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Volume 4 Number 1: Editorial

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Now four years in, and we are proud to say that *The Journal of Working-Class Studies* continues to expand in size and scope. This issue, the result of a general call for papers, sees the publication and the field explore truly original and inspiring content, drawing from different parts of the world and on a variety of perspectives. Working-class experience and the place of working-class people continues to be an extremely fertile area of academic and artistic exploration.

As with all our issues we are indebted here to the work of the submitting authors, but also the blind peer reviewers. These volunteers contribute their expertise and time for the advancement of our field. This is, necessarily, an anonymous process, so while we can't isolate out individuals here, we would like to formally acknowledge the generosity of time and spirit that they give to our community. There is no reward for reviewers other than knowledge that the quality of work published will be better as a result of their assistance – and we are extremely grateful that they have chosen to make time, no doubt at night or on weekends – to serve this publication and its readers so diligently. Having said this, if you reading this, are interested in becoming part of the potential 'reviewing pool' for *The Journal of Working-Class Studies*, we'd love to hear from you. Given the variety of submissions we receive, we are always after as diverse a group as is possible. Don't let imposter syndrome or any other nervousness around age, stage or field deter you – we are always happy to discuss possibilities. Early career scholars, in particular, tend to find reviewing a really informative process, allowing them to reflect on their own academic practice while examining another's 'work in progress'. Further enquiries about this can be sent to us anytime via the main journal email, editorial@workingclassstudiesjournal.com.

This issue features a variety of approaches to working-class studies, many of which are unique. Notably, Owen Clayton's 'Puns, Politics, and Pork Chops: The 'insignificant magnitude' of T-Bone Slim' is the first academic exploration of the long-lost activist T-Bone Slim (Matti Valentinepoika Huhta), an important voice for his generation in 1920s New York. Long since lost to history, Clayton's work vividly argues for Slim's words to be reconsidered and rightly placed into the canon of Working-Class literature. His argument is beautifully constructed and supported, including never-before published images and supporting materials endorsed by Slim's descendants, as well as a passionate account of the depth of Slim's experience and artistry. We are honoured to premiere this work here and hope that Clayton's work ignites a broader interest into Slim's time and influence.

Magnus Nilsson's work 'Class, Taste, and Literature: The Case of Ivar Lo-Johansson and Swedish Working-Class Literature' provides an important point of departure from the rest of our quite US-Centric issue this time around. Presenting, among other things, an analysis of the representation between taste and class in the 1935 novel *Kungsgatan* [King Street] by working-class writer Ivar Lo-Johansson, Nilsson raises some issues within the text, but also places them into national and historical context. Ultimately, he argues that 'attention to historical specificities can help clarify some puzzling aspects of the representation of class and taste in

Lo-Johansson's Kungsgatan', am important point when reflecting on the continued influence of such 'key works'.

Also beyond the US is Steven Farry's analysis of the work of Australian Indigenous writer, Bundjalung woman Ruby Langford Ginibi. Farry uses Bourdieu as a reference point to demonstrate a broader exploration of luxury, necessity and habitus in Langford Ginibi's work, a tool which places the accounts in the stories within a broader international discussion about class and worth. The resulting article, 'The porcupine was a feast': The Tastes of Luxury and Necessity in Ruby Langford Ginibi's Storytelling', provides a fascinating access point for those not aware of Langford Ginibi's work, as well as an interesting angle for those who are already fans.

Michael Pennell's 'More than a 'Curious Cultural Sideshow': Samuel Slater's Sunday School and the Role of Literacy Sponsorship in Disciplining Labor' explores a perhaps unlikely method of education for working-class children in early nineteenth century America. Using the case of Slater's Sunday School, an institution linked to the Slater Mill, Pennell explores how the children of mill workers 'learned the basics of reading while also learning the moral code of the factory system—a system that required not only a new 'method of order' but also a new system of discipline that reinforced the Protestant work ethic of rural Rhode Islanders'. Pennell convincingly argues that returning to the example 'provides an early 'canary in the mines' with which to sceptically reflect on current worker socialization movements, operating under the guise of training, education, and development.'

With 'Caring for the Internet: Content Moderators and the Maintenance of Empire', Lindsay Bartkowski reminds us that technology is also a class issue. This examination of emotional, digital and affective labor is an important part of the contemporary experience of working-class people but also the influence that their work has on the broader community. With content moderation as a focus, Bartkowski presents a riveting argument for keeping our considerations of work flows, influence and national boarders alive and under sufficient scrutiny.

Returning to a more contemporary education framework, Allison L. Hurst explores the way tertiary education in America is ranked. Her article 'College Rankings: Creating an Equitable Model of Transformation and Institutional Effectiveness' presents a data-driven approach to rankings and their outcomes for working-class students, making for an ornate and compelling analysis. Importantly, she argues for the consideration of a range of 'success' factors when it comes to appraising a college and its impact – not necessarily dismissing economic impact, but not solely relying on it as a 'one size fits all' measure. The outcomes for working-class students in this framework are particularly significant.

In, 'The Precarious plight of American Working-Class Faculty: Causes and Consequences' George Towers considers the way working-class faculty members are positioned in contemporary tertiary institutions, including responsibilities to represent experience but also built in to a broader academic culture that still isolates them out. With a US-centric base to argue from, this piece builds on earlier articles published in this journal as well as extensive literature from the early twentieth century to the present day, demonstrating the changing climate working-class faculty members find themselves in and the consequences of these changes. While there is a clear decline in conditions, opportunities and general 'fit' for working-class faculty demonstrated here, Towers' work serves to provoke further discussion about how this may be rectified rather than present a defeatist position. Importantly, the value of the working-class perspective in academia is emphasised again and again in this piece –

serving as encouragement for those of us who continue to struggle, in the US or anywhere, within these systems.

Last, but by no means least of the peer-reviewed articles is Colby King's 'Counting the Working Class for Working-Class Studies: Comparing Three Occupation-Based Definitions' which presents a timely reminder of the need to really interrogate the terms we use our discipline. This paper achieves the extremely difficult aim of providing a clear 'in' for new scholars to working-class studies, while also giving strong food for thought to more established readers and contributors. His systematic approach and careful consideration is to be particularly admired.

We are also delighted to include a short story by Justine Sless, 'Panacalty', set in the north of England in the 1970s and featuring local favourite stand up comic Bobby Thompson. Sless creates a fictionalised account of Bobby's comedy through the eyes of a young working-class woman who dreams of becoming a comic. The story is rich with local language and Sunderland slang.

Associate editor Sara Appel completes the main part of the issue with a fantastic collection of undergraduate student essays that focus on class and its intersections. The essays are thoughtfully written, well-researched and show great depth of talent within her 'Social Class in America' unit. Sara is justifiably proud of her students' work, as should all readers of this issue.

The issue also includes a bumper crop of reviews – eight reviews of books and one review of an exhibition. The reviewers carefully evaluate works on a variety of topics of interest to working-class studies, such as life in rural Kansas, women activists in Appalachia, the working conditions of gay, trans and black truck drivers in the US; workers stories from the now closed Guinness brewery in London, the history of labor strikes in the US; mainstream media's lack of representation of the working class, anti-racism activism; Italian-American history and the potential of film as a radical pedagogical tool. Once again, the reviews indicate that there is great work being done within the field of working-class studies!

Puns, Politics, and Pork Chops: The 'insignificant magnitude' of T-Bone Slim

Owen Clayton, University of Lincoln

Abstract

Hobos have been idealised for their supposed freedom from social restraints. A notable exception to this romantic tendency was the work of the Finnish-American anarchist newspaper columnist, songwriter and member of the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW), T-Bone Slim (Matt Valentine Huhta). T Bone Slim's writings were radical interventions in debates around class, labour and exploitation in 1920s and 1930s America. His work was deeply satirical, with a scathing wit reminiscent of Mark Twain. Focussing on his representation of food, fame, and the body, this article argues that Slim's work represents a challenge to the idealistic portrayal of the hobo that appears in many contemporary autobiographies and in later academic scholarship.

Keywords

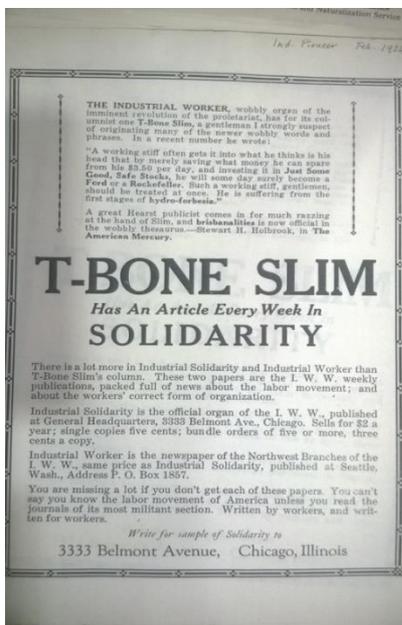'Who was T-Bone Slim and whence came his name?' ('Dr. John' 1999) [1]

Figure 1 – advert for the *Industrial Pioneer.* [2]

On the 15th of May 1942, a corpse was pulled from Pier 9 on New York City's East River. The body was that of 60-year-old Matti Valentinepoika Huhta, a second-generation Finnish-American who had been working for the New York Trap Rock Corporation as the captain of the river barge *Casey*. A committed member of the anarcho-syndicalist union the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW), or 'Wobblies', Huhta was better known under his pen-name T-Bone Slim. From the early 1920s until his death, Slim wrote hundreds of articles for radical newspapers, most commonly *Industrial Worker*, a weekly paper with a circulation of approximately 12, 000 (Anderson 1923 p.191).[3] He penned

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[1] This question, which no-one was able to answer, was posted on the 'Traditional Music and Folklore' message board *Mudcat*. The author does not appear to be the well-known singer of the same name.

[2] *Industrial Pioneer*, February 1926. This image is from the Newberry Library's Franklin Rosemont - T-Bone Slim Research Collection, Box 2, folder 28.

[3] Slim also wrote original articles for *Industrial Solidarity* and *One Big Union Monthly*, and his articles were occasionally reprinted in the monthly *Industrial Pioneer* and in the Finnish-language IWW paper *Industrialisti*.

several songs and wrote two longer pamphlets, *The Power of These Two Hands* (1922) and *Starving Amidst Too Much* (1923). He was the most famous Wobbly writer in this period: the IWW printed adverts which proudly asserted that 'T-Bone Slim Has An Article Every Week in *Solidarity*'. So prominent was he that the IWW felt a need to assure readers that 'There is a lot more in *Industrial Solidarity* and *Industrial Worker* than T-Bone Slim's columns' [Figure 1]. According to former IWW member Carl Cowl, 'people used to buy the *Industrial Worker* [just] to read' Slim's columns, which were particularly popular among hobos: 'You used to hear in the jungles the latest remarks that T-Bone Slim said' (Cowl 1992 p.21).[4] His songs were sung in hobo jungles, having being picked up from copies of the *Industrial Worker* or the IWW's Little Red Songbook.[5] Labour activist Stan Weir claimed that hobos would write Slim's phrases onto boxcars, giving his words a physical circulation as those boxcars made their way around the United States (Weir 1992 p.21). Little wonder, then, that fellow Wobbly Harvey O' Connor referred to Slim as 'the laureate of the logging camps' (O' Connor 2009 p.67).

In 1932, an anonymous poet wrote a dedication that expressed a belief that Slim would be remembered 'When boxcars are forgotten/As things men live without' (Anon 14 June 1932). Despite such hopes, Slim's death went largely unnoticed and his reputation vanished without a trace. It took the *Industrial Worker* a full five months to print an obituary (Anon 24 October 1942).[6] In the following three quarters of a century, Slim's name has been forgotten outside of his three most famous songs, 'The Popular Wobbly', 'Mysteries of a Hobo's Life', and 'The Lumber Jack's Prayer', though of these only 'The Popular Wobbly' has maintained a presence in popular culture, having been recorded by, among others, Pete Seeger (1963), and Candie Carawan, who in 1960 updated the song with Civil Rights-era lyrics. No photograph of Slim has ever been made public, and for 75 years no image of him was thought to exist. Indeed, the current article is the first time that his photographs have been published (see below). This cultural and academic neglect would not have surprised Slim, who wrote frequently about the ideological nature of fame. As this article will show, a lack of traditional literary success was inherent to his political project.

