disability hinders social justice through the interconnected issues of economic maldistribution, cultural misrecognition, and political misrepresentation in a post-socialist country. After the identification of various patterns of social injustice and ableism, we conclude by discussing affirmative and transformative techniques which are used by EWD to resist and counteract these. Our findings suggest that in the economic and political domains these responses either reinforce the existing capitalist system or can only effect change in a very long term. However, EWD succeed in shaping society's cultural image of people with disabilities through their entrepreneurship, advocacy, volunteering, and other agentive activities.

The great migrant worker strike in Femern 2022: Exploring (class-based?) collective action among migrant construction workers

Bjarke Refslund, Andrea Borello

(Aalborg University)

Migrant workers are often in literature seen as victims, or at least on the losing site, in labour disputes, accepting inferior wages and working conditions due to different expectations, low knowledge on host country labour markets and low degree of organisation which makes them more vulnerable for employer discretion (Bonacich, 1972). However there have been examples of migrant workers resisting the inferior conditions and seeking to act collectively, and large scale construction sites have been the centre for much academic scrutiny on migrant workers' protest and resistance (Arnholtz and Refslund, 2019; Berntsen and Lillie, 2016; Lillie and Sippola, 2011; Wagner and Lillie, 2014). This paper present novel insights from one of biggest, and quite extraordinary migrant workers strikes in Europe in modern days. 300 Polish construction, mainly concrete workers, blocked the construction site of the new Femern belt link tunnel between Denmark and Germany for five days. Despite internal disputes and a very reluctant French main constructor the migrant workers were successful in at least partly securing their demands. This is particular interesting since the wage was already comparatively very high at an

hourly wage of 22 euro. The paper presents the empirical findings based on field work and interviews among the striking migrant workers as well as interviews and field work among other actors, in particular the Danish construction union, who also had an active part in the conflict, with quite a high share of the migrant workers being members. Next, the analytical and theoretical implications for migrant workers labour struggle is discussed, emphasising the migrant workers agency, and how we need to understand migrant workers' resistance as a dynamic concept that changes over time. We stress how the perception of unfair and unequal treatment served as a trigger for the collective action, however with other organisational and associational factors impacting the outbreak of the strike. Moreover, the material safety of workers seems to have played a role, which perhaps makes the results less extraordinary. Finally, the more generic sociology and dynamic of the migrant strike is discussed.

Care worker resistance to structural subjugation

Carolyn Downs, T. Bartosz Kalinowski, Mike Ryder, Ilona Swiatek-Barylska

(Lancaster University)

Care work globally is in crisis. Recruitment and funding challenges coincide with an aging population and increased demand. By 2050 the European Union will need up to 1.6 million more care workers to provide the same level of service as today. European Union data suggests that there are common challenges and structural weaknesses across the care sector, while there has been much scholarship, led by the seminal work of Nancy Folbre, on the structural constraints faced by care workers that act to demoralise the fragmented and largely un-unionised sector. The notion that women are functionally suited to more expressive, caring roles and men to more instrumental roles are stereotypes that remain deeply embedded in the care sector, where over 80% of care workers in all countries where there is data are women. There are over 25,000 care providing organisations in England alone. The impact of sector fragmentation on the lived experience of care workers is under-researched and our study offers a theoretical explanation of the pathways to care worker subjugation and explores how small acts of resistance offer glimpses of alternative approaches to recruitment and retention in the sector.

This paper is based on data from two large studies across five countries (UK, Poland, Greece, Bulgaria, and Italy) with data collected between 2015-2022. We recruited 699 people involved in the provision of care in a range of settings such as care workers, care managers, care recipients, care commissioners and directors of social services.

The paper explores care worker resistance to stigma and structural subjugation, exploring the lived experience of care work through 124 interviews. A detailed analysis of our findings showed two interlinked themes: status and stigma, acted as barriers to care worker recruitment, and illustrates how the impact of these was compounded by the structural characteristics of the highly fragmented sector. This enabled the development of a theory of structural subjugation to explain our findings. Using this theory as a starting point we now consider how the informal strategies the workforce employs to resist status subjugation have the potential to support radical changes to the organisation of care work in the 21st century.

Room W001 – Resistance and meaningful work

Living for work or working for a living: Re-interrogating the personal attachment to work during the COVID19

Hamza Asshidi, Anne Antoni, Hamza Asshidi, Janna Rose, Nathalie Louisgrand, Heather Connolly

(Grenoble Ecole de Management; Centre d'Etudes et de Recherches Appliquées à la Gestion)

Work can allow self-affirmation, recognition and pleasure; thus workers may develop personal attachment to their work (Dejours, 1998, 2006; Dashtipour & Vidaillet, 2017). Yet, the depth of personal attachment to work has been pointed out as a way to control and exploit labor (Musilek et al., 2020). Scholars showed how "new forms of management" have purposefully engineered personal attachment to work in ways that encourage people to engage in their work (Fleming, 2014). This creates an emancipation-exploitation conundrum. The Covid19 situation allows investigating this issue, having generated public health measures that have disrupted the social and economic practices of employees.

The "primacy of work" weakened (Weeks, 2011), with a sudden threat to our lifestyles. The emergence of work from home was one of the major changes, and more generally a collapse of traditional work-life boundaries. We focus on how this unique situation has created conditions for individuals to interrogate their personal attachment to work.

This inductive research follows a case study methodology (Yin, 2014). In a higher education organization in France, we collected secondary data in March 2020 (onset of the COVID confinements), to construct a timeline of events. In 2021, we carried out an internal survey for employees, and semi-structured interviews (46 women, 4 men, average 50 minutes) to discuss the way employees roles responded to the pandemic. The interviews were transcribed (in French), coded, and analysed using NVivo software. Through an iterative approach, we inquired how employees experienced the sudden breakdown of taken for granted physical, spatial, and emotional balance between their investment in their work vs their life, their home vs their office, their coworkers vs their family.

We find that the participants describe the 18 months as intensely emotional. The crisis initially presented a sudden and radical change for them, their kin, and the world. It muted slowly into incremental changes in which employees tried to find meaning and stability. Effectively remaining engaged with their job, trying to compensate for the negative impact of the economic crisis on their organization, participants started to reflect on their emotional and affective investment in their work. Our findings show firstly how employees came to rethink the nature of their attachment to their work, how the sudden shift in their situation led them to rethink their socio-emotional engagement to work versus home. We then analyse the different responses to this re-evaluation: detaching from work, re-attaching to work, and questioning the fairness of their relation to their employer.

This study contributes to understanding the possibility for emancipation from work exploitation (Ekman, 2014; Bloom & Sliwa, 2022). It unveils how the conditions of the COVID19 crisis could make employees reflect on their attachment to work (Musilek et al., 2020). Furthermore, we show that employees may reduce their personal attachment to their organization while not questioning the meaningfulness of their work itself. The resistance that most employees deployed regarding their employment did not mean refusing work (Weeks, 2011), but refusing the working conditions dictated by management, which then seem meaningless to them.

Control and resistance in Royal Mail: Interim findings from WISERD 3.4

Daniel Evans, Helen Blakely, Jean Jenkins

(WISERD, Cardiff University)

Much modern sociological research has focused on the gig economy as the most egregious example of the changing world of work, particularly regarding the issue of control within the labour process (now often referred to as 'algorithmic control' as workers are disciplined through artificial intelligence technologies). Yet as Greisbach et al (2019) argue, although these methods of technological control seem new, in reality they are simply replicating historical features of control of the labour process, and in many cases these new technological forms blend with 'classic' or more simple forms of control. Braverman himself of course wrote that 'there is a general impression, which is fostered by official academic and journalistic opinion, that all of this is happening because of the rise of scientific technology and the development of machinery [when] this process of degradation is not really dependent upon technology at all" (Braverman, 1974:314).

Thus we should not exceptionalize platform work and technology but instead reflect upon how the control imperative- which is common across all forms of work- manifests itself in different ways in different workplaces; the commonalities and differences between sectors; the continuities and breaks with historical forms of control; and the role of technology as a form of control within traditional, 'low tech' sectors. With this in mind, WISERD civil society package 3.4 focuses on the changing world of work across different sectors, exploring the changes that have occurred to the labour process; the response by trade unions to these changes; and the forms of organic resistance which have emerged (if at all).

Postal work is a former state-run public service which has experienced years of privatization, casualization and deskilling, and the increasing penetration and domination of the logistics and postal industry by gig economy courier companies. Postal work is also an area which- unusually within the context of falling union density and militancy across the UK- is highly organized, with a historically

militant union in the CWU (cf. Beale, 2003; Darlington, 2002, 2003; Gall, 2003; Beirne, 2013; Mustchin, 2017). It is currently experiencing a wave of bitter industrial action between the CWU and Royal Mail. It is therefore a perfect sector in which to study these changes as well as worker resistance and the evolution of trade unions under conditions of privatisation.

This paper presents the interim findings from the first wave of qualitative fieldwork, conducted with striking postal workers across Wales. The emerging data points to the ways in which traditional forms of control (aggressive management) have been augmented by new technology; the ways in which the logic of the gig economy has seeped into the postal service and undermined working conditions and particularly the meaningful, social aspects of the job; and how the conditions of privatization and the CWU's move towards social partnership have impacted on the ability of a militant, unionised workforce to resist these new forms of control.

Resistance and meaningful work in the knowledge economy

Hannah Green

(University of Portsmouth)

Various empirically founded criticisms have been levelled at the nature of work in the contemporary sphere. Of specific interest to this research is white collar cognitive work in the knowledge economy. Specifically, professionals within business, law, administration and finance sectors. This under researched group plug a relative gap in the research field, with myriad studies focusing on precarious roles, typically those in the creative sector and those in digital, gig and freelance economies. This study explores how participants construct identity and meaning from and in their jobs, which are not obviously vocational or structured around craft – features of meaningful work (Rosso, Dekas and Wrzesniewski, 2010). Further how individuals create meaning in spite of and in response to work that is critiqued as exploitative in working hours and demands (Moen et al., 2013), as shifting responsibilities from employers onto employees (Powell and Snellman, 2004), as alienating and as lacking meaning, opportunities for craft, and creativity (Sennett, 1998). This research found various non-traditional, innovative routes to meaning creation that participants coursed through in resistance (consciously and unconsciously) to their workplaces.

These included engaging with progress in one's career as a consumptive practice that functioned in place of career goals and countered insecurity in job roles. Participants did not limit themselves to pursuing pre-determined dreams and career objectives. They adopted protean type orientations frequently moving between roles pursuing progress in any direction. Loyalty to employers did not feature. This elicited greater opportunities for and realisation of promotions, pay rises and increases in role responsibilities. In an update of Bauman's (2000) theoretical work, an aesthetics of life (success, status) was prioritised over the pursuit of an aesthetics of work (interesting, fulfilling work).

The affirmation of abilities and prowess in working environments was also meaningful to participants. As a means of resistance this was pursued at all costs and as an antidote to a lack of real autonomy and control. This meant that notions of the 'correct' presentation of the self – as assertive, credible, and highly capable - were prioritized over decisions that were most profitable and best practice for employers.

The level of resistance is discussed and contextualised within the context of alienation, particularly from the self and one's inherent authentic interests and desires. A new person of vocation is theorised (Weber, 1930); the affirmation seeker consumer with a duty to progress.

The data set for this research is taken from my PhD on meaningful employment. The research has been completed and analysed, the PhD is due to be submitted summer 2023. Narrative interviews adapted from Wengraf's (2004) method were conducted to gather a rich data set that allowed for consideration of participants active formation of identity (in relation to work) that is also influenced and informed by available cultural scripts (Watson, 2008).

Work-life balance in the seafaring industry: The challenges faced by worker in non-traditional jobs

Helen Devereux, Jane Parry

(Solent University)

This paper draws upon a project which followed the occupational experiences of a single cohort of individuals who accessed a UK government funding scheme in 2008 in a UK university. The scheme – known as the Support for Maritime Training (SMarT) scheme – was created to address labour shortages in the shipping industry. Qualitative semi-structured interviews were conducted with eighteen individuals over a decade after completing this stage of their professional training, a period which we theorised would be informative in terms of occupational retention, but which also coincides with key period of family formation in typical lifecourses.

While many of the cohort remained as active seafarers, which appeared to provide evidence of strong occupational retention around the SMarT scheme, in reality a large part of this consistency was due to their actual or perceived inability to move to shore-based roles which would suit their domestic requirements. In this paper we will explore the novel challenge that work-life balance presents for seafarers, who are compelled to spend long periods of time separated from their partners and families, in a space in which the boundaries between nonwork and work are less demarcated, and the creative responses that they have developed around this. Tools which have traditionally been deployed both organisationally and individually around work-life balance, including flexible working arrangements and pursuing shared activities with families, are simply not accessible in the same way within the distinctive occupational structures and work time regimes in which seafarers are engaged. We will look at how seafarers have approached and coped with these challenges, in particular, how household strategies are negotiated and evolve around non-traditional working patterns, especially around the time of family formation, and the influence of factors like earning capacity, job security, and gender roles in these decisions. In doing so, we are contributing towards building a more inclusive understanding of work-life balance in a complex world of work.