There is no academic scholarship on Slim. As Franklin Rosemont put it, 'T-Bone Slim won for himself a total exclusion from academic histories and textbooks of American literature, a distinction legions of lesser writers, before or since, have found it nearly impossible to obtain' (Rosemont 1992 p.7). This is in part the political exclusion of a radical who aimed at nothing less than the overthrow of the capitalist system and its replacement with the democratic management of the workplace. Such radicalism has often been seen as anathema to art. Critics have agreed with the hobo sociologist Nels Anderson's comment that 'Among all these

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[4] Wobbly Frank Lovell recalls that sailors exchanged Slim's sayings amongst each other. Frank Lovell to Franklin Rosemont, 7 March 1991, Newberry Library, Franklin Rosemont - T-Bone Slim Research Collection, Box 2 Folder 31.

[5] Slim's songs were so well known among workers that in 1933 he resisted, like many songwriters after him, performing his greatest hit on stage: 'Hoping to capitalize on lingering IWW sentiment among seaman, [Al] Lannon set up an open-air meeting at Thames and Broadway featuring T-Bone Slim. Lannon gave the singer a big introduction, expecting the singer to open with his well-known 'Popular Wobbly.' T-Bone Slim began yelling at the crowd about 'those fuckin' bastards down in Alabama' who had framed the Scottsboro Boys. An embarrassed Lannon hustled the living legend away from the microphone.' (Lannon 1999 pp.45-46). Slim's anger at the racial injustice of the Scottsboro case is notable at a time when many white hobo writers subscribed to ideas of racial supremacy.

[6] The most likely reason for the delay is that his comrades were accustomed to Slim disappearing, as many transient workers would, for months on end, only to reappear some time later. This article revealed Slim's real name in public for the first time. Slim's obituary also appeared in the Hungarian-American IWW paper *Bèrmunkas* on 31 October 1942: see Newberry Library, Franklin Rosemont - T-Bone Slim Research Collection, Box 1, folder 27.

contributors to the radical publications, there are few who might produce literature…They prefer to ride a hobby and repeat familiar formulas' (Anderson 1923 p.193). Scholars often exclude explicitly politicised writing from the canon by categorising it as propaganda. However, this does not fully explain Slim's academic neglect, since other political writers, such as John Steinbeck, have made it into the canon of American Literature, while the IWW's Joe Hill is remembered as a canonical political songwriter. Here I propose three further reasons for his neglect. First, Slim's reputation suffered because of his association with the IWW during a period of decline between the 1920s and 1940s. This phase of Wobbly history, one of government repression, internal splits over the Russian Revolution, and falling membership, is less romantic than the pre-WWI heyday, which contained notable victories such as the 1912 Lawrence Textile Strike (known as the 'Bread and Roses' strike) and the 1913 Patterson Silk Strike. Second, Slim died an obscure and probably accidental death, unlike Joe Hill's famous martyrdom, which became a cause célèbre for the IWW and the Left more generally. Third, Slim's prose writings have not been reprinted in full since they were first published as newspaper columns, and his largest archive of notes covering the period 1934-1942 was in private hands until very recently.

During his years of obscurity, Slim's torch was kept alive through the efforts of the surrealist poet Franklin Rosemont, who produced a selected edition entitled *Juice is Stranger Than Friction* (1992), and whose introduction to that book represents the only published biography of Slim. In 1962, along with his wife and fellow poet Penelope Rosemont, Franklin came into possession of Slim's notebooks.[7] He reproduced some of these writings in *Juice*, although significant portions remain unpublished. In 2016, Penelope alerted me to the fact that the archive, which includes the notebooks, newspaper articles and photographs, was up for sale, and I in turn alerted the Newberry Library, which made the purchase and then digitised Slim's notebooks. Following this I was contacted by the musician John Westmoreland, Slim's Great Grandnephew, whose family possesses a second archive of manuscript notes, letters and photographs.[8] Since more of Slim's writings are now coming to light, there is an opportunity for a rediscovery and re-evaluation of the 'laureate of the logging camps'.[9] The current article is the first attempt by any scholar to do so. It is my hope that this piece will spark interest in one of America's most talented and overlooked writers, and that Slim can finally take his place in American literary history.

The details of Slim's life are sketchy. A quiet and apparently shy man, he kept a low profile and only occasionally revealed his identity as T-Bone Slim to friends and fellow workers, many of whom knew him as Matt Huhta.[10] His columns reveal someone who had been a transient worker and who was familiar with manual jobs including lumberjack, gandydancer[11], and barge captain, as well as riding freight trains and performing harvest labour in the American West and Mid-West. Before Slim adopted this hobo life he had lived for 10 years with his wife, Rosa,

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[7] Slim left these notebooks with Walter Westmann at the IWW headquarters in Chicago. It is likely that this was during the 1920s, a period in which Slim lived in Chicago for some time. My thanks to Penelope Rosemont for explaining the notebooks' provenance.

[8] John and Cherie Westmoreland are also conducting research into Slim's life, family connections, and songs. I am deeply grateful to them for their insight and generosity (and pie). John will soon produce an album featuring many of Slim's unrecorded songs. For more, see: https://www.johnwestmorelandmusic.com/t-bone-slim.

[9] The Manuscript Notes cited in this article are from the Newberry collection, but the Westmoreland archive has provided invaluable and previously unknown information, including Slim's age at the time of his death, which is stated in print for the first time at the opening of this article.

[10] He was friends with the prominent black Wobbly Ben Fletcher. According to Anatole Dolgoff, the pair 'loved 'to chew the fat' at the Old Hall on Coenties Slip' in New York's docklands (Dolgoff 2016 p.237).

[11] A slang term for a railroad worker.

whom he married in 1902 and with whom he had four children. He left his family in 1912 for a life on the road, and was divorced in 1915. While Rosemont claims that Slim did not see his family again (*Juice* p.7-33), material in the Westmoreland archive shows that he continued to write to his family, sent and asked for money, and occasionally visited them in Erie, Pennsylvania.

Unjustly neglected, Slim's work challenged the mainstream stereotype of hobos and tramps as brutish through wit and a verbal dexterity that assumed intelligence in his transient audience. As this article will demonstrate, he used puns, neologisms and dynamic wordplay as an alternative to bourgeois language that he saw as providing cover for class exploitation by encouraging reader and worker passivity. Slim's style asked readers to be active participants; his prose embodied a literary anarchism that encouraged the individual to play an active role in the process of making meaning. In addition, he cultivated a persona that played with established notions of fame, power and success, in order to undermine the individualistic concept of greatness. Finally, Slim's persona was unlike that of other literary celebrities in that he repeatedly brought his body — and the bodies of his readers — into his work, particularly through his representation of hunger. He portrayed the class struggle as a conflict over care for the body, especially in terms of who gets to eat the best food.

I will first analyse Slim's use of language, which he represents as creating something original from the stale morass of bourgeois vocabulary. A political revolution, he implies, needs new words and phrases. Unlike the literary modernists, however, who tended to be middle-class and politically reactionary, Slim's language would be accessible to, and indeed built from, the experiences of the working class. Slim termed his innovative literary style 'coagulated verbosity' (Slim 14 March 1923).[12]

Culture and Language: T-Bone Slim's 'coagulated verbosity'

Slim represented language as a crucial element of class struggle. In contrast to a bourgeois language that sought to numb, divide and exclude workers, he fashioned a working-class form of writing that was accessible, verbally innovative, and which asked readers to participate in the project of making meaning. For example, in passages reminiscent of Ambrose Bierce's *The Cynic's Word Book* (1906), Slim provides alternative dictionary definitions of words that seem harmless but actually hold significant ideological weight:

> *Profit*: The price ignorance pays greed for the privilege of starving in a world of plenty.
> *Tear gas*: The most effective agent used by employers to persuade their employees that the interests of Capital and Labor are identical.
> *Charity*: Throwing a life-preserver into a drowned man's coffin. (Slim 1992 pp.154-155)

These definitions ask readers to look again at everyday terms in order to see their true appearance as linguistic weapons in a war against the workers. Slim's defamiliarisation of profit and charity frames them, in negative terms, as part of an exploitative system that provides the working class with starvation wages and then hands them a small and ineffective salve in the form of handouts. His reference to 'ignorance' suggests that it is the false consciousness of the workers in not opposing the profit system that enables their exploitation. His pithy

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[12] Aside from those reprinted from *Juice is Stranger Than Friction* (1992), all *Industrial Worker* references are taken from the Newberry Library's T-Bone Slim Research Collection.

description seeks to introduce these workers to the concept of surplus labour. In a different way, his definition of tear gas is aimed not at tear gas itself, but at the widely-accepted notion that 'the interests of Capital and Labor are identical'. He implies that workers who refuse to accept this idea are met with violence, euphemistically termed as persuasion, and forced to submit. As the rest of this section will show, Slim used puns, neologisms, colloquialisms, and irony to encourage his audience to become active participants in the process of reading and, from there, in revolution.

Commenting on his inability to read an Argentinian newspaper, Slim remarks 'strange, isn't it, how words are meaningless unless given interpretation by the reader?' (Slim 22 December 1923). This apparently innocuous rhetorical question encapsulates his literary approach: Slim seeks to make his audience into active readers through innovative wordplay and the defamiliarisation of everyday language. His most common technique to achieve this goal is by combining old words into new. Occasionally these neologisms were made for the simple pleasure of play, but more typically they had an explicit political message. For instance, he refers to the wealth created by workers as their 'perspirety', emphasising the sweat that labourers translate into capital and the fact that workers do not, in fact, become prosperous through their manual work (Slim 1992 p.68). Money, he states, was invented by the 'phoneyseions', combining 'phoney' and 'phoenicians' to indicate the fetishistic quality of money (Slim MS Notes, n.d). In one of several attacks that he makes on mainstream newspapers, Slim terms their main banner 'head*lies*' (Slim 1992 p.96; italics in original), while his most famous neologism, 'brisbanality', was a term used to describe the writings of the conservative Hearst newspaper columnist Arthur Brisbane (Slim 11 January 1928).[13] Though many of his neologisms are funny, occasionally Slim combines words to invite pathos, as when he refers to the despair created by homelessness as 'vagadespondia', which is a playful rebuke to the bohemianism of the term 'vagabondia' as used by the writers Francis Hodgson Burnett, Bliss Carmen and Richard Hovey (Slim MS Notes n.d). Whether aimed at generating a smile or a sigh, Slim's neologisms asked readers to combine the ideas inherent in two otherwise separate words. This technique required the active participation of his audience in order to create meaning.

In addition to the single-word neologisms that are scattered through his writings, Slim makes extended plays on words that push their meanings to the limits of logic. For example, in critiquing a mainstream newspaper's claim that 'abundance means prosperity', Slim writes:
Bring out your best type, Stumpy…We'll close debate. Never has there been a shortage of abundance in these United States. Rather, it has been a case of too much abundance—and 'too much' is not 'enough'. Too much is too much (just what it says) and enough is less than too much. Too much is more than enough and enough is never too much. Sufficiency isn't too much, but it is enough, so you can see yourself, enough is enough and too much is too much. Abundance is too much and not enough: hence it is a very ambiguous quantity to monkey with. Better stick to sufficiency—be it ever so elegant. (Slim 13 October 1923).

This passage mostly consists of straightforward statements, such as 'enough is less than too much', that define words and phrases. However, as these statements accumulate the effect is to question their overall meaning, even while their standard denotations remain. The self-evidence of 'Never has there been a shortage of abundance' and the redundancy of 'it has been a case of too much abundance' combine to put the word 'abundance' through a dialectical

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[13] This was published under the name 'No 198308' which was, according to Rosemont, Slim's IWW card number. I have not been able to verify that this was Slim's number.

process that implicitly parallels Karl Marx's critique of capitalist accumulation. At the end of this process the word itself has become something new: 'Abundance is too much and not enough'. The paradox of capitalist abundance is that it simultaneously provides 'too much' for the bourgeois class and 'not enough' for the working class, meaning that it 'is a very ambiguous quantity to monkey with'. Slim translates dialectical materialism into comically absurdist language that aims to be accessible while not losing complexity. The slang phrase 'to monkey with' reminds readers of Slim's working-class background and indicates that they, too, can realise the absurdity of starving amidst too much, to adopt the title of his pamphlet on the food industry. This combination of working-class dialect and absurdist wordplay is characteristic of Slim's writing.