Room W002 – Open stream two

Unpaid labour and the (re)production of social class among creative workers: Implications for resistance

Rebecca Taylor, Valeria Pulignano, Mark Weal, Anthony Quinn, Markieta Domecka

(University of Southampton)

Unpaid labour has been explored in a variety of academic debates in the context of its particular forms: for example, the free labour of the creative industries (Terranova 2000), volunteering work in civic leadership (Daniels 1988) or the wage theft embedded in platform work (Pulignano 2021). Whilst these debates, in different ways, suggest that class inequalities and practices structure unpaid labour, the separation of forms can obscure a broader understanding of the mechanisms through which unpaid work operates in contemporary capitalism to produce and reproduce social class. Identifying who does unpaid work, how they do it and in what context, - the divisions of labour - reveals its economic underpinnings. This can help to identify how structural inequalities are formed and expressed through the class identity of workers. There are important implications here for understanding worker agency and resistance beyond standard employment relations. In this paper we explore different forms of work in the cultural and creative industries using Glucksmann's Total Social Organization of labour (1995, 2005) as a lens through which to view the divisions of paid and unpaid labour at the micro level of individuals and households. We draw on empirical data from in depth qualitative studies of the working lives of open source software developers, voice over artists, TV/film cameramen/producers, hair and make-up artists and translators engaged in a range of employed and freelance roles to provide a rich comparative analysis of unpaid labour. We first explore 'how' people work unpaid in these different occupational contexts; the economic supports (employment, welfare, property etc.) that provide invisible scaffolding to their unpaid labour. This reveals the interconnectedness of work forms across various spaces and domains and how unpaid work is differently embedded in occupational practices. It also sheds light on the operation of structural inequalities and the ways in which occupational opportunities and resources are (differently) circumscribed by class, gender, race etc. Second, we focus in on the class divisions of unpaid labour, the role played by unpaid work in the distribution and exchange of both economic and symbolic resources and various forms of capital (Bourdieu 1986, 1990). Comparing the class identities and practices of different groups of workers (software developers, voice artists, Film/TV cameramen/producers, hair and make-up artists and translators) reveals the way in which unpaid work is both shaped by class and serves to reproduce class structures and identities. Finally, we examine the implications here for understanding worker agency and resistance beyond standard employment relations. Exploring the organisation of paid and unpaid labour for these workers combined with the (re)production of their class identity also provides a window on practices and sites of worker resistance that are not visible in more traditional occupational studies.

How workers' employment trajectories are affected by insecure employment at the early career stage.

Sleep and work: the complex role of paid work, unpaid care, and financial insecurity in sleep quality of older workers in the United Kingdom

Mariska Van Der Horst, Belinda Steffan, David Lain, Jakov Jandrić, Wendy Loretto

(VU Amsterdam)

In this paper we look at how several possible stressors (paid work, unpaid care, and financial insecurity) impact sleep quality of workers over 50. We use the concept of role overload, defined as "the sense that work demands are unrealistic, given limited resources" (Kelly & Moen, 2021, p. 18), to argue how changes in the workforce (e.g. work intensification) has led to many employees experiencing work pressures. This can result in longer working hours and/or financial insecurity, difficulty combining paid work with unpaid care tasks, and workers struggling to psychologically detach from paid work. This may in turn may also affect sleep quality.

With respect to the impact of stressors on sleep quality, researchers have recently been investigating a recovery paradox (Sonnentag, 2018). This paradox suggests that those who need recovery the most are least likely to obtain it. An important way in which individuals can recover from stressors experienced during the day and over time is through sleep. For example, when an individual has a very long working day, they can recover by sleeping. Without recovery, stressors (such as a long working day) can have

a short-term consequence (such as fatigue) or can develop over time into longer-term reactions (such as burnout). Empirical research suggests that when individuals face high levels of stressors, their recovery processes are impaired. At the same time, studies suggest that many older workers experience sleep problems, and therefore their recovery may regularly be compromised.

An often-mentioned solution to deal with high work pressures and juggling paid work with other priorities, is to enable employee job autonomy and schedule control. Karasek's (1979) job strain model, suggests that the combination of high demands with little control increases stress. However, Chung (2022) points to a flexibility paradox where more control over paid work comes with more self-exploitation. Thus, job autonomy and schedule control may negatively impact sleep quality through more difficulty detaching from paid work, while simultaneously buffering negative effects from high work demands.

To assess these complex relationships, we have used an explanatory sequential mixed-method design. First, we performed a quantitative study to assess these hypothesized relationships. Second, we interrogated qualitative data from the Supporting Healthy Ageing at Work (SHAW) project to gain further insight into these relationships. SHAW uses a case study design with qualitative interviews in three occupational settings: finance, manufacturing, and social care. Preliminary findings from the quantitative and qualitative data show how extreme working hours, unpaid caring tasks, and financial distress impact on sleep quality, with some gender differences, as well as potential buffering effects of job autonomy/schedule control. This paper contributes to literature on the relationship between work and sleep, as well as the topical agenda of workplace retention and performance of older workers. We also provide a practical contribution to managers on the importance of supporting older workers' sleep.

Unveiling the Invisible: Informal work in a monastery on Mount Athos

Christopher Russell, Dimitrinka Stoyanova Russell

(Canterbury Christ Church University)

Despite recent sociological advances in our understanding of informal work (e.g. Monteith and Giesbert, 2017), a continuing limitation is that typologies of informal work construct it in opposition, and usually in inferiority, to formal work, even if as a continuum rather than a dichotomy (Alacovska and Bille, 2021; Taylor, 2004; Williams, 2011; Williams and Nadin, 2012). To advance our understanding of informal work as an independent entity, this paper explores it in a unique setting where no formal work exists: a monastery in the Monks' Republic of Mount Athos in Greece (1). Informed by six ethnographic episodes over thirteen years, and follow-up interviews in Athens and Thessaloniki, this paper reveals interdependent informal labour practices, both unpaid and reimbursed, overt and covert, in Athos and beyond. Four core forms of informal labour are explored. First, there is the monastic ideal of self-provisioning, whereby the monks undertake what is essentially unpaid domestic labour, the monastery being the family of the monks. Whilst this is an essential activity for every monk, it is insufficient to sustain the monastery. Second, there is informal (unpaid) labour performed by guest workers. This is less overt as, whilst accepted within the community, technically the workers are overstaying pilgrims with no rights of participation nor residence on the mountain, and no resulting social security entitlements outside. Third, there is the more covert informal non-monetary exchanges between the guest workers and between guest workers and pilgrims. For example, the guest workers exchange skills in fire-starting for cigarettes from pilgrims. Fourth, even more covertly, there are reimbursed favours e.g. payment for crosses or prayer ropes.

The above types of informal labour do not happen independently of each other. The longitudinal nature of the study enables us to explore the combination of, and choices between, these diverse forms of informal labour practices, revealing their inter-dependency. Informal unpaid work enables the monastery to continue to exist as a largely independent, alternative economic space, whilst informal unpaid work enables the guest worker to cope with the ebb and flow of informal work opportunities outside Athos. Further, the informal non-monetary and monetary exchanges between the guest workers and between guest workers and pilgrims provide for some of the guest workers' needs beyond the extremely basic. Without such supplementary informal labour, it is unlikely that the guest workers would be able to survive for so long on Athos. In addition, paid informal work was not necessarily preferable to unpaid informal work. By illuminating the social organisation of labour in a monastery, this paper presents an extreme, unique, case to further our understanding of the variety and value of informal work.

1. Mount Athos is a self-administering part of the Greek state, guaranteed by the Treaty of Lausanne of 1923. The state is responsible for public order and security via the role of the Governor who is appointed by the Greek Minister for Foreign Affairs. In all other matters the twenty monasteries govern the mountain under the supreme supervision of the Ecumenical Patriarch (of Constantinople).

Young is fun: Examining the inter-relations of workplace fun and age

Cara Reed, Helen Williams, Katrina Pritchard

(Cardiff Business School, Cardiff University and Swansea School of Management, Swansea University)

"…without being disrespectful to older people, younger people are up for more of a laugh and getting involved, whereas...older can just be like 'I don't really want to do that, I'll leave it to the kids'"

This paper explicates how organizational practices positioned as playful and fun are underpinned by age-related assumptions that impact on both individuals and the effective working of organizations. Conceptually, we critically apply Turner's (1982) liminoid/liminal distinction which highlights the difference between a voluntarily playful subversive space and an obligatory rule-based constrained experience. From this we suggest that organizational fun is situated in pseudo-liminoid spaces that blur boundaries between work and play, with unintended consequences.

The study draws from interviews with workers and observations in the workplace at a UK based insurance firm (InsureCo) that prides itself on the workplace fun it provides its employees. Our analysis firstly identifies a pseudo-liminoid in operation at InsureCo where fun has been drawn into work, and with it, optionality has become more constrained and performed rather than the liminoid's original emphasis on choice and freedom. We then highlight how organizational fun becomes infused with constructs of youth. With this, three aged subject positions are constructed in the company on account of its orientation to play and fun that perpetuate age-based stereotypes: the older 'no fun' worker, the older 'bystander/observer' worker, and the younger 'play along' worker. Therefore, the aged effects of this pseudo-liminoid demonstrate how the social order is supported rather than subverted in this 'pseudo' context. Finally, we consider some of the potentially unintended organizational and individual consequences of this pseudo-liminoid, focusing on patterns in recruitment and progression that end up supporting the idea that fun should not be optional and is engaged with better by the young. Consequently, we demonstrate how contemporary workplaces claiming to be fun places to work might be exclusionary not only to older workers but also to younger workers who do not adopt the 'playful youth' role.

Our study has two contributions; firstly, with regards theoretical contribution, we offer a critical account of fun and play that suggests the liminoid may not always operate as the alternative space for freedom and optionality as theorized once it's co-opted into the work domain. Secondly, we set out the various age-based effects of fun and play at work highlighting its exclusionary potential. This has implications for workplaces that seek to be good employers through their use of organizational fun, as it indicates that in underappreciating the inter-relations of fun and age, at best this fun can be 'aged' and at worst it can be discriminatory.

In keeping with this year's theme of the conference, this research engages with power-resistance relations with regards to how fun in the workplace is in fact constituted through a normative structure of age-based assumptions that materialise in how individuals understand themselves and others and how the workplace rewards and sidelines those individuals accordingly.

Reference: Turner, V. (1982). From Ritual to Theatre: The Human Seriousness of Play. New York: PAJ Publications.

Room W003 – PhD Showcase

Everyday lives of Bihari migrant construction labourers in India: A case of class formation

Manish Maskara

The thesis examines the emergence of class formation in the case of internal migrant labourers in India. Existing literature has ignored class analysis in explaining how labour migration enables the

contemporary process of capital accumulation. By incorporating migrant labour in production relations, such as through sub-contracting in building construction, social relations of caste, ethnicity, region, gender, race, tribe etc., are deployed to organise and reinforce exploitation. A case in point is the historical and intergenerational exploitation of migrant labourers from the East Indian state of Bihar, i.e. Bihari migrant labourers who, on the one hand, form the bulk of the labour force in building construction in India and, on the other hand, face ethnic discrimination, and stereotyping as 'Bihari' labour. Bihari migrant labourers are incorporated in large-scale building construction through labour contractors colloquially called *thekedars*. Based on extensive fieldwork among Bihari migrant labour working and living at two construction worksites run by local and global construction companies in the South Indian city of Hyderabad, the thesis examines specific conditions and mechanisms of exploitative labour relations which enable and reinforce the architecture of exploitation in building construction. In doing so, the architecture of exploitation produces and reproduces the lived experience of exploitation of Bihari migrant labour. The thesis argues that the politics of producing and reproducing lived experiences of exploitation 'configures' class relations by shaping the emergence or silencing of class struggle. Through the analysis of labour relations which tie the production process with the reproduction of labour power, the thesis outlines configurations of class relations shaping class formation.

Outsourcing digital intimate labour

Victoria Antonio

(Leeds University Business School)

Social media content publishing has allowed for the monetisation of content as a form of online gig work (Hamilton et al 2022). Paywalled platforms such as OnlyFans, Fansly, and JustForFans are at the intersection of content creation and pornography (Hamilton et al, 2022). Sexual content creators (SCC) charge a subscription fee for access to a feed of content, or subscribers can Direct Message (DM) for custom and pay-per-view content (PPV) by "tipping". Sex work is typically embodied labour, however, the asynchronous nature and the non "face to face" communication methods of the platform-mediated digital delivery of sexual content have begun to create unique, new types of business process outsourcing (BPO) of intimate labour functions. For example, it is possible for a SCC building a business based on their image and parasocial, intimate labour, to hire a contractor to respond to DM's as though they are the content creator, thus outsourcing the intimate labour. There is currently only a small body of work on parasocial labour (Zelizer, 2012; Bonifacio et al, 2021; Hair, 2021) and none to date regarding the outsourcing of digital intimate labour. Using qualitative methodology, the proposed research will identify the new types of work, emergent business models, and labour relations resulting from asynchronous, digital, and parasocial sex work (ADPSW). The study aims to lend support to sex work as work and therefore be regarded in terms of labour rights by policymakers as well as provide insight into emerging labour relations in the wider world of platform work.

Room W004 – Resistance within contemporary employment relations

Housework at work: Resistance or what?

Julie Monroe

(Independent)

Historically, unpaid work has been accorded a lesser value than paid work (Weeks, 2011; Davis, 2017). Yet, offices are temporally and spatially dynamic contexts where domestic work can easily be incorporated into the working day. Whilst managerial rationality is concerned with defining work time - a traditional channel of capitalist control - ensuring that workers are optimally productive within it, worker subjectivity is constituted by a complex of motivations beyond the realm of work, representing a counter-rationality. However, when workplace internet is used for purposes other than work, work time, and its organisation, is problematised through 'worktime domestic labour' (WDL) that can be defined as domestic and reproductive labour enabled in work time. Internet technologies – exemplified by virtual assistants, online food ordering platforms, baby tech and domestic robots - provide a means to manage domestic projects alongside of work. This paper addresses how the organisational regime shapes

individual orientation towards WDL, and explores the extent and boundaries of workers' control (Goodrich, 1975 [1920]). Although the critical labour studies literature has tended to frame 'empty labour' as resistance (Paulsen, 2014), with an intersectional lens, the empty labour phenomenon takes on different meanings. Employing a contrastive explanation, these meanings are analysed through 44 interviews with office workers and managers, revealing differences between those in working-class and middle-class jobs. Relative freedom for WDL is strongly associated with occupational class and organisational control is achieved through workplace rules that differentially impact those in WC and MC jobs. This paper reveals factors that inhibit the relative autonomy of women in working-class jobs, in particular. To explain observed differences, a theoretically novel realist intersectional analysis is developed. This analysis extends earlier work that reveals shifting patterns in men's domestic work by identifying the significance of internet to support defeminising care. Counter to expectations, findings illustrate that class conditions experience more than gender does. The paper ends by discussing outcomes of the analysis and considering gender-responsive policy and practical implications of the research.

The organizational context shapes migrant job searches: Evidence on cohesion and competition in Dutch workplaces

Luuk Mandemakers, Eva Jaspers, Tanja Van Der Lippe

(Utrecht University)

With Dutch workplaces suffering from labor shortages, increased flexible labor agreements, and with growing attention for diversifying workforces, retention of employees with a migration background seems more important than ever. Yet, migrants continue to experience discrimination at their own workplace, making them more likely to search for jobs than non-migrants. Remarkably, research into organizational variation of migrant job searches remains limited. Applying recent insights from Relational Inequality Theory (RIT), this paper is novel in locating job search drivers at the workplace level. Within RIT, organizational inequalities are considered to be the product of categorical distinctions and relations between employees. The extent to which one group is saliently categorically subordinate to the other determines whether subordinate employees lay claims on and get access to organizationally pooled resources. Given that organizations with more salient categorical distinctions act as more severe inequality regimes, we expect migrant job searches to be higher in workplaces where they are more saliently subordinate.

We examine two sources of organizational variation that echo the salience of migrant employees' subordinate status and categorical distinctions within organizations. First, we delve into workplace cohesion, as it facilitates interethnic contact, which is capable of overcoming prejudice, exclusion, and intergroup conflict. Cohesive workplaces are primarily characterized by both being united in the pursuit of objectives and by having larger proportions of relations and interactions between colleagues. When migrants work in organizations where everybody feels part of the team, interethnic interactions are more likely to occur, and the subordinate status of migrants is reduced. Second, we focus on internal competition within workplaces. When several groups of people compete over the same resources, intergroup conflict is strong and mechanisms of negative bias towards the out-group surface. Because inequalities are additionally more legitimized in competitive organizations, we expect the salience of categorical distinctions to be emphasized and migrants' subordinate status to be more severe in competitive organizational cultures.

We relied on unique employer-employee linked data from the Netherlands, with information on 2,169 employees, 135 teams, and 44 organizations. Findings show that migrants are generally more likely to search for different jobs than non-migrants. Yet, the difference in job search rates is mitigated in more cohesive teams. Although workplace cohesion is important for job searches of all employees, we interpret this finding as that workplace cohesion is more important for migrant employees. In more cohesive teams, migrants are less likely to be viewed as categorically subordinate, which increases their likelihood of obtaining organizational resources, and reduces their propensity to search for different jobs. Additionally, we find that the degree of workplace competition over organizationally pooled resources has no effect on job search rates of migrant employees. Our findings underline the necessity of studying individual behavior (i.e.., job searches) as product of intergroup relations at the workplace level.

Resisting outsourcing: Learning from migrant workers' power-building strategies in the British service sector

Davide Pero

(University of Nottingham)

Structural transformations such as outsourcing have resulted in job degradation and increased precarity for a vast and growing number of workers especially if migrant (Alberti et al. 2018; Anderson 2010; Wills et al. 2010). The labour movement has struggled to respond to these transformations with established unions being unable to prevent the working conditions of their decreasing membership from deteriorating (Ness 2014; Holgate 2021) as well as to organize precarious workers (Alberti and Però 2018; Moyer-Lee and Lopez 2017; Però 2020). Even the recent adoption on the part of some large unions of the social movement and community unionism based on the organizing approach seems to be delivering rather disappointing results (Holgate et al. 2018; McAlevey 2016). Yet, effective organizing experiences of 'resistance' articulated directly by precarious workers are emerging in a number of contexts and outside of large unions, producing remarkable outcomes in term of workers' rights and limiting precarity.

This paper focuses on how precarious and migrant workers with scarce material resources and institutional support can build and deploy negotiating power effectively in regimes of outsourcing, an issue that has received limited analytical attention due, in part, to the institutionalism that informs much of industrial relations analysis (Atzeni 2021).

Using Schmaltz et al.'s (2018) typology of powers as a heuristic device, the paper analytically describes how the migrant cleaners and facilities workers of British indie unions, despite lacking material resources and institutional support, have managed to redress some of the harshest conditions they encountered in such regimes. In particular, drawing on ethnographic insights obtained through fieldwork conducted in London with workers and activists of indie unions (UVW, IWGB, CAIWU), the paper shows how these workers can build and combine different power resources in ways that ultimately enhance their overall negotiating inducing change in employers' exploitative practices.

The paper argues that in order to understand and appreciate more fully workers' collective agency and its effectiveness in contexts of outsourcing and high precarity, it is important to extend the analytical gaze beyond the workplace so as to comprise the wider community, as it is in this broadened arena that their initiatives can be often crucially staged and won.

In doing so, the paper contributes to an understudied aspect in labour process theory, that of workers' collective contentious practices (Tassinari and Maccarrone 2020), especially those that have a significant component staged 'outside' the workplace. The paper contributes to shed light on the possibilities for precarious and migrant workers of building negotiating power and articulating effective industrial action in the context of scarce material and institutional support. Also, through the heuristic use of Schmaltz et al. (2018) typology of powers the paper will provide an illustrated framework that could facilitate the comparative analyses of workers' collective practices of resistance across different contexts.

Reconceptualising employee voice: An interdisciplinary approach

Stewart Johnstone, Kendra Briken, Ian Cunningham, Tasos Hadjisolomou, Eva Jendro, Tony Mccarthy, Stuart Mcintyre, Dora Scholarios, Philip Taylor

(Strathclyde University)

A good quality of life requires more than having a job; it requires access to good jobs. Good jobs are also important aspects of reducing inequality and poverty, sustainable development and empowering the most vulnerable in society, and (ILO, 2021). Though definitions of good work vary, it is generally agreed that employee voice is a key tenet (Norris-Green and Gifford, 2021; Taylor, 2017), though there is also a lack of agreement regarding what this means.

A common point of departure is Hirschman's definition of voice in the context of consumer relationships over 50 years ago as "a means to change rather than escape [exit] an objectionable state of affairs" (Hirschman 1970, 30). This notion was adapted to the employment relationship in respect of the main options available to dissatisfied employees: to keep quiet; to leave or to try and effect change.

Academic interest has since evolved across a range of academic disciplines, each with their own definitions, priorities, and assumptions (Wilkinson et.al, 2020). Industrial relations scholars have drawn on notions of industrial democracy and view collective representation through trade unions as a natural form of voice (Freeman and Medoff, 1984). However, those in the labour process tradition, while sharing concerns with inherent asymmetries of power in the employment relationship, also have broader concerns regarding managerial control as well as collective and individual worker resistance. For OB scholars, key concerns have been the negative outcomes of limited voice including stress, absenteeism and employee turnover. Yet despite different foci, methods and levels of analysis, each approach acknowledges the existence different interests in the employment relationship.

However, mainstream management and HRM scholarship has increasingly jettisoned such concerns, favouring a much narrower conceptualisation of voice as a pro-social employee behaviour concerned with speaking up on issues of organisational improvement (Barry and Wilkinson, 2022); indeed some specifically exclude 'complaining' or 'venting' from their definitions (Morrison, 2011; van Dyne and Le Pine, 1998). The increasing dominance of studies adopting unitarist conceptualisations which assume 'what is good for the employer is good for the worker' redefine conflict and resistance as antisocial and constricts understanding by presenting a partial view of voice. It also has important implications for debates around organisational citizenship, employment rights, regulation, and employee representation.

Calls have been made for interdisciplinary approaches and dialogue, and Nechanska et.al (2020) propose returning to notions of 'structured antagonism' (control, consent, power, conflict and cooperation) to diffract disciplinary siloes. However, such empirical endeavours remain limited. The paper presents a first translation of an interdisciplinary methodology - bringing together expertise in OB, ER, labour process and economics - to critically capture worker voice. Using one one of our research questions as an example, we will show how to bring mixed methods, longitudinal data collection and the embedding of innovative reactive methods, such as diaries, with digital survey tools into dialogue to capture worker voices. Such innovation is essential to advance understanding and theorisation of the purpose and value of worker voice in shaping contemporary working lives.

Room W005 – Marginalised work and workers, risk and resistance in precarious places two

L-earning: Rethinking young people's engagement in education and paid employment

Kim Allen, Rachel Cohen, Kate Hardy, Kirsty Finn

(University of Leeds)

Over the past few decades, student employment has become increasingly commonplace in the UK and globally. Most young people in full time education engage in paid employment alongside their studies, in part because of labour market fragmentation, increased demand for part-time labour (Mizen et al. 1999) and rising education costs. This includes both school students, the majority of whom will have done some form of paid work by the time they leave school (Hobbs et al. 2007) and students in Higher or Further Education. For instance, in England, over half of full-time HE students do paid work and this rate of employment is higher among female students (DfE 2018). This upward trend corresponds with increases in student fees and simultaneous reduction of financial support through government loans and maintenance grants (Hordsey et al, 2018). Not only are more students working, they are working longer hours; consequently, for some students the degree itself is 'literally pushed to the side' (Simpson, 2020). Recent surveys suggest that the current cost of living crisis is exacerbating these trends (NUS 2022; Sutton Trust 2023; ONS 2023) with students working to support themselves and, sometimes, wider family. In this context, debates around the impact of earning while learning are being reanimated and have gained renewed urgency.

In both wider policy discourse and academic literature, working while learning is typically presented in binary terms, either as positive for developing young people's labour market experience and 'employability', or in contrast, as hindering students' ability to fully engage in their studies and academic work. Whereas the former approach focuses on internships, placements and 'CV enhancing' activities (with critical literature identifying unequal access to these), the latter presents students' paid work as

empty instrumental activity. In other words, paid work is relevant to academic study solely because it encroaches upon the time that 'should' be allocated to learning. These latter studies identify and emphasise the negative impacts of work on student engagement, achievement and completion, positioning work as instrumental, temporary or detrimental to movement into 'graduate careers' (Williams 2014).

This paper develops a conceptualisation of the relationships between education and paid employment which underpins a new ESRC-funded mixed-method study of young women's work and presents early data on combining work and studying. We argue that extant approaches limit understanding of the full significance of work undertaken by students while at school, FE and HE. In particular, we suggest that it obscures how work undertaken while studying may prefigure young people's later experiences of work, including expectations of what working life ought to involve, preferences and self-categorised 'expertise'. In order to rethink these relationships, we draw on studies that have found that early experiences of work are gendered including occupational gendering and a gender wage gap (Easterbrook et al. 2021; Kooreman 2008; Besen-Cassino 2018), and otherwise vary by class, ethnic and geographic background of the worker and those that show that 'side jobs' can be remarkably 'sticky' in the context of a deteriorating youth and graduate labour market (MacDonald 2011).

Legal work, criminalised workplaces: Hyper-precarity in full service sex work.

Lilith Brouwers

(University of Leeds)

While the sale and purchase of sexual services are not criminalised, the criminalisation of third parties - such as colleagues, managers, landlords, receptionists and security staff - in sex work in England has the effect that nearly all full-service sex work workplaces are criminalised. This can make working legally difficult and at times impossible (Souclar et al., 2019). Based on a mixed-data survey of 185 full-service sex workers on their experiences with third parties in sex work and with the criminalisation of third parties, as well as a review of the legal status and policing of third parties in sex work, this research has found that the criminalisation of third parties and workplaces produces multiple forms of precarity. Not only is sex work made precarious due to the lack of employment rights and financial and legal risk transfers (Sanders and Hardy, 2013), but there is an additional dimension of precarity due to the criminalisation of workplaces and third parties in sex work. This means that on top of a lack of stable employment, minimum hours or guaranteed income, workers have the additional insecurity of the fear of police intervention, prosecution of workers, eviction, and raids on workplaces or even homes.

These factors combine to create multidimensional insecurities or hyper-precarity (Lewis et al., 2015; Zou, 2015), a term more commonly used to describe the combined employment and legal insecurity experienced by migrant workers whose precarity as workers is exacerbated by legal precarity due to restrictive migration regimes. In contrast, the legal precarity experienced by sex workers is due to the criminalisation of workplaces and work practices, rather than exclusively due to migration regimes. This hyper-precarity reduces sex workers' ability to resist and protest work circumstances in traditional ways, such as through official industrial relations channels. Participants also emphasise that the legislation criminalising third parties makes it illegal for them to take a range of security precautions, including working together with a co-worker or hiring a contractor to provide security services. Additionally, workers discuss that they are forced to make a calculation to decide whether the legal risk of breaking third party legislation is higher than the physical risk of not breaking the law while working alone and without support. However, this hyper-precarity is not evenly distributed, with the risk of policing and prosecution being significantly higher amongst migrant workers, workers of colour, and workers in more directly criminalised workplaces such as brothels and street-based work.

This research uses the concept of 'hyper-precarity' (Lewis et al., 2015; Zou, 2015), as conceptualised in human geography, trafficking and migration studies, and apply it to sex workers in the informal economy in the field of work and employment relations. It adds to the concept of hyper-precarity by extending conceptualisation of the types of legal precarity workers encounter: this work will show that legal precarity, in addition to migration status, can also take the form of the criminalisation of workplaces and work relationships.

Making it work: Young people responding and resisting underemployment

Brendan Churchill, Leah Ruppanner

(The University of Melbourne)

Despite the favourable labour market fortunes of young people as Australian emerges from the lockdown phase of the pandemic, underemployment still remains a persistent challenge. There remains a significant and sizeable cohort of young Australian adults well into their 20s and 30s who are looking for more hours each week, including those who are working the equivalent of full-time hours. This challenge speaks to the precarious jobs that young people find themselves. However, little is known about the state of underemployment for young people. We know that this group of young people want more work–more hours–but what does underemployment look like beyond this? What do young people do in response to bouts of underemployment? How do they respond and resist the precariousness of underemployment and its impact upon their livelihoods? This research draws upon a large sample of qualitative interviews (n=50) with young men and women aged between 20 and 35 in Australia conducted in late 2022 and early 2023. Drawing on thematic and narrative analyses of young people looking for more work, the findings suggest that for many young underemployed Australians, underemployment was not a passive experience of simply just wanting more hours. Young people in this study responded to bouts of underemployment by undertaking income-generating or -supplementing activities. These activities often involved a second- or third- job, usually outside the industry of their main job or some kind of 'sidehustle' / entrepreneurial activity. For others, it was more informal activities with the aim of generating quick access to income (i.e., mystery shopping, user testing, participating in research studies). Regardless of the endeavour, young underemployed people sought out these secondary economic activities not only because of a lack of money/income but because they felt like they should be working more or 'being productive'. In this way, they were trying to resist the precarity and (future) uncertainty of underemployment. However, this was often stressful and constituted another layer of 'work'. Many worried about their futures, envisioning a future of piece-meal (or piece-rate) employment and continued underemployment. This paper discusses these findings in relation to current policy climate in Australia and the experience of young people globally.