The directness of Slim's language was a vital part of his political philosophy. Since his anarchism depended upon a vision of labourers organising society without the direction of political leaders, he had to use words that were comprehensible to the working class. This was, he felt, in contrast to socialists and communists, whose vocabulary was aimed at an educated vanguard who would lead the workers. One article picks up on a phrase used by this leftwing intelligentsia: ''Coordination of collective action,' is the big word Harvard boys hung onto the neck of the One Big Union. You've got to be almost a contortionist to say it. However, it means the same as 'Scat, capitalism'' (Slim 5 April 1941). For Slim, 'Scat, capitalism' is the superior phrase, since it requires no linguistic contortions or, presumably, an Ivy-League education to be understood. He privileges brevity and, like Oscar Wilde, utilises the aphoristic mode as the most succinct means to convey complex ideas. These include 'I don't believe there is necessity for a news censor. Editors have been very careful not to let any news get into the papers', and 'Only the poor break laws—the rich evade them' (Slim 199, pp.153-156). Having given one of his many pithy aphorisms, he remarks 'Many have strove (striven) to say that and failed — else it took a column, or half a day, or a ton of words' (Slim 21 May 1927). As well as brevity, Slim's style is characterised by colloquialisms, such as 'infernal bow-wows', 'wishing ain't ketching any fishes' and 'mebbe' (Slim 1992 p.35, p.46 & p.119). Speaking directly and in working class dialect makes Slim's work accessible, and it allows him to experiment with a variety of styles in a manner that is more typically associated with literary modernism than the radical or labour press.

In contrast to the realist style common among IWW and proletarian writers, Slim's experimentation moved beyond the bounds of realism into what Rosemont described as proto-surrealism (Rosemont 1992 pp.29-31). For example, one article consists of a dialogue between Slim and a stone in a prison wall, who tells him 'I'm in this wall until everybody gets the full product of their toil' (Slim 30 April 1924). In another column he attempts to 'yawn in print', reproducing it as 'etaoinshrdlu ?x!!oo**!?' (Slim 1992 p.106). He plays with language in fantastical ways, and shows his awareness of, and difference from, the literary modernists. In 'Don't Bomp Your Bomp', he discusses the importance of workers increasing their wages faster than the rate of inflation:

> If the cost of living *yomps* every time your wages *yomp*, keep on yomping. Don't *yomp* your *yob*. Yomp your wages—and remember, the last yomp is best. He who yomps last yomps the farthest. But when you yomp, be careful not to bomp your bomp. If you bomp your bomp, it will raise a lomp on your bomp, and the bomp will thomp like a full-grown momp. You will gradually then slomp into the bomp, and the 'gomp' will notice your homp, curved like a cast-iron handle of a pomp. And you're a chomp—a dry-rot stomp in the clomp of everygreen—omp!
> …(Pretty jazzy, Ed—a fist full of rhymes for the rising generation of poets.)

(Slim 13 Oct 1923)

In a manner approaching the infamous literary style of Gertrude Stein, Slim's accumulated rhymes parody the literary modernists, perhaps specifically jazz poets, whom he refers to as 'the rising generation of poets'. Yet the article also indicates Slim's similarity to this rising generation, particularly his ability to use words in ways that go beyond the utilitarianism of capitalistic managerial discourse. There is no biographical evidence that Slim read Stein or other modernists, but his awareness of modernism nevertheless seems clear. In making this brief reference to his relationship to more mainstream experimental poets, he indicates the persona that he adopted throughout his career as a writer for the radical papers. As the following section will discuss, this persona was of a writer who was, paradoxically, famous and unknown, powerful and powerless, successful and yet, in traditional terms, a failure. He positions his fame as being tied to revolution, and in doing so indicates that his greatness in the literary realm depends upon what his readership can achieve in the realm of politics.

[Sl]images

Figure 2 – Slim's trademark image, which appeared at the head of most of his columns.[14]

Figure 3 – a one-off cartoon that utilised Slim's trademark image.[15]

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[14] *Industrial Worker*, 6 February 1924.

[15] *Industrial Worker*, 28 April 1922. Note the use of a T-bone that is about to be used to hang the capitalist. My thanks to Renée Ward for pointing out this important detail.

Figure 4 – a photograph of Slim in his early twenties.

Figure 5 – a photograph of Slim with Rosa Huhta, circa 1906.[16]

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[16] These photographs, which are from the Newberry Library's Rosemont Collection, were taken before Slim became a hobo. I estimate that Figure 4 was taken around 1904 and that Figure 5 dates from around 1906. They were most likely taken in a photographic studio in Erie, Pennsylvania, which is where the Huhta family were living during this period. Future research could attempt to identify this studio. My thanks to the Newberry Library for reproducing these images.

'T-Bone The Great': Slim's Representation of Fame, Power and Success

Matt Huhta's persona, encapsulated under the hobo moniker 'T-Bone Slim', was the Wobbly newspapers' most successful brand. Like all brands, it had a trademark (but not trademarked) image. Slim's articles were typically accompanied by a cartoon drawing of a man with hair sticking up at the front of his head like devil horns and eating a T-bone steak [Figures 2 and 3]. The image bears some resemblance to extant photographs of Slim, which are published here for the first time [Figures 4-5], although this resemblance is somewhat obscured by Slim's youth.[17] More importantly, the cartoon encapsulated the twin qualities of rebelliousness and hunger that were key to the Slim persona. As already noted, Slim was well known among radicals and hobos. Yet he was aware that this fame existed only within the circle of those who read Wobbly newspapers. He was well-known and obscure, a paradoxical situation that he folded into his persona through frequent comments on the nature of fame. As I will now show, he built an alternative concept of literary success that depended not only on his power as a writer but also on the ability of the working class to build a new society. Slim wedded his personal literary success to hope for a forthcoming revolution. In the absence of such a revolution, fame would not be worth having.

Slim asserted his fame in terms that were reminiscent of Walt Whitman, but unlike Whitman, Slim's bombast was ironic. He uses a variety of self-aggrandising phrases, including 'T-Bone The Great' (Slim 29 July 1926), 'the lustrous T-Bone Slim' (Slim 22 Sept 1926), and 'I, T-bone Slim, (elegant humorist and clean as hounds' tooth)' (Slim MS Notes n.d). This ironic self-aggrandising is further undercut by the context of the articles in which it appears. For example, he refers to himself as 'I, even I, the inimitable immaculate T-Bone Slim', in an column in which he is forced to get a job as a dishwasher — or rather, as he puts it, to 'emancipate' his future boss 'from the drudgery of the sink' (Slim 1992 p.43). The trivial everydayness of this situation contradicts the deliberate pomposity of Slim's phrasing. Similarly, he notes that there is a movement to buy Monticello, Thomas Jefferson's home, in order to preserve it for the nation, and he asks 'Wouldn't it be a graceful deed if the I. W. W would purchase one of Fegg Bros' boarding cars (the home of T-Bone Slim)…as a perpetual memorial…By the way, again—I request this be done after I am hung' (Slim 20 May 1922). The image of the IWW buying a boxcar for posterity is humorous in its incongruity. It highlights the difference between a historic and mainstream American hero, Jefferson, who lived in a mansion, and Slim, a prominent Wobbly, who has no permanent home. The reference to Slim being hanged indicates that he is aware of the fate of Wobbly heros, which is in contrast to that of Jefferson, who was able to die peacefully in his sleep surrounded by family (and his slaves, some of whom were also family). The difference between the two men's fates comes down to Slim's radical, proletarian politics.

Slim makes this latter point explicit in an article in which he contemplates his lack of mainstream success. He asks 'a man' if he 'knows T-Bone Slim', to which the man replies ''No thanks, I'm just after biting on one''. After some prompting, the man 'brightens up' and says that he does know Slim, who he describes as a ''tramp lineman'', to which the author adds the sardonic comment, 'such is fame'. Slim then imagines what would happen if he were to change his political positions:

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[17] The resemblance is clearer in three later photographs of Slim that are held in the Westmoreland archive.

Now, if I were to say, 'No man has the right to advocate slowing down on the job,' the *Literary Template*, the *Independent Prevaricator* and the *Miscellaneous Mandrell* would carry extra special supplements in rainbow colors, announcing to the palpitating world that 'our T-Bone Slim, 140 per cent American, once a poor boy, has now conquered the literary world (single-handed) and stands today at the peak of his profession in the full glare of the envious eyes of such great writers as H. G. Wells and H. Bell Wright.' T-Bone Slim, the giant of letters, in answer to the question, 'Well, what do you say?' replied, 'Save your syllables and the sentences will do the rest.'

> Yes, if I said no man should advocate slowing down, they would name their cigars and their streets after me. (Slim 1992 pp.62-3).

The passage parodies mainstream literary magazines, here given comic names, who raise authors up to the level of geniuses only if they advocate certain political positions. Slim writes in the style of one of these magazines by positioning his alternative, more mainstream self in the mould of a rags-to-riches success story, one that would fit comfortably into hegemonic understandings of the American Dream. The inanity of such magazines is clear from the generality of the reporter's question, 'Well, what do you say?', which is matched by Slim's inane reply 'Save your syllables and the sentences will do the rest', a nonsensical, Ben Franklinesque response that is given an air of profundity by its position in a literary magazine. Slim concludes the piece by refusing to advocate Taylorite work methods, concluding 'Woe is me—no rainbow supplements' (Slim 1992 p.63). Not prepared to betray his politics, he understands that mainstream literary success will always elude him. Moreover, he mistrusts fame under capitalism since, as in the example just cited, it leads to the idealisation of individuals as leaders and a consequent pacifying of the masses, who believe that their leaders are a different, more heroic type of person than they are themselves.

Slim parodied the process of idealisation by imagining himself as a great leader, satirising, for example, the Great Man theory of history by claiming to have led the 49-ers into California (Slim 12 January 1932). He grants himself enormous powers, as when he imagines arriving by plane to save a harvest crop from going rotten single-handed (Slim 13 September 1930). He repeatedly states that he is on the verge of running for the Presidency, a manifestly absurd statement given the IWW's stance against voting. He claims to stand on a political platform of 'softer seats and rubber heals' and that he will not accept the Vice-Presidency: 'it's President or nothing with me, and if it's nothing, I won't accept it' (Slim 1992 p.96 & p.158). He also states that he had intended to run for Mayor of Chicago 'but was held up on the eve of nomination by slow freights', emphasising the unlikelihood of a hobo assuming political power (Slim 1992 p.153). By making these preposterous claims, Slim parodies the system of representative democracy, and indeed the very notion of representative power itself. As an anarchist, he sees the idealisation of political leaders as leading to the anesthetisation of the working class. Playing on his pen name, he tells his readers that 'No great big heroic T-bone Slim or Dill-Pickle Fat is going to prance into an industry and tell the children in the drill-press department, 'Hear ye, hear ye, I now organise you into the 'Yearnful Earners of the Universe.'' (Slim 23 May 1931). The mock-heroic language highlights the pomposity of political leaders or union bosses ('Yearnful Earners of the Universe' is a parody of the medievalism of craft union names) who assume that they can easily do for the workers what the workers have been

unable to do themselves.[18] Such leaders are dangerous, since they mislead their followers and have the potential to become demagogues.

The struggle for working-class emancipation would not be won by leaders or luminaries like Slim: it would be won or lost by his proletarian audience. For this reason, he connects his own greatness directly to that of his readers, stating 'No one recognizes better than T-bone Slim the insignificant magnitude of the 'world's greatest writer'...A man is only great as a writer, if his readers are great. Never was, is or will be a writer greater than reader' (Slim 18 August 1923). Slim's greatness is an 'insignificant magnitude' if considered on its own. Rather than a quality of individual genius, greatness is a relationship between writer and reader. Slim insists on several occasions that his audience, and working-class people in general, are more intelligent than is commonly assumed: 'I will state right here that *I am not in the habit of associating with ignoramuses*'. (Slim 1992, p.52; italics in original). The intelligence of workers makes them worthy companions for the 'world's greatest writer'. Slim's communal model of authorship empowers his audience in a way that foreshadows Roland Barthes' concept of the writerly text. It also imposes a responsibility on readers to be great, which for Slim is a distinctly political quality. Article after article exhorts his audience to join the IWW, to take part in political action, and ultimately to overthrow capitalism and build a fairer society. If this were to occur, Slim would find himself as the leading literary figure in a worldwide revolutionary movement. If it does not happen, then his name and his literary greatness will remain hidden. Slim would most likely put his contemporary obscurity down to the continuation of capitalism.

Since he wishes to avoid being raised on a pedestal, Slim is keen to emphasise that his class experience is identical to that of his audience. The main way that he does this is by representing himself as permanently hungry. As the final section will show, for Slim the class struggle was a struggle of biological need, especially in terms of who got to eat decent food.