Hanging Lantern Room – Special Event

Mental health, disability and flex-ability in small workplaces: Investigating employee and employer perspectives, through a tension-based lens

Annie Irvine, Jane Suter, Lindsay Badger, Cara Molyneux

(King's College London; University of York; University of Leeds; University of Plymouth)

We know that disabled people disproportionately work in poor quality and low paid jobs. Such jobs are designed to prioritise labour market and employer-orientated flexibility. The inherent tensions between employer and employee choice and control over workplace flexibility has been a significant concern for academics in many disciplines. Yet, the concept of flexibility as a robust variable has been used extensively in models and analyses connected largely with benefits that derive for workers with parenting or caring responsibility, conceptualised in terms of work-life fit. Although non-disabled workers will also need accessible workplaces that are flexible to meet individual needs, the need is even greater for some disabled people. Often, impairment effects make working possible only when it is organised to fit with the natural rhythms of their bodies. I propose a more nuanced conceptualisation of workplace flexibility is required to resist ableist notions of the ideal worker.

This paper will present findings from a study that involved qualitative interviews with disabled workers and small and medium size employers (SMEs). I outline why working in a smaller sized business appears to offer disabled people more enabling experiences of work. In harmony with worker perspectives, I will introduce a new conceptualisation of workplace flex-ability defined as "accessible working environments that enable disabled workers to make choices influencing where, when, and for how long they engage with work-related activity". This definition has several important features. First, it prioritises accessibility. Second, it promotes worker choice and control to arrange core aspects of work-related activity to enable optimal health and wellbeing. Third, it is an approach that has the potential to resist the tensions of traditional ableist notions of the ideal worker.

The findings from this qualitative study suggest that micro and small size employers are already prepared to embed accessibility in the context of organisational culture. Though, the risk for disabled workers who work in SME contexts is when workplace flex-ability is provided to them on an informal basis. The argument posed is that employers who are willing and able to embrace this more holistic conceptualisation of workplace flex-ability are more attuned to the workplace structures that may create accessibility barriers. These relations occur organically in micro and smaller organisations largely due to the close proximity between business leader and employee. Such close relations create meaningful and authentic discussions which shape workplace culture to be capable of responding positively to balance work-body fit.

Findings from the study suggest the importance of welfare and employment policy integration whereby formalised workplace flex-ability activates employers to develop good quality jobs and conditions for all workers. Once aware of the interaction between inflexibility and inaccessibility, employers can make assertive steps towards embedding employee-orientated workplace flex-ability. This can then facilitate universally applied employee engagement, support and solidarity. Therefore, workplace flex-ability contributes to a knowledge base that will better inform employers in choosing options that optimise both employee outcomes and business needs. The framing of workplace flex-ability in this way, broadens earlier definitions.

There is growing awareness of the number of people in work with mental health issues: an estimated one in six workers (Elliott et al., 2008; McManus et al., 2016) and the organisational costs an estimated £42 to £45billion per year (Hampson & Jacob, 2020), suggesting that mental health issues and managing people with them are prominent issues within the contemporary work and employment landscape. The current research field of mental health issues at work focuses upon how work can shape individuals' mental health (Woods et al., 2019) and how work can be important for people to recover from mental health issues (e.g., Llena-Nozal et al., 2009). However, it is incomplete and lacks theoretical and conceptual underpinning (Elraz, 2017; Follmer & Jones, 2018). Little is known about the day-to-day experience of work for people with mental health issues and what shapes and influences that experience. This paper, therefore, explores the significant issues at work for people with diagnosed mental health issues, from the perspective of individuals and line managers.

Drawing on semi structured, in-depth interviews with 20 individuals with diagnosed mental health issues and 20 managers, the lived experiences, significant issues and enabling features were explored. From reflexive thematic analysis drawing on the paradox theory with a tension lens, it became apparent that there were three main clusters of factors that can influence and shape individuals' experiences of work: individual, social/relational, and organisational.

Within the individual cluster the significant factors identified are the impact of mental health issues, attitudes and perceptions, diagnosis, and disclosing. The social/relational cluster is formed from managers' experiences, managers' characteristics and colleagues. The organisational cluster is comprised of work design, reasonable adjustments, policies and procedures and workplace resources. These three clusters are interrelated and influence each other. Underpinning these clusters are societal issues, including the biomedical model and the stigma and discrimination experienced by people with mental health issues. This reflects the consistent assumptions running through many of the interviews that mental health issues are understood and approached from a biomedical model view and that there are negative perceptions of mental health issues that can create stigma and discrimination for individuals. These negative perceptions are pervasive and affect the experience of work for people with mental health issues.

The findings from this research provide understanding of a prominent issue in today's workplace by bringing together disparate literature that lacks theoretical and conceptual underpinning (Elraz, 2017; Follmer and Jones, 2018) with people's experiences. This has produced insights of the experience of work for individuals with mental health issues and what the key factors are that influence that experience.

This paper presents findings of a recent qualitative study that explored the perspective of small business managers who had first-hand experience of supporting employees with mental health problems. The study was born of our concern that, whilst mental health at work has garnered significant attention in recent years, the experience of small and micro businesses remained notably absent from the empirical evidence base. Yet extant research on HRM and occupational health practices in small and micro businesses suggested that experiences in such firms would differ from their larger counterparts, due to

their higher degree of informality, flatter organisational hierarchies, closer social and spatial proximity and more limited resources.

Our methodology comprised in-depth qualitative interviews with 21 managers of small and micro businesses located across England and Scotland, all of whom had direct experience of managing employees through mental health difficulties. Data were analysed using a combination of thematic analysis and scrutiny of 45 employee cases as described by managers. The core theme was an experience of 'juggling on a tightrope' as managers navigated a delicate balance between supporting the employee and simultaneously managing performance and wider business concerns. Managers felt this balancing act acutely, as responsibility often loaded on one individual with multiple roles and competing priorities. Drawing on paradox theory, using a tension-based lens, we illustrate how managers in small and microbusiness traversed a support-performance continuum involving three key tensions: (1) individual vs collective; (2) confidence vs caution; (3) informal vs formal. We bring into focus how managers worked dynamically through tensions as employee mental health problems emerged and impacts became evident, striving to balance individual and collective needs and calibrating the formality and assertiveness of their intervention.

Themes of resistance emerged around employee unwillingness to recognise or enter into discussion about perceived distress or struggles in the workplace, and also resistance to proposed workplace adjustments or the taking of sick leave. This could manifest as 'dysfunctional presenteeism' (Karanika-Murray & Biron, 2020) which in turn posed challenges for managers and co-workers. Managing mental health in the workplace is distinctly relational and our study revealed the complexities inherent in dynamically managing the wellbeing of the individual (unwell) employee, their co-workers and the managers themselves.

By investigating managers' direct experience in detail, we are able to critically explore the tensions and perhaps irresolvable complexities involved in attempting to meet the needs of all social actors involved in the network of organisational relationships, where mental health problems manifest. Whilst navigating managerial tensions when supporting employees with health problems is not exclusive to the small business context, we conclude that these tensions are amplified in smaller organisations, whose differing capacities and resources can intensify cross-pressures, and exacerbate emotional and cognitive challenges for small business managers.

The three papers in this session each take an in-depth qualitative approach to considering how disabled people and people living with mental health problems manage and are managed in the workplace, with a particular focus on experiences within small businesses.

Increasing labour market participation of disabled people and supporting job retention for people who experience mental health problems are among the most prominent issues in the contemporary work and employment landscape – receiving renewed attention as economic inactivity due to ill health climbs post-pandemic. Whilst the UK Government exceeded its target of getting one million more disabled people into work by 2027 (five years earlier than planned), hailing this slight reduction in the disability employment gap as a policy success denies the continuation of accessibility and attitudinal barriers facing disabled people at each stage of the employment journey.

This special session will offer a lens on the lived experience of managing mental health problems and disability in the workplace from both the employee and employer perspective. Molyneux's study involved 15 SME owner-managers and 12 disabled people with experience of working within SMEs. Badger interviewed 20 workers with diagnosed mental health issues and 20 managers who had supported employees with mental health problems (this sample included five employer-employee dyads). Suter & Irvine conducted interviews with 21 managers in micro and small businesses, all with first-hand experience of supporting employees through times of mental distress.

This multi-perspectival approach enables a critical analysis of the tensions inherent in balancing and reconciling competing needs and priorities in the workplace, particularly within smaller organisations – who face more constrained resources and often lack specialist HR or occupational health expertise. We find that resistance to formality within small businesses may be both a benefit and a risk for disabled workers and those with mental health problems. Whilst Molyneux finds that a greater inclination to informality and flexibility can facilitate effective workplace accommodations, Badger, Suter & Irvine identify that, when persistently challenging situations require a move towards formal intervention, this can generate resistance from employees and their colleagues.

All three studies highlight the critical role of relational factors in shaping responses to disability and mental health problems in the workplace. Badger and Molyneux's analyses also highlight how societal norms and dominant practices are influential; these include ableism, the ideal worker concept, stigma, and the dominance of biomedical framings of distress and disability. Whilst Molyneux finds that working in a small business can offer disabled people more enabling experiences of work – with smaller employers more readily embedding accessibility within their organisational culture – Suter & Irvine emphasise the enhanced tensions that may arise for managers in small firms, when navigating support for employees with mental health problems. Badger finds these tensions can cause resistance to supporting and managing employees with mental health problems. Juxtaposing the perspectives contained within and between these three studies illuminates inherent complexities and paradoxes.

The multidisciplinary special session includes researchers from Psychology, Disability Studies, Social Policy, Human Resource Management, Organisation Studies and Coaching.

Room W119 – Comparative and global perspectives on resistance

Precarity, Agroecological transformations and rethinking the Future of Work: Lessons from the Green Revolution in India

Divya Sharma

(University of Sussex)

This paper examines how intersecting economic, social and ecological precariousness experienced through changing forms of agricultural work shapes differential forms of resistance as well as quiescence. I draw on ethnographic research and oral histories with farm workers and cultivators to construct a comparative analysis in two 'core' regions (Punjab, Tamil Nadu) in India, where capital and resource intensive model of agricultural modernisation known as the 'Green Revolution' was initiated in the 1960s. The oral histories were assembled through unstructured in-depth interviews with older men and women farmers and workers focussing on their memories of significant changes in agricultural work practices, and socio-ecological relations over their life course. The interviews and ethnographic fieldwork were conducted over a period of 8 months in Northern Tamil Nadu in 2017-2018 and over 12 months in south-west Punjab in 2014-2015. I situate these narratives within an analysis of scholarship on multidimensional agrarian crises in India since the 1990s, policy discourses on addressing these crises, widespread protests led by farmer unions in India and agendas of an an emergent agroecological movement.

As the material (economic and ecological) costs of Green Revolution agriculture are intensifying for rural farming households, struggles in various forms have been proliferating across the country. They include movements demanding debt waivers, higher minimum support prices for crops, assured income support for farmers from the state, and others that enact a prefigurative politics by organising farmers to shift toward agroecological practices. I argue that this fragmented landscape of resistance reflects how gender, class, and caste hierarchies shape experiences of rural and agrarian crises for landed 'progressive' farmers at the forefront of implementing Green Revolution technologies and perceived as 'beneficiaries', and for marginalised cultivators and workers in specific regional ecologies. Viewed together, however, they also make visible the failure of the trenchant 'transition' postcolonial development discourse – that posits urban futures and non-farm wage work as the desired goal - to materialize for most rural workers in the aftermath of slow dispossession through agricultural intensification. I suggest that these varied forms of resistance stemming from agrarian modernisation, and ontologies of agrarian work that foreground ecological precarity and highlight the relational dynamics of production and social reproduction, are critical for rethinking postcolonial development. More broadly, I argue that attending to agrarian ontologies of work in the global South is crucial for challenging the Eurocentric assumptions that shape the recent 'future of work' debates centred largely on implications of technological innovation, greening of economies and urban geographies.

Warming up to work, warming up to corporate capital: The techniques of psychosocial control on the factory shop floor in the Indian e-commerce industry

Suraj Telange

(SOAS, University of London)

The paper studies the sociological importance of "Warm-up meetings" (alternatively Stand-up) sessions of everyday work shifts at three Amazon warehouses in India. It uses Michael Burawoy's 'Manufacturing consent' (1979) and 'Politics of Production' (1985) theoretical frames to argue that these daily warming-up sessions in modern corporations like Amazon have become an effective instrument of transferring neo-liberal narratives to the shopfloor workers. The paper is based on the author's intensive yearlong embedded participatory observation fieldwork where the author worked as a shopfloor labourer for a year amongst Amazon warehouse labourers in India.

These Warm-up meetings on the Amazon shop floor are held daily and involve warm-up physical exercises, a summary of production targets and their attainment, felicitation of top-performing workers, and attempts to boost workers' work morale through social examples, accountability/disciplining of underperforming workers and allocation of work tasks at the beginning of every work shift. These meetings have specified structural cum social roles for shopfloor labourers, supervisors, and shopfloor managers within the labour-capital hierarchy at Amazon. The ultimate aim of this is to make workers work harder, willingly. The paper looks at such everyday ideological attempts of capital in manufacturing consent as an integral part of capital's strategies of control over the workforce on the shopfloors. Through these regular work-social gatherings, the values of higher productivity and loyalty to the company get transferred to workers, where an absence of any economic incentives for higher labour productivity sketches the landscape of Indian labour relations.