'Empty Stomach is THE revolution': Hunger as Class Struggle

For Slim, revolution was a conflict over care for the body, a healthy body being something that workers were unable to maintain due to their poverty. He emphasises that, like the majority of his readership, he is poor: 'God knows, too much money never ruined the author of this screed' (Slim 1992 p.40). His shoes are 'dropping off' due to wear and his lack of funds to buy replacements (Slim 1992 p.95). He refers, with typical gallows humour, to sleeping rough: 'Woke up stiff all over—lumpy bed. I had inadvertently spread two sheets of newspaper in one spot' (Slim 18 August 1923).[19] But Slim does not always emphasise the comedy of his personal suffering. In *Starving*, he portrays bodily ailments in a way that aligns him, like the workers in Upton Sinclair's *The Jungle* (1906), with the hogs in Chicago's famous meatpacking district. After a discussion of packingtown, in which he describes the slaughter of the pigs in minute and bloody detail, he notes 'The other night when I got off the Harlem/Grand car, a 'moving corral,' my high-top Peters waterproof-shoe was full of blood, and it didn't come from a hog either—although I'm a hog for punishment' (*Starving* p.53). The comparison of hog and worker is, of course, not original, but the image of Slim's shoes being full of blood as he steps off Chicago's L train is unusual in making his vulnerable physical form a key facet of his

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[18] He writes elsewhere: 'The working class has now been saved so many times in the last 4000 years that I lost count' (Slim, 23 May 1936).

[19] According to an acquaintance, Anna Shuskie, when Slim was working as a river barge captain 'Mostly he lived right on the barge', and 'whenever he was in the city and not working on the barge he flopped somewhere in Skid Row' (Anna Shuskie, 19 December 1987). See Newberry Library, Franklin Rosemont - T-Bone Slim Research Collection, Box 2 Folder 31.

writing. Unlike Walt Whitman's persona, in which the body is a healthy and positive thing, for the more naturalistic Slim the body is under attack by the very labour that he must perform in order to live.

The search for food is the most common theme in Slim's work; it is a deeply political search, tied to the unequal distribution of wealth. For Slim, the 'Empty Stomach is THE revolution—the only kind workers have EVER known' (Slim 2 January 1924). Noting that 'Labor has a bad habit of getting hungry' (*Juice* p.38), he says that only political change will ensure that the working class can continue what he calls the 'noble custom of eating' (Slim 1992 p.135). He makes frequent reference, in articles and unpublished notes, to 'ham and eggs'. Along with the T-bones that give him his name, this is the most commonly-cited food in his work.[20] Ham and eggs becomes shorthand for a simple meal that workers desire and deserve, but which they do not get. So prominent does this particular meal become that when Slim wrote a 1924 column as the parodic opening of a romance novel, he called the lead character, a well-to-do gentleman, Mr Hammond Deggs (Slim 1992 p.70). This Dickensian naming strategy literally embodies food into the person of Mr Hammond Deggs, whose name expresses the fact that as a member of the bourgeoisie he can access good food easily. This simplification of the class system down to a struggle between those who are able to eat regularly and those who are not is a continuation of IWW iconography, a tradition in which radical cartoonists typically illustrated capitalists as obese men, or occasionally pigs, in bowler hats.[21] In those cartoons, however, the emphasis is on the obesity of the plutocrats rather than the emaciation of the workers. In contrast, and with the exception of Mr Hammond Deggs, Slim's focus is on the lack of food, and the consequent importance that it takes in the everyday life of the poor: 'meal time', as he puts it, 'is an epoch in the history of today' (Slim 13 May 1922).

The problem of food is not merely a matter of quantity but also of quality. Slim critiques the system of industrial adulteration, arguing that synthetic food does not have the nutrition required for a healthy life. His pamphlet *Starving Amidst Too Much* is an analysis of the food system; in it, he asks 'Is it a part of wisdom to preserve our food with poison? Is it a part of intelligence to squeeze the juice out of meats, and feed the pulp to workers?' (Slim 1923 p.33) He concludes that 'Under the Capitalist System of food distribution it is impossible to get pure, fresh foods for the home even, to say nothing about the hotels and restaurants' (Slim 1923 p.37). One of his most extended critiques of adulteration is his song 'The Lumber Jack's Prayer':

> I pray dear Lord for Jesus' sake,
> Give us this day a T-Bone steak,
> Hallowed be thy holy name,
> But don't forget to send the same.
>
> Oh hear my humble cry, Oh Lord,
> And send us down some decent board,
> Brown gravy and some German fried,
> With sliced tomatoes on the side.

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[20] The 'ham and eggs' trope did not originate with Slim. It had already appeared in Joe Hill's songs 'There is Power in a Union' (1913) and 'Ta-ra-ra-boom-de-ay!' (1914), as well as in other writings by hobo and working-class authors.

[21] See Franklin Rosemont, 'A Short Treatise on Wobbly Cartoons' in *Rebel Voices: An IWW Anthology* (Chicago: Charles H. Kerr 2011 first published 1988), pp.425-443.

Observe me on my bended legs,
I'm asking you for Ham and Eggs,
And if thou havest custard pies,
I like, dear Lord, the largest size.

Oh, hear my cry, All Mighty Host,
I quite forgot the Quail on Toast,
—Let your kindly heart be stirred,
And stuff some oysters in that bird.

Dear Lord, we know your holy wish,
On Friday we must have a fish,
Our flesh is weak and spirit stale,
You better make that fish a whale.

Oh, hear me Lord, remove these 'Dogs,'
sausages of powder'd logs,
Your bull beef hash and bearded Snouts,
Take them to Hell or thereabouts.

With Alum bread and Pressed-Beef butts,
Dear Lord, you damn near ruin'd my guts,
Your white-wash milk and Oleorine,
I wish to Christ I'd never seen.

Oh, hear me Lord, I'm praying still,
But if you won't, our union will,
Put pork chops on the bill of fare,
And starve no workers anywhere.

(Slim 2011, p.268).

This song, which was sold on coloured cards by the IWW, follows the tradition of Joe Hill's 'The Preacher and the Slave' in parodying religion as promising 'Pie in the Sky' while failing to deliver in this life. It contains Slim's most commonly desired foodstuffs, including T-bone steaks and 'Ham and Eggs', as well as more exotic meals such as stuffed quail on toast. Unlike Hill's song, 'The Lumber Jack's Prayer' also critiques adulterated food like hot dogs and alum bread, which are packed full of preservatives, and which the singer claims have 'damn near ruin'd my guts'.'Oleorine' is a reference to margarine, which contains oil and was originally called oleomargarine. Oil had symbolic significance for Slim, who elsewhere refers to the United States as an '*oleogarchy*', a pun that brings together the qualities of oil, synthetic food and money (Slim 1992 p.131).

As 'The Lumber Jack's Prayer' shows, Slim included himself in his depiction of the hungry worker. Indeed, hunger was a key facet of his persona. He claims that he got the name 'T-Bone Slim' from beating his old 'strawboss' (foreman) to a pile of T-bone steaks on a particular job (Slim M.S Notes n.d). This apocryphal story reveals that food was a key driver of and an

important metaphor for his political struggles.[22] The cartoon image of Slim eating a T-Bone, which headlined most of his columns, signified the outcome of a successful revolt. In his articles Slim is permanently hungry, at times breaking off from the topic at hand to indulge his feelings about 'jelly rolls—u, umh!—Cookies—haa-ah!—and bread (not so good)—yum yum' (Slim 5 April 1930). This insatiable hunger is a comic aspect of his persona, but the reason for his hunger is not funny: he wrote in his notebook that his 'breakfast' one morning composed of 'several groanings in bed' (Slim M.S Notes n.d). For him hunger was a defining class experience, dividing working-class consciousness from that of the bourgeoisie. This is why he wrote that to appreciate his humour, his audience should 'skip a couple of meals before reading' (Slim 1992 p.37).

For Slim, food was linked to imagination and creativity. He argues that the fact that 'the better class' cannot think of a superior solution to poverty and hunger than souplines demonstrates their 'bankruptcy for ideas…their total eclipse of brains…Eat soup and you will think in terms of soup' (Slim 19 January 1924). One problem, however, of ideas being generated by food is that the working class does not eat well enough. Slim encounters this problem himself when he claims that 'The reader will notice how stale and flat my writing is. Cause? Sour stomach' (Slim 16 July 1921). Food can also be a problem in the political realm: it is, he says, 'Next to impossible to pronounce the word 'revolutionary' when your face is full of pie' (Slim 11 June 1921). Taken as a figurative (as well as a comic) statement, this suggests that workers who are fed will no longer identify themselves with revolution. Too little food might mean an inability to act, while sufficient food may take away the desire: as Slim put it in *Starving*, 'if we can get food all else pails into insignificance' (Slim 1923 p.36). This sums up the theoretical problem of Slim's insistence on parsing the class experience through hunger, which is ultimately a non-political or, we might say, a non-dialectical sensation. Hunger does not necessarily lead to an agreed set of interests among a group of people, an interest that would be needed for them to organise as a class. Hunger does not suggest a particular long-term political solution. Its temporary abatement might even be politically conservative, since hunger, like pain in Emily Dickinson's poem, 'has an Element of Blank - / It cannot recollect / When it begun - or if there were / A time when it was not - / It has no Future - but itself' (Dickinson 1959 lines 1-4). The immediacy of hunger creates an attitude of living-moment-to-moment among hobos and tramps, something that Jack Kerouac would later, and quite erroneously, portray as a zen-like attitude. Toward the end of his life Slim grew frustrated with the inability of his fellow workers to see beyond today.[23] What he did not realise is that his own concentration on the immediacy of hunger played into that emphasis on immediacy.

Conclusion

Slim is a rare figure in being a prominent proletarian author who did not become middle-class over the course of his writing career. He stayed within his original class, even though that meant working long hours, living in difficult conditions, and meeting a relatively early death aged 60. Some have speculated that Slim became an alcoholic toward the end of his life, and

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[22] Former hobo Roy Brickle and the author and songwriter James Stevens independently state that Slim was a camp cook; Brickle claims that this is how T-Bone got his road name, while in his book *Brawny Man* Stevens implies it. (See Brickle 1979 p.115 & Stevens 1926 p.146). *Brawny Man* is a fictional hobo autobiography based on Stevens' own hobo experiences.

[23] His later articles are generally pessimistic about the prospects for change, and frustrated that his audience have not brought it about. In 1937, he wrote that 'the working class surely loves punishment' (*Juice* p.125) and the following year he claimed that the proletariat 'is pretty helpless…Well, not pretty, but helpless. **They even have to be told to join the IWW**' [emphasis in original] (Slim January 1938 p.32).

even that he was murdered (Pete Johnson 1979 p.282; see also Rosemont 1992 pp.16-19). While both claims are unproven, his final years were personally and politically difficult. On 24th February 1939, for example, when he was 56 years old, Matti Huhta was charged with, and pled guilty to, one count of Disorderly Conduct, a fact which may indicate a lessening of control over his personal life.[24] In the political realm, Slim's dreams of revolution had faded as the IWW shrank to a fraction of its previous size: as he noted poignantly in 1937, 'We have the union, but no membership' (Slim 1992 p.126). In addition, and for a reason yet unknown, Slim's columns, which had run consistently in IWW newspapers since the early 1920s, suddenly failed to appear. Between July 1941 and his death in May 1942, his articles appeared in only 6 of 45 issues.

T-Bone Slim was a gifted writer whose contribution to American Literature has been unjustly overlooked. Reminiscent of a blue-collar Mark Twain, his verbal dexterity, wit, and experimental style were unique in the radical newspapers of the early-to-mid twentieth century United States. As such, his neglect by literary scholars has been remarkable. Thoughtful and self-reflective, Slim sought to use words in a way that would undermine the stultifying effects of bourgeois language. Arguing for the high intelligence of his proletarian readers, he constructed a communal model of authorship in which literary greatness was tied to the workers' revolution. In doing so, he mocked fame and the idealisation of great figures in the realms of politics and literature. Slim's persona was of someone who eschewed individual notions of literary success in favour of a larger cause. It was also of someone who was permanently hungry. Hunger was an integral and often comic part of his brand because it tied Slim's experiences as a member of the working class to those of his audience. While his notion of hunger as a form of class struggle was to a degree simplistic, it also created an immediacy that allowed his writing to cut through many of the ideological constructs of his day.

Slim was buried on New York's Hart Island, America's largest mass grave, which at the time of writing holds a million people who were too poor to afford a private burial.[25] Hart Island is New York City's hidden shame. Run by the secretive Department of Correction, for most of its history the island was off-limits to the public.[26] During World War II, the island housed a workhouse for juvenile, elderly and infirm prisoners, the inmates of which would have been the ones to bury Slim. He and the other dead are stacked unceremoniously: coffins are placed on top of one another, from three to five deep, with up to 150 people in each pit. Today the pits

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[24] New York City Municipal Archives, Manhattan District 1 (Tombs), Docket 1115, 24 February 1939. Slim received a suspended sentence. Intriguingly, he gave his name as Joseph Hilger to the authorities. This pseudonym, which he also used to sign letters in the Westmoreland archive, suggests three things. First, and least surprisingly, Matt Huhta was reluctant to reveal his identity to the police, presumably because he feared persecution. Second, he wanted to adopt a name that channelled the legend of Joe Hill, which indicates that he saw himself as the spiritual successor to the IWW's most famous martyr. Third, his choice of 'Joseph Hilger' demonstrates Slim's playfulness, since it was a name that had political and personal resonance for him but was unlikely to be picked up on by the authorities. The name Joseph Hilger, in other words, mocked those who claimed power over Matti Huhta. This incident was previously unknown.