These meetings are part of the everyday work routine at Amazon warehouses and most modern workplaces today, including manufacturing, service, and trade sectors. Despite their ubiquitous presence across various modern workplaces, the existing literature on labour regimes/labour process studies hardly has seen these meetings as instruments/places through which control is transferred/exercised over the labour force. Its higher emphasis on capital's use of a vast reserve army of labourers, migrant/native status, and gendered, racial, or Caste differentiation amongst labourers, although crucial, it still proved an incomplete explanation for the control that my labourers experienced in everyday working in industrial settings in India. The reasons why my workers worked harder than they were required when there was no economic incentive in place were in such social gatherings like regular Warm-up meetings, which ended up showing higher performance from my workers every week. Seeing such meetings as a sociological phenomenon of modern industries sheds light on how these daily warming-up sessions have become powerful mediums for transferring neo-liberal narratives to the shopfloors workers.

THURSDAY 14 SEPTEMBER
PAPER SESSION 7
15:30-17:00

Room W010A – Gender and intersectional inequalities within workplace resistance discourses

Gendered experiences, perception, and conceptualisation of success in civilian working life of UKAF women veterans.

Andreana Glendinning

(University of Warwick)

This paper explores gendered experiences of UK Armed Forces (UKAF) Women Veterans concerning perception of success in civilian life. Data was collected through qualitative interviews with 42 women veterans as part of a doctoral study which explored their longer-term working lives. Participants had served in the Royal Navy (RN), Army and Royal Air Force across all rank groups.

As noted by Godfrey and Brewis (2018), unlike many other service occupations, the military is male-dominated and highly masculine. The experiences of women who served in a gendered UKAF could impact upon how they define their success in civilian working life. Hence, success for women veterans could not be fully understood, without exploring how they had fared in the civilian world of work; something that previous research on veterans' employment has not yet examined. A wide range of components contributed to their belief, and assessment, of whether they were successful or not in civilian working life. Women veterans in this study defined success in their own words through narratives. Three main themes were identified regarding UKAF women veterans' perception of success:

• Work-life balance (WLB). Women veterans with caring responsibilities often changed from focusing on career to focusing on family life. Achieving WLB for these participants was a key indicator of perceived success in civilian working life inferring success was related to ability to manage family life rather than career.

• Financial security. Financial aspects of success for most participants revolved around supporting a safe and stable life.

• Fulfilling working life. Job satisfaction influenced most participants' perception of success including feeling valued, credible, challenged, doing a 'good job' and recognition for jobs well done. These aspects were key for women veterans' perceived success.

This paper explores nuances of these themes relating specifically to UKAF women veterans within the context of feminist theory and their experience of gendered organisations.

The study investigated the needs of women veterans not addressed in extant resettlement offerings for UKAF personnel during transition from military to civilian working life which lacks support for groups of women veterans compared to male counterparts. It addressed the issue of differing conceptualisation of success between men and women with added facets of military identity and, demonstrating different perspectives of success for women veterans compared to men veterans and to women who worked solely as civilians. In effect the approach was to look at how gender and veteran status shape how individuals define success.

The contribution of this study to the field is two-fold, theoretical and empirical. Theoretically, the social phenomena of this study were multi-faceted and linked to three main bodies of knowledge i.e., feminist theory and intersectionality interlinked with military identity. Therefore, a conceptual framework was developed encompassing the multidisciplinary focus of longer-term working lives of UKAF women veterans. Empirically the study addressed gaps in literature regarding women veterans using their perception of success as a vehicle to inform future policy for support of UKAF women veterans in developing and maintaining careers post-service.

Understanding careers of gay men from working-class backgrounds in the UK: Lessons for HRM

Andrew Kozhevnikov

(University of Leeds)

In career – and broader management - literature, there is a growing interest in diversity and how individual characteristics shape people's experiences. However, most studies have concerns restricted to 'visible' characteristics – race, gender and, to a lesser extent, age. The issues of class and sexuality have rarely been addressed, despite the strong evidence from other disciplines (e.g., sociology and psychology) of their continuing impact. In spite of significant effort to promote legal rights and protection to LGBTQ people, discrimination they face still persists. However, there has been little effort to consider how this discrimination is transferred into the career context. At the same time, even though class boundaries may have become more permeable, the whole array of stereotypes and prejudices regarding one's background exists. After a period of an [erroneous] conviction that class had become irrelevant in an allegedly egalitarian society, recent years have seen more calls to re-introduce class into research agenda. This can be particularly important for career studies, considering the notable absence of appreciation of class.

This ongoing project focuses on career experiences of gay men from working-class backgrounds who, arguably, find themselves in a double bind. Firstly, their native working-class environments have been said to be intolerant (or even hostile) to [male] homosexuality. Thus, 'traditional' working-class careers may enforce concealment of sexual orientation to avoid discrimination and bullying. Secondly, more middle-class environments might provide a safer career context for gay men, but there is a risk of discrimination in 'professional' occupations due to one's different or 'unfitting' family history, pedigree, education etc. However, these problems and approaches to tackling them remain empirically (and, in most instances, theoretically) open.

To fill this void, the current project draws upon semi-structured interviews with gay men from working-class backgrounds in the UK; the final number is expected to be around 25-35. The objective is to better understand career barriers faced by this group, specific strategies they deploy to navigate their interests, resources enabling (or, in case of their absence, hindering) those strategies, and support needed to support these under- research career agents.

The early results confirm that sexuality and class background intersect and result in particularly disadvantaged positions in the career milieu. Inability to rely on family support, lack of anti-discriminatory policies (or inadequate enforcement of them) and pressures to conform to middle-class norms, tastes and aesthetics have been named among the major career barriers. To navigate them, the respondents engaged in sophisticated identity work, strengthened their resilience, commitment and other personal resources, and strategically selected more tolerant career environments. Some respondents even managed to capitalise upon their class and sexuality. One important finding is that upward career (or social) mobility is often accompanied by the sense of loss of one's identity and heritage, and many respondents reported the sense of loneliness and strived to make their class and sexuality more visible when reaching more senior (safer) level of career hierarchy.

The findings advance the theoretical explanations of people's career experiences and have practical implications for businesses and policy-makers.

Gendered vulnerabilities in digital labour platforms and the strategies of women resistance: A case study from India.

Dipsita Dhar

(Jawharlal Nehru University)

In India, women remain one of the most "unproductive" labor forces, with a Labor Force Participation Rate (LFPR) half of the global average. Of the 25.1% of women in the workforce, almost 94% are engaged in informal work such as construction, domestic, and home-based work (Ministry of Labour & Employment, 2023). With the emergence of Digital Labor Platforms (DLPs) in India, it was expected that this large potential workforce would be captured and diversified in the labour market. However, data from the Taskmo Gig Index shows that only 28% of gig workers are women, and it is also noted that women are more likely to perform routine, non-cognitive tasks, which offer less opportunity for social mobility and wage increase (WLF 2018). Moreover, preexisting social inequalities such as the gendered division of labor, lack of access to education, and inadequate infrastructural development have hindered women's participation in the mainstream workforce. Even with a lower entry barrier, DLPs remain less accessible to women compared to their male counterparts (Kasliwal 2020).

This paper aims to locate gendered vulnerability in the 'platformised' workplace and explore how women build resistance, both individualized and collective. Drawing from Butler (2016), we view vulnerability and resistance not as binary or oppositional but as continuous, "politically produced, unequally distributed through and by a differential operation of power." In order to conceptualize "gendered vulnerability", we consider encountering sexual harassment in the workplace as the primary category, followed by discriminatory behaviour from customers, differential treatment by the local bureaucracy and regulatory bodies, and the access to union or at least collective bargaining, among others. We conducted 15 in-depth semi-structured interviews with women engaging in different kinds of DLPs, such as ride-sharing, delivery partners, and beauty and wellness services. We observed three distinct relationalities between vulnerability and resistance that co-exist and operate simultaneously: Workers limiting themselves to the tactics of subversion, also known as "weapons of the weak"(Scott, 1990) (like the non-unionized Urban Company workers, Uber drives, who use live location sharing with family members as a precaution to harassment); building bottom-up collective resistance with the help of informal and semi-formal networks (like the older Urban Company workers using informal unionism, spontaneous mass gathering to bringing in the Company to the table for a dialogue) ; and developing solidarity and affinity where women workers chose the "the weapons of the organized" (Kabeer, 2013) in orienting resistance strategies against the state and the DLPs (like the unionized drivers of Uber and Rapido who could strike a successful negotiation not only with the companies but also involved the state in regulating the platforms). Keeping in mind the nature of the neo liberal state and the limits of women's citizenry rights, this paper strive to contribute on the literature of varied forms of counter hegemonic struggle (Purcell, 2022) led by the women happening within Digital Labour Platforms, mediated and non-mediated by the traditional trade unions, from the global south.

Room W010B – Marginalised work and workers, risk and resistance in precarious places one

Understanding the impact of bogus self-employment on working lives: The erosion of the material basis of citizenship

Marti Lopez-Andreu, Julie Monroe

(Newcastle University Business School)

This paper discusses the impact of bogus self-employment on working lives. Drawing on data from interviews and focus groups to self-employed workers in different occupations (from couriers to speech language therapists, from foster carers to construction and railway workers) in the UK it analyses how the status affects life courses and the capacities of workers to manage and plan their lives. The status of bogus self-employment implies a transfer of risks from the employer to the individual. However, there

is a lack of research considering how this trend affects the capacities of individuals to manage and plan their lives. This paper uses concepts from the life course approach to emphasize how solo self-employment can de-institutionalize life courses (Brueckner and Mayer, 2005) and it erodes the institutional and organisational supports (even in different degrees and in incomplete manner) related to the so-called standard employment relationship (Bosch, 2004). In this context, it uses the concept of 'material basis of the citizenship', developed by Castel and Haroche (2001), to highlight that the capacity to be a citizen- someone who can have a strategy, to be able to act and to have projects regarding the future according to their objectives and goals- are related to certain supports (or properties). The authors highlight that for those who only own their labour force the precondition for the strategy has been the development of what they called social property, linked to the standards of the employment relationship.

This paper engages with the calls to expand the research on bogus self-employment and precarious work to the aspects that enable workers to engage with these forms of employment, with a focus on the 'grey zone' of unpaid labour at the household level and the role of reproductive labour in the household economy of precarious workers (Kampouri, 2022; Murgia et al., 2020; Pulignano and Morgan, 2023). In this context, this paper asks: 1) What enables individuals to engage with solo self-employment? 2) How they manage/cope with the risks associated? and 3) How the status impact the on life-course planning? We contribute to these debates by identifying that beyond narratives of independence and freedom, bogus self-employed workers integrate the risks and vulnerabilities of the status according to different positions in relation to the life stage, household conditions and the position in relation to reproductive labour. This makes that the capacity to plan and develop the life course is strongly embedded in the intersection between life stage, ethnicity, gender and class.

Resistance and reinvention: Reworking the older digital technology professional as 'digital native'

Christine Shukis-Brown, Katrina Pritchard

(Birkbeck, University of London)

This research examines the ways in which 'older' digital technology sector workers negotiate their ageing identities. Our analysis show how, through a series of discursive moves, participants resist the 'digital immigrant' stereotype (of the digitally challenged older worker), instead identifying as 'digital natives' (Prensky, 2001). In doing so they disrupt ideas of digital nativism as generationally connected to younger workers. Youth is often revered in the digital tech sector, associated with being bold, disruptive and having 'entrepreneurial enthusiasm' (Zhao, H., & Liu, Q., 2022) that is deriving pleasure and enthusiasm for involvement in entrepreneurial tasks and approaches (Pattnaik et al., 2023). Instead, digital nativism is reworked as age-neutral in a bid to positively connect with a preferred identity that has to date linked birth date with technological skill.

Through a discourse analysis of interviews from 15 older digital technology sector workers, we analyse the ways in which they rework their 'older' professional identities as curious, disruptive and entrepreneurial (Rosales and Svensson, 2021; Zhao H., & Liu, Q., 2022). We show how this is achieved through, firstly a de-generationalisation of digital nativism (Prensky, 2001; Helsper and Eynon, 2010) and secondly through 'eldering' of digital skills which are essentialised as vital to organisational success. Through their identity work participants resist the 'older' professional as necessarily digitally othered, instead offering themselves as highly digitally desirable through a repurposing and reconceptualisation of digital nativism. The native identity is thus disconnected from its generational origins which have dominated normative understandings of older people (organisationally and beyond) as less digitally interested and/or capable. Through such identifications participants further resist tensions and challenges associated with the 'deficit paradigm' of older workers (Coupland et al., 1991, p. 8).

Empirically this study explores how the concept of digital nativism is evolving, the implications of connecting age and technology for older digital tech sector professionals (Rosales and Svensson, 2021) and challenges the current and future relevance of the concept. While some affirmation of digital nativism is offered as a legitimised identity category, there is resistance to the idea it is bounded by age. More broadly this research contributes to specific age-related tensions within an under-researched professional group operating within a heavily youth orientated sector (Spedale, 2019; Rosales & Svensson, 2021).

Theoretically our study offers a new insights into the ways preferred identities are negotiated through resistance to generational boundaries, associated categories, and labels (Brown and Coupland, 2015; Slay and Smith, 2011). More specifically we show how the confines of generational belonging can be reshaped to meet preferred identities. Consequently we challenge established ideas of 'digital nativism' as bounded within fixed age categories or as a binary indicator of who is technologically (more) capable or resistant (Mariano, 2021). Our study has implications for how organisations may view resistance more broadly a positive means of rejecting negative and harmful stereotypes connected to the ageing and older worker.

Working from home: The flexible sovereignty

Salih Kinsun

(The University of Essex)

This discussion explores the challenges of remote working for journalists in the UK and the problems that come with using the home as a workplace. Especially with the Covid pandemic and the developments and changes experienced afterwards, the method of working from home was dictated to employees, who became dependent on their homes at the end of this process. The situation of being dependent on the home has brought new debates in the field of social science. These debates include mental health problems, the balance between work and life, privacy and precarity. Based on these debates, this discussion gathered data from 25 local journalists in the UK working from home, using in-depth interview techniques. The findings confirm that local journalists are not adapted to work from home and face many challenges. For example, journalists feel particularly lonely when home turns into a workplace, lack resistance and cooperation, suffer from stress, anxiety disorders and burnout syndrome, and are precarious due to the extra cost of bills and personal expenses. This study has been supported by studies in sociology and media and communication research, and concluded that journalists working from home face the problems partly mentioned above. To sum up, it has been observed that journalists working from home are marginalised workers, and even their homes, where they feel most secure, have become precarious workplaces.

The UK hospitality sector under pressure: Analysing employers and workers adjustment strategies to post-COVID and post-Brexit working environments

Zinovijus Ciupijus

(Leeds University Business School)

The UK's hospitality sector has been affected by a variety of external pressures that have significant implications for its employment relations. These pressures include the impact of COVID-19 on staff retention, the withdrawal from EU freedom of movement of labour, the cost of living crisis. Compared to the pre-Brexit migration system favouring intra-EU labour migration, UK employers lost their previous ability to replenish their migrant labour with ease (MacKenzie and Forde, 2009), while mobility differentials (Alberti, 2013) of existing and potential migrants had been altered through the introduction of more conditional and restrictive regulations. The continuous reluctance of UK policy makers to include hospitality workers into occupation shortage list in spite of acute shortages highlights a historic under-recognition of sectoral skills and social value of the sector to the UK economy.

In this paper, we draw on findings of an ESRC-funded study of the post-Brexit migration system and realities of work post-COVID. The paper investigates changing dynamics of employer-employee relations in the hospitality sector, drawing on two main sources of data. First, results from a new nationally representative employer survey conducted in 2022 and 2023 for this project. Secondly, qualitative evidence from interviews with a regional trade body, union officials, the sectoral skills' council and an organizational-based case study of a regional hotel group.

The paper reveals how more restrictive migration policies and resultant labour shortages have impacted upon UK hospitality employers and workers across different citizenship status. This paper also considers how the perceived transient nature of the hospitality sector, with fluctuating seasonal demand, contributes to a sense of uncertainty and insecurity of hospitality work and to what extent this leads to workforce shortages. The findings offer new insight into both employer practices and workers' response to new environments. While the survey results show how employers sought to adjust their HR practices

in the aftermath of Brexit and COVID, interviews with institutional stakeholders illustrate a complex interplay between national policies and organisational practices in formulating short and long-term labour and skills fixes in the sector under pressure.

Finally, the qualitative case study of a hotel group provides detailed insights on how the combined impact of EU migrant hostile environments and COVID have impacted employer strategies and worker responses in the sector. Mirroring findings elsewhere (ReWage, 2022), the case study points to comparatively low levels of pay and intense working conditions as key factors contributing to workers leaving the sector. Chefs are identified as a particular group within the industry with higher labour mobility and bargaining power; the collected data demonstrates that employers are resorting to international recruitment of higher paid chefs in countries like South Africa and The Philippines to fill vacancies in the food preparation. Despite sectoral challenges, the study investigates why British and migrant workers decide to continue their employment in the UK hospitality sector; those are linked to individual choices as well as to employer practices during COVID – job protection specifically, and long-term investment in training and skill development.

Room W001 – Marginalised work and workers, risk and resistance in precarious places two

Robots for our drains: Forays into caste and reframing perspectives on resistance posed by sanitation workers

Nayan Jyoti, Jennifer Diyvadarshi

In recent times, many Dalit organisations and intellectuals mocked the Indian government over the excitement & interest it is showing over sending a man to moon but lacks the same kind of enthusiasm when it comes to making sewer/septic tank cleaning less dangerous and death free. Our scientists have all the resources and funds to make modern rockets, robots and computers but when it comes to cleaning sewer/septic minimal technological inventions are made and investments for research in this field are even unavailable. There have been some dalit intellectuals who have called out the double standards of our society by reminding us how this occupation has always been taken up by safai karamcharis/sanitation workers that mostly come from the dalit community, therefore the governments don't care so much to bring any real changes. This is quite revealing of the caste based apartheid that runs even in the government machinery. This paper tries to understand how the Balmiki community which is associated with sanitation work has reframed its perspectives on resistance by either owning or rejecting these machines,which is a recent state intervention. Our survey checks with these families to see if the machines have revolutionised their lives or not. Deaths in the capital due to sanitation work are still hitting the news daily. Is this revealing of a different ground reality, these are some of the doubts that this paper tries to raise.

Understanding the complexities of hidden work: The everyday rights and risks of unpaid care work

Helen Blakely, Jean Jenkins Wiserd, Ian Rees Jones Wiserd

(Cardiff University)

The organisation and distribution of care work in the UK has undergone a significant reconfiguration in recent decades, most clearly evident in the contraction of the expectation that social care provisioning can be accomplished either through the protections of state or the efficiencies of the market. While it has long been accepted among politicians, campaigners and academics that the provisioning of social care in the UK requires significant reform, public and academic debate often fails to engage with the the contribution of unpaid care work. This paper considers the significance of forms of unpaid care work - the ways in which unpaid care workers are filling the 'care gap' while their access to support and assistance is curtailed in a context of diminishing resources. In this context, we bring together feminist analyses of hidden work (e.g. Daniels 1987; Hatton, 2015) and Lockwood's (1996) concept of civic stratification to highlight their potential for further advancing analyses of the contribution of unpaid care work. In doing so the we undertake an analysis of stratifying practices relating to carers' rights to

demonstrate how ideas of social citizenship can aid investigation of forms of 'risky work' that are socially marginalised, economically devalued and legally excluded. Through this lens of civic stratification it is possible to attend to those classifications and representations of different social groups, including groups of workers, that are created through social institutions, encoded in law through particular rights and constraints and regulated through culturally embedded norms and practices. The framework casts light on how valuations of different types of work are produced through various stratifying devices and practices. Critically, by emphasising their relationship with the boundary drawing mechanics of social citizenship the approach draws attention to how these valuations are fluid; varying spatially and temporally in relation to the regime of rights in place.

Underemployment as an individual and social risk: A conceptual framework to investigate the lived experience of underemployed workers

Vanesa Fuertes, Vanessa Beck, Levana Magnus, Daiga Kamerāde, Tracey Warren, Luis Torres, Miguel Munoz

(University of the West of Scotland (UWS))

Recent labour market ruptures resulting from industrial changes, economic recessions, and austerity measures have seen an increase in underemployment (Heyes et al., 2018; ILO, 2020), as employers have sought to optimise profits altering the way people work and live (Beck et al. 2020). As a result, we are experiencing a dangerous reframing of work and work-life balance, leading to a situation where workers are expected to be permanently available, whether employed or self-employed, to work in jobs below their potential or preference in terms of hours, wages and/or skills. Underemployment, thus, is a key societal risk that makes workers insecure in their daily lives and more vulnerable to economic fluctuations or unexpected personal or societal events such as the Covid-19 pandemic and its aftermath, the rise of energy prices, or food insecurity due to climate change.

Despite the growth and importance of underemployment, there is a lack of conceptual clarity. Underemployment has been broadly defined as work that is lesser or inferior for a worker compared to some standard (Maynard and Feldman, 2011), objective or subjective, in terms of hours, qualifications, or pay, and it is often equated with contingent, precarious, low-pay, atypical, or insecure jobs. Although there have been unidimensional (time-, skills- or income-related underemployment) studies on the individual consequences of being underemployed, there has been limited qualitative exploration of underemployment as a multi-dimensional phenomenon whose consequences, in and outwith work, pose current and future risks not only to individuals but also to households, families, communities and society.

This paper has two aims. First, it will set out a conceptual framework to serve as a qualitative tool to study, measure, and analyse underemployment. We do that by investigating the various definitions and measurements of underemployment building on seminal works such as Feldman's (1996), on McKee-Ryan and Harvey's (2011) literature review, and posterior studies. The objective is to develop a definition of underemployment as a dynamic multi-layered concept based on a labour market continuum (Dooley, 2003) and situated within traditional and newer labour markets. The resulting conceptual framework will provide a nuanced but clear understanding of this complex and understudied phenomena giving visibility to invisible underemployment (Senkrua, 2018). The second aim of the paper is to present insights from research on the lived experiences (McIntosh and Wright, 2018; Rich et al., 2013) of underemployed workers using and reflecting on the validity of the conceptual framework for qualitative research in practice, and exploring the financial, health, social and other risks of this type of work for workers and others around them. This paper draws from the initial qualitative insights of a three-year ESRC mix-method longitudinal study of underemployment and the lived experiences, within and without the work-sphere, of underemployed individuals in the UK.

A time for action: Perceptions of European workers in the UK and British workers in Continental Europe during COVID-19 at the time of Brexit

Hilary Collins

(University of the West of Scotland)

This paper details a project which collected the voices of European and British citizens living in the precarity of Covid-19 and Brexit. We aimed to explore the challenges they faced in both their employment and day to day lives.

Following the Covid-19 pandemic, there are increasing calls for new approaches to government and local policies which unleash the benefits that migrants, refugees and asylum seekers bring.   It is recognised that affective/identity dimensions are susceptible to socio-economic and political shifts (Zontini and Genova, 2022). Migrants, asylum seekers and refugees tend, for a variety of reasons, to be less successful in host country labour markets than natives. There has been increased interest in the experience of migrants in the UK and Europe. Although literature has given attention to a variety of topics from enablers and barriers to integration in the labour market at policy level, scant attention has been given to the stories of migrants, their sense of identity, their role and agency in shaping their life and policy (D'Angelo et al., 2021).

The lives of British citizens in Europe and EU citizens in the UK are becoming more precarious and challenging after Brexit and Covid-19.We explored their challenges, in both their employment and in their every day lives. Our narrative account of self provides an ongoing stream of sense-making (Brown, 2006) into which they fit their selective perceptions of new experiences (Sims, 2005). To do this we conducted an audio survey with open ended questions with 26 EU and British citizens

The data was collected via an audio survey and was analysed, using a thematic approach and NVIVO software.

A strong theme throughout the data was a sense of belonging which comes from feeling a sense of association with a group. Belonging is about someone making a choice that they want to be included in a collective This choice is highly significant and central to understanding migrant decision-making, attitudes, integration outcomes and the social identities that emerge or consolidate in the context of migration.

Data analysis identified three patterns of belonging.

The first pattern of belonging describes people who actively seek to sever existing links with their national community. The second includes people who actively seek to establish an identity that transcends specific national communities. This group includes people who clearly detach themselves from bounded belonging. A third, in-between pattern of belonging acknowledges strong links with both national and host communities. The people in this group identify strongly with both home and host community and have created links with both.

Our work concurs with other authors(see McCollum, 2020) in finding that Brexit has compelled migrants to regroup and rethink their sense of belonging with many affiliating towards a European, rights-based conception of belonging. We found acts of disenfranchisement along national identity lines, which most suffer in relation to the issues of independence and belonging. We conclude by asking how we can maintain a sense of belonging and solidarity (Beck and Brook, 2020) both inside and outside working practices?

Room W002 – Open stream

Organisational culture in Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs): Leadership traits, networking and women

Martina Topic, Christine Carbery, Karen Vollum-Dix, Sallyann Halliday, Joy Ogbemudia

(Leeds Beckett University)

This paper is based on findings from a survey and interviews regarding the organisational culture in SMEs. The survey has 61 responses, which did not enable statistical analysis and thus 11 interviews were conducted to supplement these findings and provide a more meaningful analysis via a mixed method. A descriptive analysis was used to analyse survey results and a thematic analysis was used to analyse interview data. Findings show that personalities and character traits are seen as relevant for leadership and career success with most participants in the survey self-assessing themselves as having feminine characteristics but outlining masculine characteristics as the ones needed for career progression. Interviewee participants also outlined masculine characteristics as necessary for a career progression, thus showing that organisations, SMEs as a largely unexplored area in this case, and consistent with other literature on corporations, still function as a masculine habitus and that people do not always recognise oppression because oppressive practices are deeply ingrained into everyday life to the point, they became natural (Bourdieu, 2007). Networking continues to present a barrier for women with many women outlining they do not like engaging in that activity despite its relevance, however, findings show the rise of LinkedIn networking and two women outlined that this form of networking is beneficial, opening a question whether this impersonal form of networking could at least solve the issue of harassment in networking events, which was reported in some studies.

Entrepreneurial norms, intensive work-lives, and material speculation: Interrogating discourse and materiality in the working lives of start-up entrepreneurs

Karel Musilek

(Cardiff University)

This paper contributes to current discussions of intensive and extensive work-lives in relation to neoliberal discourse and the material logic of work and life in contemporary capitalist societies. It offers a theoretical and empirical extension of Foucauldian analyses which attribute commitment to work to the influence of neoliberal enterprise discourse while often neglecting the material conditions of entrepreneurial and freelance work. Drawing on the analytical position of moderate constructionism as well as the developments within materialist discourse analysis the paper develops an account that combines attention to discourse with an emphasis on the material constraints and incentives in analysing the intensive character of entrepreneurial working lives.

To illustrate the necessity and feasibility of the material/discursive analysis the paper draws on an ethnographic study of start-up entrepreneurs who organise their lives around work to an especially high degree, as evidenced by their prevailing "giving it all" attitude as well as extensive work hours. The analysis shows that the norms of self-realisation, freedom and contribution to social change have indeed been important motivating forces behind the intensive commitment to entrepreneurial work. However, the intensive dynamic of entrepreneurial lives cannot be understood separately from material factors pertaining to the economic requirements of capitalist reproduction (e.g., the need to secure funds to reproduce one's life) and entrepreneurial economic practice (e.g., an impetus to invest in the development and running of a company) and expectations of material returns (e.g., future financial rewards of start up success).