[25] New York City Municipal Archives, Hart Island Burial Records (microfilm). Original research by Cherie Westmoreland, John Westmoreland, and myself reveals that Slim was buried on 5th June 1942 as an 'unknown white man' in plot 161, section 1, grave 24 (death certificate 11399). He was never formally identified because, according to a letter from the Chief Medical Examiner to Slim's sister Ida Huhta Ekola dated 2nd July 1942, such an identification could only be performed in person by a family member, a task that Ida was unable to complete. He must have been informally identified, however, since the Medical Examiner's report states 'Possible name of Matt Valentine Huhta' (see New York City Medical Examiner's report M42-2690). It is probable, though not proven beyond all doubt, that Slim was the 'unknown white man'.

[26] In 2014, a successful lawsuit against the City enabled a limited degree of access. For further information, see the Hart Island Project website: https://www.hartisland.net/ [accessed 12 May 2019].

are dug and the coffins unloaded by Riker's Island prisoners, disproportionally black, who receive $1 an hour and who in some cases find the labour of burial so traumatising that they ask to be replaced and taken back to their cell.[27] New York City's most isolated and exploited workers, the kind of people for whom Slim wrote, still labour over his bones.[28] Yet this story has a twist. In 2012, Hurricane Sandy caused enormous devastation across New York City, accelerating the longstanding erosion of Hart Island. In 2018, large numbers of bodies from the potter's field washed up on beaches in Long Island Sound, only a few miles from the Manhattan Waterfront where Slim worked, and which now contains some of the most expensive real estate in the world. Refusing to stay silent, New York's poor have come back to haunt the neoliberal city that tried to forget them. This also serves as a fitting metaphor for Slim himself, who after 75 years is remerging from his cultural burial.

Future research could examine Slim's portrayals of class, race, gender, war, humour, food, optimism, pessimism, the media, and many other aspects of early-to-mid twentieth century America. Historians can uncover more details about Slim's patchy biography, helping to unravel the mysteries of this hobo's life. More might yet be discovered about his literary influences. Artists and musicians may wish to utilise his prose, poetry and song lyrics in their own work. Finally, Matt Huhta's commitment to the cause of working-class emancipation should provide an inspiration to many activists and writers who seek social justice and greater equality in our own time. As he himself put it, 'To make two blades of justice grow where none grew before—that is Beauty' (Slim 1992 p.156).

Author Bio

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Acknowledgements

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[27] Video of New York City Council Meeting, 30th May 2019. https://legistar.council.nyc.gov/MeetingDetail.aspx?ID=690970&GUID=262BE200-F57E-4599-8D89-2DCF56838C5D&Options=info&Search= [accessed 1st June 2019]

[28] New York City seems poised to change the jurisdiction of Hart Island from the Department of Corrections to the Department of Parks and Recreation with the aim of improving both the condition of and access to the island. See Cory Kilgannon, 'Can an Island Off the Bronx With One Million Graves Become a City Park?' in *New York Times*, 31st May 2019, https://www.nytimes.com/2019/05/31/nyregion/newyorktoday/nyc-news-hart-island-bronx-graves.html [accessed 1st June 2019]

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Class, Taste, and Literature: The Case of Ivar Lo-Johansson and Swedish Working-Class Literature

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Abstract

This article discusses the tradition of Swedish working-class literature and the relationship between taste and class. First, I analyze the representation of this relationship in Swedish working-class writer Ivar Lo-Johansson's novel *Kungsgatan* [King Street] from 1935. Thereafter, I discuss the whole tradition of Swedish working-class literature—in which Lo-Johansson's novel occupies a central position. This tradition constitutes a challenge to received ideas about class and taste, mainly because its consecration as a central strand in Swedish literature and its dissemination to a mass audience in the working class make it problematic to uphold conventional distinctions between popular/working-class and high/bourgeois culture. Finally, I argue that the challenging of these distinctions is not only a key to a better understanding of Lo-Johansson's novel, but it also shows that Swedish working-class literature can serve as a catalyst for re-theorizations within working-class studies of the relationship between class and taste as something that is historically specific, rather than universal.

Keywords

Working-class literature, taste, class, Ivar Lo-Johansson, Sweden

Introduction

Ivar Lo-Johansson (1901–1990) is a central figure in the tradition of Swedish working-class literature (which will be described in more detail below). His parents were *statare* (contract farm workers that were hired on an annual basis and paid mainly in kind), and before becoming a professional author, he worked as, among other things, a stonemason and a peddler. In 1933, he had his definitive literary breakthrough with a more or less autobiographical novel about a young *statare* boy: *Godnatt, jord* (published in English in 1991 as *Breaking Free*). During the following decade, he published a number of novels, short stories, and reportages about the *statare* class, and many have argued that this contributed to the abolishment of the *statare* system through an agreement between the trade unions and the employers in 1945. Among Lo-Johansson's most important later works are a series of eight autobiographical novels published between 1951 and 1960, seven collections of short stories about human passions and vices from the period 1968–1972, and his memoirs in four volumes published between 1978 and 1985. *Kungsgatan* [King Street], which was first published in 1935, is one of Lo-Johansson's most well-known novels, and it has remained popular until today (as will be described in more detail later in the article).

The aim of this article is to show how *Kungsgatan* and the tradition of working-class literature to which it belongs can serve as an entry point for theorizing the relationship between taste and

class. First, I will analyze how this relationship is represented in Lo-Johansson's novel. Thereafter, I will turn to Swedish working-class literature in general and discuss how it brings to the fore questions about taste and class. Above all, I will show that its consecration as a central strand in national literature and its dissemination to a mass audience in the working class constitutes a challenge to conventional distinctions between popular/working-class and high/bourgeois culture. However, the article makes an intervention not only in the study of Swedish working-class literature but also in the study of working-class literature in general, as well as in theoretical discourses about the relationship between class and taste within working-class studies more broadly. The main claim in this article is that the relationship between class and taste should be viewed as historically specific rather than universal.

Previous Research

Swedish working-class literature is relatively well researched, and in recent years, it has received increased scholarly attention—especially within a Nordic network for the study of working-class literature, which has hitherto organized six conferences and published four edited collections (Agrell et al. 2016; Hamm, Nestås Mathisen & Neple 2017; Jonsson et al. 2011; Jonsson et al. 2014).

Lo-Johansson has been the object of many academic studies, but although several of them focus on his novels from the 1930s, the scholarship on *Kungsgatan* is meagre. Ola Holmgren (1998) devotes a few pages to the novel in a monograph about Lo-Johansson's whole oeuvre, Maria Wahlström (2017) has examined its representation of prostitution, and Anna Williams (1999; 2002) has studied how it relates to processes of modernization. However, the novel's thematization of taste and class has not been analyzed explicitly. In fact, the topic of taste has generally not been prominent in research on Swedish working-class literature. Nevertheless, a few studies in recent years have addressed its representation in contemporary working-class novels (Arping 2011; Hamm 2016; Nilsson 2010).

In sociology, taste and class are central, but also contested, concepts. An overview of the main theoretical positions regarding their relationship that have been important within cultural studies can be found in an essay by Jon Cook. One of these positions Cook (2000 p. 102) associates with the cultural sociology of Pierre Bourdieu: it 'suggests a systematic co-relation between economic class and taste' and associates social elites with 'high culture' and the working class with 'popular culture.' Another position he associates—quite brilliantly—with the main character in the BBC sitcom *Keeping up Appearances*: Hyacinth Bucket (pronounced 'bouquet') (Cook 2000 p. 106). This position is based on the idea that taste 'finds its expression hierarchically' and that elites 'determine what is good taste, while 'those lower down imitate what has been decided by those above them' (Cook 2000 p. 107). However, those at the top of the social hierarchy can also imitate or appropriate styles emanating from the bottom (Cook 2000 p. 107). Yet another position that Cook (2000 p. 107) identifies is one from which taste is seen as a means for creating communities that are 'tangentially related to class, perhaps,' but not explained by 'the monolithic orders' of social classes.

In contemporary research about Swedish working-class literature, questions about class and taste have mainly been addressed with the point of departure in feminist sociologist Beverley Skeggs's theory about respectability (Arping 2011; Hamm 2016; Nilsson 2010). Drawing primarily on Bourdieu, but also on post-structuralist theorists like Foucault, Skeggs (1997) argues that upper- and middle-class people subject working-class people to symbolic violence

by representing them as being unrespectable, for example, by associating their taste with unrespectability.

In recent decades, Bourdieu's theories about the relationship between taste and class have been subjected to much critique. One example, which is of special relevance for this article, can be found in Rune Sakslind and Ove Skarpenes' sociological analysis of the Norwegian middle class. Drawing on Michèle Lamont's comparative research—which has demonstrated that some of Bourdieu's theories seem to hold only in the French context where they were originally developed—Sakslind and Skarpenes (2014 p. 326) show that 'the culturally conditioned social interaction between classes in Norway follows a particular pattern that is quite different from continental models. Thus, they argue, 'the seeming universals of class theory' are not necessarily applicable everywhere (Sakslind & Skarpenes 2014 p. 325). Consequently, they call for 'the study of class culture not as something universal, but as something particular, embedded in social formations' (Sakslind & Skarpenes 2014 p. 331).

Class and Taste in *Kungsgatan*

Kungsgatan is a Bildungsroman. Its protagonist, Adrian, is a farmer's son who leaves the village where he has grown up and moves to Stockholm. He encounters many difficulties, the worst of which is that he is infected with gonorrhea, before managing to shed his rural identity and become a class-conscious urban proletarian. This story fits well into the main theme in Lo-Johansson's novels from the 1930s: the transformation of Sweden from a traditional rural society into a modern, urbanized nation in which the working class and the labor movement constitute the central social and political force (Nilsson 2003). However, one of the things that makes *Kungsgatan* stand out in Lo-Johansson's oeuvre is that its discussion of modernity and class often brings to the fore questions about taste.

Early in the novel, before moving to the city, Adrian attends a winter school for farmers. There, he articulates a conservative ideology, expressed in an essay in which he 'jämförde spinnrockens skönhet med en självbindande slåttermaskins och kasserade den sistnämnda' [compared the beauty of the spinning wheel to that of a self-binding mowing machine and discarded the latter] (Lo-Johansson 1935 p. 21).[29] This conservatism is expressed as a taste judgement. Adrian prefers the old and agrarian over the modern and technical on what seems to be purely aesthetical grounds. That modern agricultural technology might be efficient, for example, seems not to matter; it is discarded because it is not as beautiful as a spinning wheel. Adrian's conservatism is also connected to his social position as the son of a farmer. For, in *Kungsgatan*, like in Johansson's novels from the 1930s in general, farmers are associated with the past and described in opposition to modernity, which is connected to urbanity and the working class (Nilsson 2003 p. 25–27). For example, the first section of *Kungsgatan*, which describes Adrian's childhood in the countryside, has the title 'På sextusen års grund' [On six-thousand-year-old ground] (Lo-Johansson 1935 p. 3).

During his stay at the school, Adrian begins to change. Above all, his encounter with the teachers makes him question not only his own taste but the taste of farmers in general:

> Det minsta konstföremål på lärarnas väggar, även kopiorna, ett stycke mineral på deras bord, några blommor i en vas uppvägde allt böndernas mischmasch, som dessa

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[29] *Kungsgatan* has not been translated into English. All translated quotations in this article are my own, and do not capture the novel's aesthetic merits. The novel has, however, been translated into Danish, Norwegian, Icelandic, Finnish, German, Croatian, and Slovenian.

smaklöst samlade hos sig. … Lärarna, dessa idealister, levde ett rikt liv på rätt knappa inkomster. I motsats till bönderna levde de ett djupare, klarare liv, också ett vackrare liv än böndernas så kallade friska, vilket mestadels saknade all lätthet och frihet, och därmed också saknade allt behag. (Lo-Johansson 1935 p. 23)

[The tiniest object of art on the teachers' walls, including the prints, a piece of mineral on their desks, some flowers in a vase, counterbalanced all the farmers' mishmash, that they collected because of their bad taste. … The teachers, these idealists, led a rich life on rather meagre incomes. Unlike the farmers, they led a deeper, clearer life; it was also a more beautiful life than the so-called healthy life of the farmers, which mostly lacked all lightness and freedom and, thus, all pleasure.]