The ethnographic study identifies three main operations in which the discursive norms and material logic of entrepreneurial work-life interacted to produce the especially intensive nature of the entrepreneurial lifestyle. 1) Identifying the gap between the full realisation of entrepreneurial norms and their feasibility in current material circumstances. 2) Practices of investment where current effort and resources were invested into the start-up enterprise 3) Logic of speculation on future returns, both in terms of material gains and realisation of the powerful discursive norms. The analysis shows how it is the combination of norms and material imperatives that explains the tendency for personal life to be integrated into work through the blurring of the line between personal and working time, and the logic of speculative investment into future financial returns.

Breaking the vicious cycle: Can active labour market policies facilitate the labour market integration of people with severe mental health problems?

Stefan Tuebbicke

(Institute for Employment Research (IAB))

Unemployment has detrimental effects on individuals' mental health and poor mental health reduces re-employment chances, creating a vicious cycle. Active labour market policies (ALMPs) have been shown to ameliorate negative effects on mental health and improve labour market integration on average. In the context of individuals with severe mental health issues, however, it is unclear whether these interventions can be expected to deliver similar positive effects. Hence, this paper estimates the long-term effects of ALMPs on the labour market integration of individuals with severe mental health issues and compares estimates to individuals without such issues using rich and unique combined survey and administrative data. Effects are estimated using double machine learning and show that ALMPs do not only improve labour market integration of unemployed individuals with severe mental health issues, but they do so more effectively than for other unemployed individuals.

Room W003 – PhD showcase one

Through the eyes of the self and other: The journey of induction, learning, implementing & resisting emotional labour in London's public house sector

James Green

(University College London (UCL))

This paper seeks to provide a detailed account of emotional labour adopted by bartenders while employed in a public house (pub) in London. Ranging from the recruitment choices of management to hire workers based on their presumed performances (by both interview and unpaid trial shift), how employees learn their emotional labour while at work, 'backstage' and 'front stage' collective and individual emotional labour, to employees amplifying performances through employee deviance, rejecting/resisting, or escaping emotional labour due to intolerable customers, work conditions, and/or management. This paper presentation hopes to fill in some of the theoretical gaps missing from Hochschild's theory (e.g., learning, agency of workers to negotiate acceptable performances), and add to the contemporary understanding of the theory through the incorporation of other theoretical perspectives (e.g., labour control, precarity, labour exploitation) via my own lived experiences as well as those who I researched. In the field, I implemented a hybrid ethnographic research design (participant observation, observant participation) where I was employed as a bartender in Central London from January 2022 to January 2023 – pub name is pseudonymised as 'Rita's Public House and Dining'. I documented well over 100,000 words of fieldnotes and interviewed 36 bartenders who live and work in London. I am currently undergoing analysis and writing up for my PhD thesis submission later this year. Being able to attend and present at this conference will provide me with an opportunity to discuss some of the implications of my study with academics in the sociology of work field, as well as (potentially) helping me find an appropriate Viva panel.

Why care to care? Exploring meaningful work and turnover intentions in commissioned social care

Marina Nikolova

(University of Strathclyde)

The Feeley Review (2021: 13) of adult social care in Scotland argues that the predominantly female workforce in the sector is 'motivated', 'resilient', and 'proud of their work' but nonetheless consistently undervalued and underpaid. Indeed, arm's-length funding relationships in social care quasi-markets (Cunningham and James, 2014) pressurise providers of commissioned social care to do 'more for less' through cost-cutting and standardisation. This process drives the on-going erosion of pay and conditions in the sector (Cunningham, 2015; Rubery, 2015) and limits the control workers have over how and when they provide care (Müller, 2016; Rubery and Urwin, 2011). This sectoral reality exists

against the backdrop of the wider social framing of care work as dirty work and women's work, ultimately driving its further devaluation (Atkinson and Lucas, 2012; Twigg, 2000). This study adopts a sequential explanatory design, utilizing quantitative and qualitative approaches, in order to explore how the interplay between objective job characteristics and work-related meaningfulness affects turnover intentions. A sociological perspective on meaning construction bounds the latter to cultural and social norms (Geertz, 1973; Kluckholm, 1951) and the attribution of meaningfulness by the individual is thus presumed to reflect wider societal attitudes. While occupational outsiders traditionally help foster meaningfulness at work, the ideas of others may result in the opposite in the context of dirty work (Ashforth and Kreiner, 2013), low prestige and pay. Subsequently, a need emerges for occupational insiders to reassert the importance of their work through shared narratives. The relationships with colleagues and beneficiaries (i.e. service users) are explored here as activators of positive identities within the job.

Through the lens of positive organisational scholarship, meaningful work benefits the employee as work becomes 'pleasant, enjoyable and personally enriching, as well as contributing to something beyond pure self-interest' (Bailey et al, 2017: 417). By stimulating prosocial motivation and positive work identities, meaningfulness buffers the effect poor conditions and work alienation have on turnover intentions. On the contrary, meaningfulness could be framed as a form of managerial control resisted by employees (Lips-Wiersma and Morris, 2009) that results in the formation of an abject identity (Harding, 2019). Multiple case studies of social care organisations are currently being conducted within the sequential explanatory design in order to establish the meaning, role and value attributed to meaningfulness by employers, employees, and membership organisations in commissioned social care. A point of particular interest is whether employers actively utilise ideas about meaningfulness in their retention strategies, as well as employees' own awareness and views of that. The quantitative element of the study explores the objective links between meaningfulness and turnover intentions, while interviews are expected to capture the lived experiences stemming from workplace relationships, along with the response that they elicit in employees. All stages of data collection are scheduled to conclude by July 2023, allowing the completion of data analysis prior to the conference.

Caring new world of work

Ivana Lukes Rybanska

(Prague University of Economics and Business)

How can organizations change from being ‚private governments '(Anderson, 2019) and become ‚liveable places' (Fotaki et al., 2019, s. 4)? This question drove my dissertation research which comprised three ethnographic case studies from three organizations in the IT, non-profit, and manufacturing sectors. This thesis analyses the links between care (Tronto, 1987, 1998) and power in the studied egalitarian organizations.

Each of the three Czech organizations described itself and emphasised the equality of its members in their processes and organizational structure. Each has been operating for at least 18 years during the fieldwork period. The presented research is grounded on individual interviews, observations, and internal and external document analysis.

The ethnographic material offers the presentation of practices (communicative, structural, and material) which enable the organizations to maintain the equality of their members while further developing the organization.

The analysis identifies four modes of care that emerge at the intersections between the degree of institutionalization of care and whether care is aimed at the individual workers or the organization as a whole. Focus on these aspects enables us to understand care not as subservient but as a source of enabling power (van Baarle et al., 2022). The thesis shows which structural features of organizations foster the spread of care in organizations and how the institutionalization of care reduces the care allocation dilemma (Antoni et al., 2020).

The cases presented in the thesis demonstrate that the world of work can be caring. Organizations need to develop reflexive practices fuelled by the autonomy of the organization's members. As a result, the care about co-workers and about the organization as a whole will make the respective organization efficient in fulfilment of organizational goals and nurturing an environment for the workers.

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Resistance, misbehaviour, or free labour? Understanding fashion models' and content creators' collective action online

Abigail Harrington

(University of Birmingham)

There has been a plethora of research investigating working conditions in the precarious economy. An important question that has emerged from such work is what space there is for resistance? Collective action online, for instance on online forums, has been one area where studies have found gig workers to be resisting their negative working conditions, such as algorithmic uncertainty. Yet one sector of the informal sector that remains understudied is gendered gig work. This paper addresses this gap by taking one established tethered example of freelance work, fashion modeling, and one un-tethered example of emerging gig work, content creation on sites such as OnlyFans, to investigate collective forms of action in both industries. This study asks firstly, what contentions exist between models and other actors in fashion modeling, and content creators and platforms such as OnlyFans? And secondly, what space for resistance are there in both industries? This paper draws from the first phase of PhD research, which consisted of a qualitative content analysis of public online forums, instagram pages and websites. QCA proved to be a suitable method since It enables a focus on specific research questions and aims, while inductively building a coding scheme, which not only provided valuable insights on workers' activities in both industries, expanded upon here, but also informed a semi-structured interview guide for the second phase of PhD data collection. The findings from content analysis suggests that to label all action as 'resistance' would be reductive, and therefore this study draws from the concepts of 'misbehaviour' and 'free labour' to better understand the nuances in collective action taking place online. Moreover, parallels are drawn to actions which can be understood as a continuity of more traditional forms of worker's resistance such as protest, the debunking of myth and sharing of experiences which has been noted as a powerful form of resistance in feminist scholarship. The use of jokes and satire are also found, which have been historically associated with 'weapons of the weak'. Yet many discontinuities from traditional forms of resistance are also identified, such as the way in which social media can amplify worker's misbehaviour, resulting in explosions of consciousness that leads to more concrete forms of collective resistance. There is also evidence of new grass root union organisations that largely organise online. On the other hand, the paper also addresses how many of the actions actors take online, ultimately ends up serving their 'managers' (in this case agents and platforms), and therefore constitutes free labour. Thus, the reality of what counts as resistance online is complicated and several questions emerge from the study, such as: what counts as resistance as work becomes more informal? Does the impact of resistance matter? If so, how can the impact of resistance be measured? And finally, what role or responsibility should intermediaries such as platforms and agents have in the freelance sector? Answering such questions may help to better understand what constitutes resistance, misbehaviour, or in fact, free labour in the precarious economy.

Room W004 – Public sector, small business and third sector experiences of resistance

The power of resistance among voluntary workers

Leanne Greening

(Swansea University)

In recent decades, under pressures of a neoliberal, New Public Management (NPM) agenda, successive UK governments have ceaselessly outsourced public service delivery to the Non-Profit and Voluntary (NPV) sector. The sector's increased involvement in service provision coincided with the emergence of the 'contract culture' which saw the replacement of unspecified and indeterminate government grants with binding and prescriptive service contracts (Cunningham et al., 2014). As a result of the changing funding landscape, NPV organisations are now obliged to adhere to compliance requirements such as the reporting of outputs, outcomes and social impact against rendered funding (Baines and Cunningham, 2011). Such NPM-inspired changes require these organisations to monitor, coordinate and evaluate their activities which is indicative of the sector's shifting relations of control and power. Namely, the sector has moved from being characterised by relative autonomy, light regulation and relations based on altruism and commitment to one that is subject to increased external control, audit cultures and tightly regulated work. There is growing evidence that in the UK, funders' demands are often in tension with these organisations' missions, values and social goals (Venter et al., 2017). However, the effect of these changes on those delivering services has received considerably little attention. This is particularly concerning when we acknowledge that many of the workers within these organisations perform labour for free and can therefore, curtail their involvement with relative ease and without financial penalty.

Whilst interest in voluntary labour is slowly growing, extant literature focuses almost exclusively on 'volunteer management', a distinctive branch of expertise that seeks to maximise the productivity and efficiency of volunteers' activities by adapting Human Resource Management approaches to voluntary work settings. Recent work has highlighted that volunteer management strategies engage volunteers at the level of affect in order to align their attitudes, feelings and behaviours with the achievement of organisational targets (Read, 2021). This points to the way that volunteers' efforts are mobilised and coordinated to support the burgeoning obligations that these organisations face to demonstrate their impact. This reimagined environment has brought issues of control and power into sharp focus and has given rise to questions about how power is enacted and reinforced in organisations that lack the formal reward and power structures to influence behaviour (Alfes et al., 2016).

Reflecting on 40 semi-structured interviews, this paper examines how unpaid workers respond to and resist the changing context within which their efforts and labour are situated. Moreover, this paper sheds light on the largely unexplored power dynamics at the volunteer–organisation interface and analyses the motivators for resistance and how they influence the strength and intensity of workers' resistance strategies. From this vantage point, this paper takes a critical perspective and examines the complex and nuanced ways that resistance might be expressed beyond those found in traditional wage-labour relationships. Examining resistance in the context of voluntary work provides a fruitful site to rethink resistance and encourages us to consider it in new and broader ways.

Feminist decolonial engagement with public space

Ndirangu Ngunjiri

(University of Nairobi)

This article explores the ways in which feminist decolonial engagement can transform our understanding and use of public space. It argues that public spaces are often gendered and racialized, reflecting and perpetuating systems of oppression and exclusion. Through feminist decolonial engagement, we can challenge these systems and create more inclusive and equitable public spaces. However, much public art reflects and perpetuates systems of oppression, exclusion, and erasure. In

this article, we will explore how feminist decolonial engagement can transform our understanding and use of public art. Which is often gendered and radicalized, reflecting and perpetuating dominant narratives about who belongs in public space and who does not. For example, public art may celebrate the accomplishments of white men while ignoring the contributions of women and people of color. It may also depict women and people of color in stereotypical or exoticized ways, reinforcing harmful stereotypes and erasing their agency and humanity. Feminist decolonial engagement offers a way to challenge these systems of oppression and exclusion in public art. This approach involves questioning the dominant narratives that shape public art, and foregrounding the perspectives and experiences of those who have been marginalized and excluded. One way to engage in feminist decolonial engagement with public art is to create new works that challenge dominant narratives and highlight alternative perspectives. For example, artists may create works that celebrate the accomplishments of women and people of color, or that explore the experiences of marginalized communities in public space. By challenging dominant narratives and highlighting alternative perspectives, we can create more inclusive and equitable public spaces that reflect the diversity of our communities.

Room W005 – The resistant self: Work, identity work and wellbeing reconsidered

The problem with the problem: Generational resistance in higher education and work choices

Joanna Smith

(Lincoln International Business School)

This paper evaluates the significant changes in higher education and work during the lifetime of millennials. Many of the accepted, traditional trajectories from childhood to young adulthood in Britain disappeared as the millennial generation emerged. New aspects of resistance subsequently emerged. My research documents working class millennials eschewing their assigned moniker, whilst challenging their habitus as opportunities for university and graduate employment beckoned. Older family members and employers from preceding generations struggled with a new 'millennial problem to be fixed'. I dispute Archer's (2007) position that such societal changes diminish the role of habitus on one's life-course, observing the differences in social class, cultures and sub-cultures remain evident at the macro level of society, I give qualified support for her typologies of reflexivity.