Being the son of a farmer, Adrian occupies a high position in his village. At the school, however, he feels inferior to the teachers. This inferiority is *symbolic*, rather than *economic*. The teachers are not richer than the farmers. But despite their meagre incomes, they lead richer lives. What makes their lives rich seems to be the fact that they have good taste.

This association of class difference with differences in taste continues in the description of Adrian's life in the city. It is expressed mainly through representations of so-called *hötorgskonst*, which *The Swedish National Encyclopedia*'s Swedish-English dictionary translates as 'trashy (third-rate) art, kitsch.' The term comes from Hötorget, a square in central Stockholm where this kind of art used to be sold. It is located near Kungsgatan, the street which has given name to Lo-Johansson's novel. In the novel, this street is mainly associated with prostitution, and this association rubs off also on the paintings sold nearby. Thus, Lo-Johansson's proletarian novel seems to reproduce a rather aristocratic idea about art, namely that artistic value is the inversion of economic value, which is homologous to the idea that romantic love stands in absolute opposition to prostitution. Hötorgskonst paintings are hand-painted, often made with templates, and mostly depict scenes from nature. In *Kungsgatan*, it is especially the latter that makes them appealing to workers in the city:

Det var i synnerhet om fredagskvällarna, som arbetarna intresserade sig för konst. De hade då fått avlöningen för veckan och de hade suttit på kaféerna och blivit en smula glada. Somliga ville bereda hustrun en överraskning när de kom hem sent med litet pengar. Då köpte de en tavla och tog den med. De kände först av allt efter om tavlan var riktigt torr. På motiven kunde de aldrig anmärka. De flesta motiven var från landet, och det var köparna med, men de hade nästan glömt bort, hur landet såg ut i verkligheten. De andra trodde blint, att landet var som på Hötorgsmålarens tavlor. (Lo-Johansson 1935 p. 31)

[It was especially on Friday nights that the workers took an interest in art. They had received the week's salary by then, and they had been sitting in cafés and become somewhat merry. Some of them wanted to surprise the wife when they came home late with little money. Thus, they bought a painting and brought it with them. They made sure first and foremost that the painting was really dry. They could never complain about the motifs. Most of the motifs were from the country, and so were the buyers, but they had almost forgotten what the country really looked like. The others believed blindly that the country looked like it did in the Hötorg-painter's paintings.]

Thus, like Bourdieu and his followers, Lo-Johansson associates workers with popular art. His description of their focus on the paintings' content is also consistent with Bourdieu's claim that

working-class taste is governed by an 'anti-Kantian aesthetic,' which 'gives priority to what works of art are about over how they are formed' (Cook 2000 p. 102).

However, Lo-Johansson also complicates the relationship between workers and popular art by emphasizing that the appeal of this art is a product of the workers' association with the countryside—that is, they have not yet liberated themselves from their former rural identities and become urban proletarians. Furthermore, he describes this kind of art as being *ideological*. In Anna William's (1999 p. 9) words, Lo-Johansson thematizes how 'consciousness is formed' and analyzes 'the role of art as both a creative and manipulative force in such processes.' The hötorgskonst paintings in *Kungsgatan* replace the 'real' countryside with a kitsch version of it, one that produces nostalgia, and thus *hinder* the development of a new, urban, proletarian identity among workers.

Moreover, the novel does not just represent urban workers as country folk in disguise. It also associates them with a desire to become bourgeois. This includes Adrian, at least initially:

> Han ville ha ett arbete, där han fick gå ren om händerna och snyggt klädd. Det var vid en tid, då alla ville det. Det var en tid, då arbetarna ville se sina barn som borgare. Det var den tid, då kvinnan av alla klasser vart en liten dam. (Lo-Johansson 1935 p. 38)

> [He wanted a job where he could walk around with clean hands and nice clothes. It was a time when everyone wanted that. It was a time when the workers wanted to see their kids become bourgeois. It was a time when women of all classes became little ladies.]

Even the most class-conscious urban proletarian in *Kungsgatan*—Adrian's mentor, the elderly construction worker Moderat—seems to have internalized bourgeois values, especially bourgeois *taste*. This is brought to the fore in a description of the room in Moderat's apartment that Adrian rents:

> Det hade mörkbruna tapeter, kakelugn som sköt i tak i det höga rummet, toalett i farstun, en uråldrig chiffonjé, en plyschsoffa som kunde förvandlas till säng, kommod med paradhanduk, hemvävda trasmattor, underst korkmatta, en asparagus i en korg, fikus på ett trebensbord, knypplade dukar och på väggen en fotografi av Branting, uppflugen högst under taket. Alla prydnader var av gips, garn eller utgjordes av fotografier. Böcker fanns inte. Men på väggen, där soffan stod, hängde en hemsydd väggbonad på vilken lästes:

> 'Fågel söker fäste,
> människan söker bo.
> Eget litet näste
> ger den bästa ro' (Lo-Johansson 1935 53)

> [It had dark-brown wallpaper, a tiled stove that rose toward the high ceiling, a toilet in the vestibule, an ancient desk, a plush sofa that could be turned into a bed, a washbasin with an embroidered towel, home-woven rag-carpets, linoleum underneath, an asparagus in a basket, an India-rubber tree on a three-legged table, pillow-lace, and on the wall a photograph of Branting, perched under the ceiling. There were no books. But on the wall, where the sofa was, there was a home-sewn tapestry on which one could read:

'A bird seeks its place
man seeks a home
A little nest of one's own
gives the best peace and quiet']

Branting was the leader of the Swedish labor movement. His picture is the only thing connecting the interior decoration in Moderat's home to the working class. Everything else indicates that the apartment is home to a family that mimics the bourgeoisie.

Toward the end of the novel, Adrian finally manages to break free of his old identity and become a class-conscious urban proletarian. At the same time, he also gains access to the world of high culture. The latter is exemplified by him visiting a theatre performance with his girlfriend, Tora, a class-conscious proletarian who has grown up in the city:

> En kväll gick de på teatern, som spelade en av de sista gångerna för säsongen. Han upplevde med förödande styrka den stora konstens ödslighet, medan Tora tycktes ha svårare att förstå dessa ur ett gammaldags borgerligt hemlighetsmakeri uppståndna konflikter. Ett slag skämdes han också, medan han satt därinne. Det var vid tanken på föräldrarna, då han icke tyckt sig ha rätt att göra sig delaktig av kulturen, under det att föräldrarna arbetade utanför. (Lo-Johansson 1935 p. 357)

> [One night they went to the theater, which gave one of the last performances of the season. He experienced, with devastating force, the desolation of great art, while Tora seemed to have greater difficulties understanding these conflicts emerging from old-fashioned bourgeois mystery-making. For a while, he was also ashamed while sitting there. It was when he thought of his parents, when he did not think that he had the right to participate in culture while his parents worked outside.]

This scene shows that Adrian has been able to overcome the alienation from the world of culture that he had previously experienced at the winter school in his role as the son of a farmer. This is connected to his change of social class—his breaking free from his identity as the son of a farmer—and is accentuated in the description of his insight that his parents, who are still farmers, have no access to the world of culture.

Much like Bourdieu, Lo-Johansson seems to insist on the co-relation between economic class and taste. In *Kungsgatan*, farmers, workers, and intellectuals display different tastes. However, there are aspects of the representation of class and taste in Lo-Johansson's novel that do not harmonize with the Bordieuan theoretical position. One aspect is that while Bourdieu and his followers see the distinction between the bourgeoisie and the working class as homologous with the one between highbrow and popular culture, Lo-Johansson paints a more complex picture. For example, he associates the workers' taste for kitsch art not with their proletarian class position but with their inability to liberate themselves from their previous rural identities. Thus, Adrian, who does manage to break free from his role as the son of a farmer and become a class-conscious urban proletarian, develops a taste *not* for popular culture but for highbrow bourgeois culture.

Lo-Johansson's representation of taste and class in *Kungsgatan* also has similarities with that theoretical position described by Cook that focuses on hierarchies and mimicking of taste. This is most evident in the description of Moderat's apartment. Perhaps, Adrian's and Tora's visit to the theater could also be seen as an example of mimicking bourgeois taste. However, the

latter example indicates that Lo-Johansson's representation of taste hierarchies is rather complex. For, even if Adrian, toward the end of the novel, takes part in cultural activities explicitly described as being bourgeois and as being out of reach for both the urban proletariat (represented by Tora) and farmers (represented by his parents), he himself is described as having developed a proletarian class consciousness. Therefore, Adrian's visit to the theatre should perhaps be understood in analogy with the third position described by Cook: as an attempt to become a member of a community that is only 'tangentially' (or perhaps not at all) related to social class.

Swedish Working-Class Literature and Taste

Kungsgatan brings to the fore questions about taste and class not only on the level of content but also through its very status as a work of literature belonging to the tradition of Swedish working-class literature.

According to the standard narrative about its history, working-class literature first emerged in Sweden during the second half of the nineteenth century within the labor movement (Furuland & Svedjedal 2006 p. 4–5; Nilsson 2017 p. 96). The literature produced and read there differed from bourgeois literature in several ways. For instance, politics was more important than aesthetics (Mral 1985 p. 15), and working-class literature had a collective rather than an individual(istic) character (Nilsson 2006, p. 36–37). In addition, working-class writers mainly used short formats, such as poems and songs (Furuland & Svedjedal p. 55–56). Thus, early Swedish working-class literature could very well be—and has indeed been—conceptualized as an *expression* of a *class-specific taste*; this, in turn, can be connected to material conditions specific to the working class, such as the lack of economic means, leisure time, and education necessary for reading novels (Nilsson 2006 p. 38).

However, literary life within the labor movement was in no way totally autonomous from other parts of society. For example, many working-class writers borrowed forms and motifs from bourgeois and religious literature (Nilsson 2006 p. 37). Accordingly, it cannot be viewed as expressing only *proletarian* taste. The fact that it existed solely within the labor movement also means that working-class literature was not a concern for the working class in its entirety, only for those workers who were class conscious and politically organized. Hence, it cannot be seen as an expression of *all workers'* taste. Furthermore, early Swedish working-class literature aimed at *creating* class consciousness (Mral 1985 p. 15). Therefore, it should perhaps be viewed not as *expressing* but as *producing* taste (for example, in the form of taste for literature expressing socialist ideals). Since the labor movement aimed at *transforming* the working class by instilling it with socialist ideas, this taste should perhaps not be associated with the (existing) working class but with a (not yet fully existing) community centered on the labor movement's socialist ideology.

Consequently, the history of early Swedish working-class literature seems to challenge the idea that literary taste can be directly connected to social classes. Its later history also calls into question some ideas about taste hierarchies and their relationship to class hierarchies.

Early in the twentieth century, a number of working-class writers—among others Maria Sandel, Dan Andersson, Martin Koch, and Gustav Hedenvind-Eriksson—became successful outside the labor movement (Furuland & Svedjedal 2006 p. 78-79). Some ten years later, another group of working-class writers that included Ragnar Jändel, Ivan Oljelund, and Harry Blomberg also managed to establish themselves in the site of national literature (Uhlin 1950 p.

210–211). In the 1930s, working-class literature had its definitive breakthrough in Swedish literature with the emergence of a generation of working-class writers to which belonged Harry Martinson, Josef Kjellgren, Vilhelm Moberg, Moa Martinson, Jan Fridegård, and Ivar Lo-Johansson (Furuland & Svedjedal 2006 p. 216–219). After World War II, working-class literature was consecrated as a central strand in Swedish national literature (Nilsson 2014 p. 21–22). Perhaps the best symbol of this position is that in 1974 the Nobel Prize in literature was awarded to Harry Martinson and Eyvind Johnson as representatives for 'the many proletarian writers or working-class poets' in Swedish literature (Gierow 2018).

Some commentators have argued that the breakthrough for and consecration of working-class literature in Swedish national literature was a result of working-class writers abandoning the proletarian aesthetics that had been developed within the labor movement and instead catering to bourgeois literary tastes. For instance, Arne Melberg (1973 p. 85) argued that working-class literature was 'absorbed' by bourgeois literary institutions, whereas Birgitta Holm (1975 p. 247) claimed the confrontation between working-class writers and the bourgeois institution of literature resulted in the former 'succumbing.' In light of these ideas, the breakthrough for and consecration of working-class literature in Swedish national literature appears to be examples of the bourgeoisie (mis)appropriating working-class literature while keeping the existing hierarchies of taste intact. However, in the following, I will argue that it represents a reconfiguration of these hierarchies.

One indication that the consecration of Swedish working-class literature has indeed reconfigured the dominant taste hierarchies is that it was opposed by many bourgeois critics, who in the 1920s and 1930s did their best to condemn this literature. The most notorious of them was Sven Stolpe, who from 1926 launched a series of attacks on the emerging generation of working-class writers (Nordmark 1978 p. 17). In an article published in 1928, for example, he argued that the rise of working-class literature represented an unfortunate tendency toward democratic levelling within the realm of literature (Stolpe 1928).

Stolpe's rejection of working-class literature has the form of a taste judgement. On the one hand, he admitted that the worker is a legitimate motif in literature. No 'sane person,' he argued, 'any longer subscribes to the classical doctrine that literature should exclusively depict kings, princes, and their likes,' and he claimed that writers' interest in 'modern social life, including its everyday or repulsive forms' has made the Swedish novel 'richer' (Stolpe 1928). On the other hand, he argued that when it comes to literary form, working-class literature has no merits: 'Actually, all is said if one claims that working-class writing is naturalistic: a more antiquated literary style, a theory that is more at odds with the innermost trends of our time is hard to find' (Stolpe 1928). In other words, those who appreciate working-class literature are out of touch with contemporary taste.

Stolpe's critique of working-class literature for being aesthetically backward is far from unique. As has been demonstrated by Valentine Cunningham (1997 p. 5), among others, radical literature from the 1930s has often been associated with older literary styles—thereby possible to condemn as a 'historical blip or bypass on which writing got snagged and slowed down in the long march of the twentieth century from modernism at the beginning to modernism at the end.' In response to such accusations, much scholarly energy has been invested in attempts to establish links between this literature and the dominant, or even avant-garde, aesthetic discourses of its time.

In Sweden, this has mainly taken the form of emphasizing the links between 1930s working-class literature and modernism (Nilsson 2003; Witt-Brattström 1988). This research is not without merits. Many Swedish working-class writers were indeed influenced by modernist aesthetics, and this needs to be acknowledged. However, even if this means that they were in touch with the most advanced aesthetic ideas of their time, it does not mean that they did not challenge the dominant literary taste. The (counter) attacks by Stolpe and other leading bourgeois critics is evidence of this. Further, since modernism was not considered an important strand in Swedish literature until after World War II, the modernistic features of 1930s working-class literature were also condemned as violations of good taste. These condemnations, however, did not only come from bourgeois critics; they also came from critics affiliated with the labor movement. The most well-known of these is the Marxist critic and poet Ture Nerman, who accused the modernists among working-class writers of aestheticism and escapism and who has gone down in history as Swedish modernism's enemy number one (Nilsson 2003 p. 245–253).

It was not only its modernist tendencies that made 1930s Swedish working-class literature a target for critique from the labor movement. As has already been mentioned, Lo-Johansson had his definite literary breakthrough in 1933 with the novel *Godnatt jord* [*Breaking free*]. Together with two other novels published the same year—Moa Martinson's *Kvinnor och äppelträd* [*Women and Apple Trees*] and Jan Fridegård's *En natt i juli* [*A Night in July*]—it also marked the breakthrough of the most important genre in 1930s Swedish working-class literature, namely the more or less autobiographical proletarian Bildungsroman. Some critics affiliated with the labor movement received Lo-Johansson's novel positively. One of them was Alfred Kämpe, who even compared its author with August Strindberg (Furuland 1976 p. 73). Nevertheless, some critics within the labor movement condemned the novel for being too pessimistic and for maligning working-class people (Furuland 1976 p. 73–75). A similar criticism was also put forward by some bourgeois critics, who objected to Lo-Johansson's alleged naturalism, thereby reproducing the critique of working-class literature formulated by Stolpe a few years earlier (Furuland 1976 p. 76–77).

In the 1930s, Swedish working-class literature challenged the dominant literary taste. The opposition facing working-class writers from bourgeois critics might imply a clash between classes. However, the fact that some critics affiliated with the labor movement also condemned working-class literature indicates that things are in fact more complicated.

Another complicating fact is that the breakthrough for Swedish working-class literature in the 1930s was mainly a breakthrough in intellectual circles, to which most workers did not have access. For example, the first edition of Lo-Johansson's *Kungsgatan* was printed in 2,200 copies, with three additional printings of 1,000 extra copies over the next five months (Furuland & Oldberg 1961 p. 14). These relatively low numbers—combined with the fact that it was published not by any working-class press but by Sweden's most prestigious publishing house, Bonniers—indicate that the novel did not reach any substantial audience within the Swedish working class, which at the time consisted of around one and a half million people (Therborn 1981 p. 47). Thus, 1930s Swedish working-class literature seems to have much weaker connections to the working-class than the older working-class literature that was produced, circulated, and read within the labor movement.

However, in the 1940s and 1950s, many working-class writers did in fact reach mass readerships among workers, mainly through cheap editions of their works from the 1930s that were targeting working-class audiences (Nilsson 2006 p. 75–77). For example, in 1943,

Bonniers published a moderately priced two-volume edition of *Kungsgatan*. At first, 45,000 copies were printed, followed by another 20,000 (Furuland & Oldberg 1961 p. 14). In 1950, a more expensive bound edition, again in two volumes, was printed in 40,000 copies. In addition, *Kungsgatan* was serialized in two labor-movement newspapers in 1944 and in 1947–48 (Furuland & Oldberg 1961 p. 14). It was also filmed in 1943 (Furuland & Oldberg 1961 p. 124–125).

Besides eventually becoming popular among reading workers, the working-class literature of the 1930s has also, retroactively, been embraced by the labor movement. For example, the Swedish Trade Union Confederation has instituted a literary prize in Lo-Johansson's name, which is given out every year to an 'important working-class writer' (Ivar Lo-priset 2018).

Working-class literature has remained an important strand in Swedish literature until today in terms of both its status as high literature and its popularity. This is most evident in Lo-Johansson's case. In the definitive work about Swedish literary history, *Den svenska litteraturen* [Swedish literature]—whose volume about the period 1920–1950 has the subtitle 'Modernister och arbetardiktare' [modernists and working-class writers]—more than seven pages are devoted to Lo-Johansson (whose picture also appears on the back cover) (Lönnroth & Delbland 1993). He has also remained one of the most-read Swedish authors. For example, *Kungsgatan* has continued to appear in new editions, including easy-to-read versions, audio books, and electronic books. In 2015, it was selected book-of-the-year by the project 'Stockholm läser' [Stockholm reads]. The project activities included reading circles, lectures, film screenings, and literary walks (Stockholm läser 2018). Two new editions of *Kungsgatan* were published for the project: one easy-to-read-version and one full-length version with a foreword by contemporary working-class writer Susanna Alakoski. During the project, *Kungsgatan* became the most borrowed book at Stockholm's public library (Nummer ett 2018).

The fact that Swedish working-class literature is a central strand in national literature, at the same time as it is embraced by the labor movement and popular among both workers (at least historically) and reading people in general, challenges some ideas about the relationship between class and taste. Above all, it makes it difficult to argue that what workers like is popular literature, while the bourgeoisie enjoys high literature. It also calls into question the idea that hierarchies of taste are analogous with class hierarchies. After all, Sweden is a capitalist society, in which the bourgeoisie is the dominant class. At the same time, the dominant literary taste does not exclude working-class literature.

Conclusion

Swedish working-class literature challenges common ideas about the relationship between class and taste, which shows that such ideas are marked by the contexts in which they emerge. For example, Pierre Bourdieu's cultural sociology—which remains one of the central theories about this relationship despite the recent criticism—has been developed in a context (France) where working-class literature has been neither popular among workers nor considered high literature. The same can be said about those theories which emphasize the rigidity of hierarchies of taste and describe negotiations between classes in terms of mimicking and appropriation. After all, Hyacinth Bucket is indeed a very British lady.

Attention to historical specificities can help clarify some puzzling aspects of the representation of class and taste in Lo-Johansson's *Kungsgatan*. The novel's protagonist, Adrian, struggles to break free from his earlier identity and become a class-conscious proletarian. However, at the

same time as he completes this transformation, he also discovers high art. Thus, from the perspective of Bourdieu's sociology of culture, it would seem as if he is simultaneously gaining access to and becoming alienated from the working class. From another theoretical position, he could be interpreted as someone who, as he becomes a proletarian, mimics the taste of those above him or inscribes himself in a community that has no direct relation to class. However, if one considers that Lo-Johansson belonged to a generation of working-class writers whose works were about to become an important strand in modern Swedish literature, it is far from impossible to imagine that he might not have viewed the realm of high literature as a bourgeois domain or as a realm outside of class society. Instead, he may have viewed it as domain that would not remain exclusively bourgeois much longer. Then, Adrian's going to the theater is not necessarily a mimicking of bourgeois taste or a transience of class-based tastes—it could just as well be him entering a sphere from which he has hitherto been excluded but which he now, after having become a class-conscious worker, intends to conquer.

This shows that Swedish working-class literature provides productive avenues to re-theorize conventional scholarly understandings of the relationship between class and taste. This is no less true regarding the common distinction between popular/working class and high/bourgeois culture. Accordingly, working-class studies could benefit from more comparative studies that make visible the complexity of class and its relationship to phenomena such as taste, as well as the influence of historical contexts.

Author Bio

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'The porcupine was a feast': The Tastes of Luxury and Necessity in Ruby Langford Ginibi's Storytelling

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Abstract

This paper brings Bourdieu's concepts of the tastes of luxury and necessity into dialogue with the alimentary habitus that Bundjalung woman Ruby Langford Ginibi records in her lifewriting. The paper argues that Langford Ginibi's alimentary disposition has much in common with the taste of necessity that Bourdieu attributes to the French working class. The analysis identifies two further characteristics of her relationship to food that Bourdieu does not describe: an emphasis on recounting the adverse material circumstances in which meals are procured and prepared, and a practise of indiscriminate eating in which foods are deemed uniformly and reliably desirable. The paper finds that, despite some public censure, Langford Ginibi maintains much of her habitus as she accrues social, cultural, and economic capital. It concludes that maintaining and valorising the taste of necessity and its associated habitus may be read as a positive strategy that seeks to restructure the colonial field from below.

Keywords

Indigenous literature, working-class food, working-class habitus, Bourdieu

'The porcupine was a feast': The tastes of luxury and necessity in Ruby Langford Ginibi's storytelling

> *[P]resenting a family recipe and figuring its circulation within a community of readers provides a metaphor nonthreatening in its apparent avoidance of overt political discourse and yet culturally resonant in its evocation of the relation between the labour of the individual and her conscious efforts to reproduce familial and cultural traditions and values* (Goldman 1992 p.172)

Food is an important medium through which difference and inequality are produced (Julier 2005 p. 164). Relationships to food stratify the social order and allow subjects, families, cultures, races, nations, and genders to distinguish themselves in a myriad of ways. French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu's theorising of eating as a site of class-based distinction begins from the premise that '[s]ocial subjects, classified by their classifications, distinguish themselves by the distinctions they make' (Bourdieu 1984 pp. 6-7,56; on food, see 1984 pp. 171-201). These classifications and distinctions, manifested as 'tastes', structure and are structured by the social order (1984 pp. 170-171). Bourdieu proposes a gradient of food distinctions moving from the taste of necessity, in which quantity and substantiality are valorised, to the taste of luxury, 'which shifts the emphasis to the manner (of presenting,

serving, eating etc.) and tends to use stylized forms to deny function' (1984 pp. 6-7). Such tastes and dispositions are the respective provinces of the working class and the *bourgeois*. Bourdieu also alludes briefly to a sub-proletariat characterised by 'absolute poverty and insecurity' and grounded in 'an inescapable deprivation of necessary goods'; these conditions generate a habitus involving 'a form of adaptation to and consequent acceptance of the necessary…a resignation to the inevitable' that represents one pole of the taste of necessity (1984 pp. 395, 372).

In Australia, scholars assessing the portability of Bourdieu's concepts and theories of the social order identify the need to explore Indigeneity's irrupting and mediating effect on the colonial field (Bennett et al 2013 pp. 145-146). To advance this work, the following paper brings Bourdieu's concepts of the tastes of luxury and necessity into dialogue with the alimentary habit(u)s that Bundjalung[30] woman Ruby Langford Ginibi records in her texts *Don't Take Your Love to Town* (1988), *My Bundjalung People* (1994), *Haunted by the Past* (1999), and the collections of stories and sketches *Real Deadly* (1992) and *All My Mob* (2007). The paper argues that Langford Ginibi's alimentary disposition has much in common with the taste of necessity that Bourdieu attributes to the French working class: a sense of food as 'the primary need and pleasure', an enthusiasm for eating and drinking well (i.e. heartily), a convivial approach to meals as informal and communal occasions[31], and a preference for '[p]lain speaking, plain eating' (1984 pp. 178-180,194-196). It identifies two further characteristics of her relationship to food that Bourdieu does not describe: an emphasis on recounting the adverse material circumstances in which meals are procured and prepared, and a practise of indiscriminate eating in which foods are deemed uniformly and reliably desirable.