Using a micro-sociological methodology, underpinned by an interpretivist, social constructionist stance, this paper draws upon oral life stories of seven millennial adults elicited via semi-structured, in-person conversations between 2016 and 2021 in various locations in England. These narratives are framed within concepts from Ricoeur's (1990) work on time and narrative and a biographical approach from social history sociology (Plummer 2001, Blumer 1981 and Linde 1993) exploring often unheard features of millennials' oral life stories. The study of generations, including Mannheim (1952) , Kercher (1983), Pilcher (1994) and Bristow (2016), informs debates about capital, culture and agency engaged by Bourdieu (1979), Lareau (2003/2011) and Archer, addressing central themes of class, family, higher education and work in these millennial life stories.

I reimagine Giddens' (1991) premise of the pure relationship in the contexts of higher education and employment. Each is transactional and subject to the contracting of two parties. Both parties agree to being in relationship, adopting a 'hop-on, hop-off' principle of temporality. I argue the temporary nature of pure relationships is better realised in our experiences of higher education and employment. A remedy for resistance and the resisted is found, albeit one of passivity and retreat as much as advancement and victory. Not all educational and work experiences are entrapped by habitus and destiny.

I argue that studying 'distinct' generations is only occasionally helpful. Millennials' identities are part of a constellation of institutional, social and relational factors, not merely generational belonging. Although the time and place in history in which these millennial individuals were born and in which they live has had significant influence, I argue that social class and family often dominate more than generation in their life courses. I theorise the way some of my informants engage with and negotiate their natal scripts is as autonomous reflexives. The exercise of personal agency enables them to challenge and extend options available to them in structures of education and professional employment, not merely

reproducing their habitus and the life chances of their families' acquisition of capital and social class. I develop an extension to Archer's reflexive typologies, combined with an application of Carlson et al's (2017) comparative dimensions – the 'autonomous ambitious' who make sense of their reflexive capabilities to challenge both their natal and generational scripts.

Employee resistance to management-driven wellbeing initiatives

Rachel Cook

(Swansea University)

Despite the CIPD's (2022) findings that 51% of surveyed organisations now have a standalone wellbeing strategy, 33% increased their wellbeing budget and 61% believe employees are keen to engage with wellbeing initiatives, employee receptiveness to workplace wellbeing, and related initiatives, remains an area of debate. Spence (2015) advocates that, whilst the focus of wellbeing initiatives is invariably a positive discourse (insofar as they aim to improve physical, psychological, and social functioning), it cannot be assumed that employees will be positively disposed towards them.

An important theme emerging in the critical management literature (Lipman 2014) is a disconnect between management and employees in this regard. Management too acceptingly presume employees will want, and be receptive to, any wellbeing initiative put in place, for the 'obvious benefits' this would bring (Manner 2020), i.e., mutual gains. Critical management studies critique the managerialist perspective of not sufficiently considering other contextual factors within the organisation that may prevent employees from wanting, or being able, to engage with these mechanisms, such as, organisational history and culture, apathy towards workplace wellbeing, a lack of engagement and/or resistance to organisational involvement in wellbeing.

In this research, there were five research sites, covering five different industries and geographical regions of the UK. A total of 71 semi-structured interviews were conducted, 23 with management and 48 with employees. Management participants were those in the organisations primarily responsible for employee wellbeing. Employee participants were those who did not have any management responsibilities but were 'front-line' staff, and so, the primary users of wellbeing initiatives.

The research found that wellbeing initiatives were driven almost entirely by management. Employees' understanding of wellbeing was not sufficiently considered during the development of wellbeing initiatives. The three key themes which emerged in relation to employees' understanding of wellbeing were work-life balance, mental and physical health, and resilience. Examining the extent to which the wellbeing initiatives in place in the research sites positively impacted these aspects of wellbeing, there were mixed opinions of their effectiveness.

Management-driven wellbeing initiatives, led by management perceptions of what wellbeing initiatives should include, resulted, from the perspective of enabling employees to achieve their own understanding of wellbeing, in ineffective wellbeing initiatives. As such, employees did not fully engage with them, as they did not see any merit in doing so, speaking directly against the idea of mutual gains. The research advocates for the development of employee-led wellbeing initiatives as a means of overcoming resistance to engagement with workplace wellbeing.

Hanging Lantern Room – PhD Showcase Two

Special event

Logical thinking in a PhD with publications' arguments and the thesis overall argument: A participatory workshop

Wendy Olsen

(University of Manchester)

AIM: the workshop aims to integrate mixed methods and scientific logic of using evidence with great care into the doctoral dissertation and publications. The weaving of arguments between submissions to journals and the overall doctoral dissertation is a key topic.

WORKSHOP CONTENTS: An initial lecture covers induction, scientific method, deduction, inference, and the way that conclusions are linked to a series of "premises" and "data-based assertions". The main works cited are Cottrell's Critical Thinking Skills, Bowell and Kemp's 4th edition Critical Thinking: A Concise Guide Chs. 5-6, and Olsen's book Systematic Mixed Methods Research (Palgrave, 2022, Chs 1, 8-10)). An activity allows the participants to share their 'research questions' and their simplified arguments with each other in a small group. The third segment makes the small groups discuss these arguments, with reference to a series of prompts. Mini-presentations from each table allow plenary discussion around the main findings. We hope this will address how you do induction to rest an argument firmly on evidence; how you use abduction (if at all); how retroduction works; and how to address apparent contradictions.

WHO IS THE AUDIENCE: Your PhD might use interviews, observation, ethnography, tabular data, online data, texts, corpus, sounds, smells or any mixture of evidence types. Your PhD might be at the end of year 1 or 2 or 3.

WALLS OF THE ROOM will be plastered with simplified diagrams for 3 of the tables' arguments. An example is shown below. The creation of these flipchart posters or whiteboards is based on a 30-minute larger-group exercise.

SOCIAL RESEARCH LOGIC METHODS USED: The overlap of deduction and inference with induction per se is stressed from the start. By distinguishing 'premises' of arguments from data and 'conclusions', all students are enabled to create a simple graphic that represents each submitted journal-paper or chapter. Furthermore, we aim to clarify what role is played in research by social theory that is transdisciplinary or multidisciplinarity. We also note how to identify research 'puzzles', and how to plan teamwork in PhDs.

PRE-HOMEWORK: Students are allowed to use existing work to prepare a one-pager and bring hard or soft copies to the workshop. POST-WORKSHOP ADVICE: Those who submit a two-pager at the end can get written or verbal feedback in the two weeks after the Conference, mostly by a 1-to-1 meeting during Conference. STAFFING: Prof Olsen and one other academic will help with the whole process, including verbal feedback.

We conclude with a short plenary discussion.

PRACTICAL ASPECTS: To run as a single session, managed by Prof Wendy Olsen, separate from the other PhD activities, in a flat room. Cap of 36 people (9 workgroups of 4 people) Pre-registration is not required.

References. Cottrell, Stella (2017) Critical Thinking Skills: Effective Analysis, Argument and Reflection, 2nd ed., London: Macmillan; Bowell, T., & Kemp, G. (2015) Critical Thinking: A Concise Guide. 4th ed., London: The University of Chicago Press; and Olsen, W.K. (2022), Systematic Mixed Methods Research for Social Scientists. London: Palgrave.

Room W119 – Resistance within contemporary employment relations

'The good, the bad and the ugly'! Framing for transformation and solidarity: The leading narrative of Mick Lynch (General Secretary, RMT)

Kathryn Boyle

(Glasgow Caledonian University)

'If you're an anonymous Trade Union Leader I think there is something wrong with the campaigning that your union is doing' (Mick Lynch, 222). The pivotal role of Trade Union leadership in resisting and rebalancing hegemony is well acknowledged (Kelly, 1988; McAlevey, 2016). Yet with a crisis in union membership levels, how many in our 'civil society' (Gramsci, 1971) can name any Trade Union leaders? In an age of employee relations, are Trade Unions any longer considered as legitimate political actors giving workers a voice? And as neoliberal subjects continue to internalise the reality of being an ideal economic actor (Foucault, 1980), does the working class even believe in its own existence anymore? 'I use that term "working class" cause it's gone out of fashion, so many people in my position including the TUC and the Labour Party don't like using it, but there is a class' (Mick Lynch, 2022). Here, Lynch asks us to engage in frame-breaking: something a charismatic leader does to empower their followers for self-actualisation and radical change (Fiol et al., 1999). Thus, if solidarity is a dormant potential waiting to be activated (Atzeni, 2009), individual Trade Union leaders can be the critical catalysts for legitimising collective and social action against perceived injustice – as well as resisting challenges to frame identities and actions as illegitimate (Darlington, 2018). Against the grain in a post-Thatcher world, Mick Lynch, General Secretary for the RMT, has become a public figure in his attempts to mobilise collective action within the RMT as well as organise community solidarity. This study sets out to investigate some of the ways he has tried to achieve this. Focusing on the role of communication strategy and speech imagery by charismatic leaders (Fiol et al., 1999), and the significance of language, narrative and rhetoric in enacting solidarity (Morgan and Pulignano, 2019), this study collates and thematically analyse the writings, speeches and interviews of Mick Lynch since he became General Secretary in May 2021 to ascertain how he uses rhetoric as an exercise in power to affect identity construction, resistance and change. A work in progress, early findings indicate he uses language and imagery to demonstrate: features of transformational leadership (Bass, 1990); framing (Kelly, 1998; McAlevey, 2016), including positioning identities such as the 'good' (the RMT), the 'bad' (Train Operating Companies) and the 'ugly' (the Government); frame-breaking (Fiol et al., 1999); frame amplification, extension and contestation (Gahan and Pekarek, 2013); and constitutive rhetoric (Seitz and Tennant, 2017). Consequently, this study seeks to reawaken academic interest in the subjective agency of activist leadership (Darlington, 2018), enlightening potential avenues contemporary Trade Union leaders can take to catalyse resistance against neoliberalist ideology and hegemony over workers, who are the community (Ikeler and Crocker, 2018), in our modern capitalist societies.

Work-based harms in the contemporary warehouse: Understanding harms of work as a result of the dynamics of class struggle

Ben Ledger-Jessop

(Sheffield Hallam University)

The warehouse as an industry has undergone immense growth over the past decade, growing 88% percent 2011 and 2021, compared to an average growth of 26% across all industries (ONS, 2022). The growth of this industry is expected to continue with support from cross-government plans under the Future of Freight plan (DfT, 2022). Logistic planning companies recommend placement in socio-economically deprived regions of the UK to lower building costs (Avanta UK, 2019) and this placement further reduces costs by providing access to large pools of workers in need of employment (Financial Times, 2019). Warehouse work is typified by extensive use of agency labour on zero-hour contracts meaning workers have less recourse to solving employment related issues due to the precarious nature of their contracts (Kik, et al., 2019). This is in combination with other policies designed to allow businesses to be more flexible and agile in their response to market demands. These are further combined with other ideological policies such as workfareism and a shrinking social security net (Peck

and Theodore, 2015) to guide workers into low paid, precarious work. The work inside the warehouse is deskilled through routinisation and increased use of digital technology (Delfanti, 2021). These processes also facilitate intensification of the work, that alongside the individualised digitisation of the labour (Moore, 2019), makes traditional forms of resistance harder to sustain. These factors compound to make this form of employment, once seen as secure and reliant blue-collar work, hard for workers to navigate without harm.

The Zemiological concept of work-based harm has attempted to provide frameworks to understand the extent of harm and offer insight on decreasing it, most notably by Scott (2018) and Lloyd (2019). However, these frameworks obscure the role of the state in facilitating the harms of the contemporary workplace and the potential for certain junctures within capitalism to ameliorate or increase the harms of work. Turning towards Poulantzas' foregrounding of class struggle (Poulantzas, 1973), this paper aims to show, through an application on warehouse work, the current harms of the work-place can be understood as a crystallisation of class struggle and only in doing so can we begin to ameliorate harms of work.

On the front line: Community and workplace solidarities during strike action - a response to the dismantling of collective bargaining

Kendra Briken, Ian Cunningham, Alan Miller

(University of Strathclyde)

The recent strike waves tend to be represented in the media with a focus on rather larger scale sectors, and workforces impacting on the deliverance of public services. With Jim and Alan, our on the frontline workers, we focus on the lesser explored actions taken by a smaller workforce, in the private sector, and the role for community and workplace solidarities.

In our conversation with Jim and Alan, they talked us through a period of infinite strike action they had been part of with their 60 colleagues in 2022, in response to what was framed as a disgraceful pay offer, way below inflation. Their narratives showed us, how their action was far more than a simple response to a 'disgraceful' pay offer but reflected a general response to the dismantling of collective bargaining, the undermining of long-standing skill sets, and qualifications. We heard how management action was crucial, but how their taking part into industrial action as resistance was fuelled by diverse sources of solidarity, stemming from the workplace, but also the community, and, to a degree, from the support of the trade union officials.

Following the two workers' voices, their example as predominantly white, male maintenance workers in a food fermenting process factory allowed us to gain insights into how the strike action is re-producing class subjectivities as a political response to a pay offer that represented the tipping point. Historically, Jim and Alan have been vital to the running of production, but they also benefitted from above average working conditions, manifesting in relatively high wages and a favourable shift pattern. In our discussion with them, it became clear that as white, male, long standing employees, they felt, on the one hand, privileged, and, on the other, unsure about any support or solidarity. In their narration of the strike action, we saw how the strong support from the community allowed Jim and Alan to perform and act on their original class subjectivity, and to strengthen younger, more vulnerable co-workers. We see the establishing of a solidarity subjectivity emerging, but also the disappointment when the same younger generation settled with a deal below Jim and Alan's expectations, or, what they perceived as a loss. The fragility of solidarity comes to the fore and impacts on the workplace relations.

Publishing in WES: Editor Insights
17:10-18:10
Hanging Lantern Room

Marek Korczynski and Lauren Cohen, Co-Editors in Chief of Work, Employment and Society

(University of Nottingham)

The WES Editors-in-Chief will give an overview of the journal and opportunities to publish within the journal. They will outline key elements in what distinguishes papers that are accepted for publication from papers that are rejected. There will be plenty of space for questions and observations from people attending.