In addition to exploring the parameters of Langford Ginibi's alimentary habitus, the paper observes that she accrues social, cultural, and economic capital (and thus improves her position in the social order) while expressing the taste of necessity. This suggests a devolution of Bourdieu's model, in which tastes reproduce the social order (1984 p. 372). While there is some evidence that public censure of Langford Ginibi's refusal to adopt *bourgeois* modes of food-related conduct affirms Bourdieu's theorising, the paper contends that maintaining and valorising the taste of necessity and its associated habitus may be read as a positive strategy through which capital is accrued and a restructuring of the colonial field advanced to achieve change from below.

Langford Ginibi and an Indigenous Australian working class

Since 2008, the Australian Federal Government has published annual *Closing the Gap* reports that detail the disparities between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians' health and wellbeing in areas such as education, employment, and housing. *Closing the Gap 2019* reports alarming but unsurprising measures of Indigenous socio-economic disadvantage: Indigenous child mortality rates are 2.4 times the rate of non-Indigenous children, non-attendance rates of Indigenous secondary school students are 14 per cent higher than for non-Indigenous students, and Indigenous men's and women's life expectancy is 8.6 years and 7.8 years less than their non-Indigenous counterparts (2019 pp. 33,69,123). The reports routinely find little to no

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[30] Bundjalung Country is located on the east coast of Australia, where it bisects the border between the states of Queensland and New South Wales. It extends from Logan in Queensland to Grafton in New South Wales and inland as far as Tabulam and Baryugil.

[31] Informality does not infer that proletarian meals are rule or values-free events. Bourdieu describes the norms that working class women are obliged to observe and the exclusionary implications of particular preferences (1984 pp. 190-191,194-195).

progress being made towards most of the targets set to alleviate these markers of Indigenous disadvantage.

Walter's research on Indigenous Australian disadvantage demonstrates class's limitations as a way of describing and theorising this subordinate social location (see Walter 2009, 2015; Walter & Saggers 2007; Atkinson, Taylor & Walter 2010). Walter accepts that, '[i]f a consistently shared socio-economic position can be considered the basis of social class, then Indigenous Australians form their own class, firmly wedged at the bottom of Australian society' (2009 p. 2); however, she also finds that the socio-economic measures and norms through which class is identified and produced do not validly describe lived Indigenous experience. In particular, her research shows that conditions such as poverty have particular characteristics for Indigenous people, whose experiences and circumstances are not adequately captured in Western measures and descriptors (Walter & Saggers 2007). Walter does not explore whether Indigenous middle- and working-class tastes or habitus diverge, although she contends that achieving the conventional socio-economic markers of the middle classes does not produce the concurrent privileges of health, wealth, or well-being for Indigenous subjects that their non-Indigenous peers enjoy (Walter 2015). This suggests the need to explore taste's efficacy at securing or advancing Indigenous people's claims to a desirable location within the colonial social order.

Despite Walter's reservations about class's validity as a means of describing Indigenous positions within the social order, Marxist scholars Armstrong (2005) and Kuhn (2009) have produced viable class-centric accounts of Indigenous labourers' exploitation and emancipation and considered the roles that race and racism play in advancing the capital-owning class's interests in Australia. In terms of producing and administering a proletarian Indigenous population that serves the dominant class's needs, Scott and Evans have examined the way Queensland's system of education and patriarchal management of Indigenous people aimed to create and maintain 'an underclass of obedient, underpaid labourers' (1996 p. 140). They explain how education and training provided on reserves and missions[32] 'neatly dovetailed with the primary needs of European employers for low-skilled, or, at best, semi-skilled black servants' (1996 p. 143). McGrath reaches a similar conclusion in her analysis of non-Indigenous representations of Indigenous labour, in which 'primitivist tropes' produce and legitimise exploitative class-based relationships (1995 p. 31). She posits that training in domestic work created a subordinate relationship between non-Indigenous employers and Indigenous menial workers that reproduced the class divides of England (1995 p. 38). Goodall's study of Indigenous women's paid and unpaid labour as carers and mothers in New South Wales in the first half of the nineteenth century argues that strategies for managing Indigenous women's reproduction, sexuality, and employment were derived from 'established mechanisms for management of white working class girls' (1995 p. 82). Like McGrath, she

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[32] Reserves and missions were established during the early nineteenth century to protect Indigenous populations from the increasing settler population. Reserves were originally designated as areas where Indigenous people could pursue a limited hunter-gatherer lifestyle and observe traditional customs and practices; however, as State and Federal Governments adopted policies of assimilation rather than segregation they became sites of instruction and training that pursued a 'civilising' agenda. They, and church-administered 'missions' where evangelicals sought to convert and minister to Indigenous people, offered basic vocational training and instruction in Christian and European conduct, customs, and religious beliefs. During the late nineteenth century and early to mid-twentieth century, many Indigenous people were forcibly removed to and confined on reserves and missions, where punitive disciplinary measures, poor diets, and unsanitary conditions substantially diminished their quality of life. See Anna Haebich's *For Their Own Good* and Tony Swain and Deborah Bird Rose's edited collection *Aboriginal Australians and Christian Missions*. For an Indigenous perspective on mission life, see Jack Davis's *No Sugar*.

finds that representations of the Indigenous population facilitated the social order's reproduction: Indigenous women's framing as negligent carers produced them as a recalcitrant underclass on which the blame for failing government policies (such as those intended to improve Indigenous infant mortality and other measures of health) could be projected. Indigenous women who performed menial and minimally paid service in white homes recall their employers' negligence and disregard for *their* well-being (see Ward 1987). Huggins (1987) has recorded Indigenous women describing the exploitative conditions—particularly the provision of low quality, limited food and segregated eating—they endured while working for middle-class non-Indigenous families. Their testimonies evidence the important material and symbolic role that food has played in producing hegemonic relations between the property-owning class and those who labour for them. Such poor treatment led to strikes by Indigenous domestic workers, whose withholding of their labour obliged landowners' family members to perform necessary chores, leading to 'an inversion of the 'proper' class and racial order' (Haskins & Scrimgeour 2015 p. 99).

These intersections of class and race are evident in Langford Ginibi's lifewriting, which exemplifies the Indigenous Australian literary genre of relational, collaborative, and communally oriented telling of personal and national histories (see Moreton-Robinson 2000 pp. 1-3). Although *Don't Take Your Love to Town* (henceforth *Town*) does not invoke class explicitly (Syson 1993), it presents a socio-realist narrative that accords with Bourdieu's sense of working-class aesthetic and cultural preferences (1984 p. 376). *Town* describes Langford Ginibi's life of itinerant menial labour: she begins working as a maid at age 10, gives birth to her first child at 16, and supports her increasingly large family through employment as a farm labourer, fruit picker, fencer, cleaner, and garment maker. As Brewster observes, many of the experiences Langford Ginibi describes are 'shared…with white people who experienced poverty' (1996 p. 36). This facilitates *Town*'s much-commented-upon marketing as the tale of a 'battler', which has been argued to occlude some of the text's racial politics and account for its popularity in Australia (Mudrooroo 1990 p. 149; Huggan 2000 p. 48; Neville 2002 p. 214; Schaffer & Smith 2004 p. 93; cf Perera 2012 pp. 75-76). While the text suggests some equivalence between Indigenous and non-Indigenous transient workers—'[w]e stopped for supplies and then pitched a tent beside a creek on the outskirts of town…plenty of people lived like that, poor whites as well as blacks…' (1988 p. 84)—it also describes her generation of Indigenous people 'living worse than the poorest of poor whites' (1988 p. 96).

Intersecting class and race consciousness is made more explicit in *Real Deadly*, where Langford Ginibi decries the '[b]ig landowners' who 'dispossessed [Indigenous people] of the land, and everything' (1992 p.1). Its first story foregrounds the Indigenous labourers who 'built up those big stations, as cooks, stockmen, housemaids and servants' but are now living 'in poverty compared to the affluence of THE MANSIONS ON THE HILLS' (Langford Ginibi 1992 p. 1-2). Similar concerns are evident in *My Bundjalung People*, which describes Langford Ginibi's visits to her ancestral Country, where she reconnects with friends, relations, and her people's past. Like *Town*, *My Bundjalung People* does not address class directly, but records and cites a number of non-Indigenous station owners and managers who affirm the valuable contribution Indigenous workers made to their pastoral enterprises (1994 pp. 65-71, 90-100). Some critics have discerned an evolving self-representation in the text, which presents a 'demonstrably cleaner, nicer and stodgier Aboriginal woman writer' than the narrator of *Town* and *Real Deadly* (Nyoongah Lyttle 1998 p. 34). As shown in the analysis below, some of the food and dining venues Langford Ginibi enjoys in the text connote increased economic, social, and cultural capital; however, her alimentary habitus remains largely unchanged from *Town*.

Part of *Haunted by the Past*'s narrative involves a similar journey to Langford Ginibi's ancestral Country as those undertaken in *My Bundjalung People*, however, she now presents herself as an elder—an authority on Bundjalung language and custodian of a number of traditional stories (1999 pp. 116-119, 130-135)—rather than the more deferential and tentatively belonging character of the previous work (see 1994 pp. 139-141). This infers an increase in her cultural and social capital across Indigenous and non-Indigenous fields. The text is a collaborative telling of Langford Ginibi's son's life that foregrounds his experiences of incarceration and the criminal justice system. Returning to the point made in *Town*, it asserts that although colonial society was 'bad for poor whites…we Aboriginal people had double the amount of oppression because we were singled out for unfair treatment on the basis of race as well' (1999, p. 171). Such claims, consistent across her three book-length texts, demonstrate the need to determine the ways in which Indigenous Australian experiences correspond with and exceed Bourdieu's analysis of working class culture and the social order's reproduction.

The taste of necessity in Langford Ginibi's storytelling

Langford Ginibi's frequent references to food throughout her storytelling suggest its primacy as a conjoined site of need and pleasure. The most food-centric of her texts, *Town*, contains at least one reference to food, meals, or cooking on 160 of its 269 pages. Many of these references are labour-centric accounts of procuring food and preparing meals (1988 pp. 78,83,173). Langford Ginibi also describes repeated instances of running out of food and obtaining it in socially undesirable ways: soliciting charitable donations, pawning possessions, and stealing (1988 pp. 75-76, 123-125, 210). These foreground the sense of food as need. A complementary sense of food as primary pleasure is evident in her childhood recollections of eating to excess on special occasions (1988 pp. 12-13,50), 'tucking into' chops, and 'stuffing [herself]' with wild-growing fruit (1988 pp. 16,34). In adulthood, much of the pleasure Langford Ginibi derives from food involves preparing it for others, as she wishes for a stove on which to bake things, enthuses over having access to an orchard, and proudly recounts cooking communal meals for her family and friends (1988 pp. 64,121,167,194). These pleasures are consistent with her later valorisation of Indigenous women's as nurturers and food gatherers (1994 p. 58)[33].

Privation mediates and contextualises much of the pleasure Langford Ginibi obtains from food. On one occasion, the family sell the tyres from their car to purchase provisions, but their dog consumes the corned beef they had been intending to have for dinner:

> [w]e had nothing left in the camp to eat and I didn't know what to do. I was six months pregnant and felt like I'd used up all my energy…I sat on a drum and stared at the grass for a while. Then it came to me. There was a farmhouse down the road apiece, with a market garden. I was too ashamed to go myself, so I sent a note with the kids saying what had happened to our meal. In a while, Billy, Pearl, and Dianne came back with fresh fruit and vegetables and a couple of chooks already cooked. I was so happy I went to thank the good people.
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> (1988 p. 94)

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[33] The challenge of reconciling Langford Ginibi's aspirations with non-Indigenous feminist values manifests second wave feminism's difficulties in reconciling the disparate material circumstances and priorities of working-class and raced minority group women with those of the middle classes (Ferrier 2006). While Langford Ginibi at times decries her lack of autonomy, material deprivation leads her to covet the domestic sites—a kitchen and home—that some white middle-class women identify as sources of oppression (1988 105, 172).

While the taste of necessity is prevalent, on occasion the family also enjoys foods that Langford Ginibi deems luxurious:

> I heard Peggy Sue barking at something and went to look. 'Bunning,' I said to the kids, 'look, its quills are up. Get me a waddy, quick.' Pearl came running with a stick and so I hit the porcupine hard on the head…I cut up potato and pumpkin and baked them beside the porcupine in the camp oven…A baked dinner called for bush sweets, so I made a scone mixture and boiled doughboys. The porcupine was a feast and after we had the doughboys with Golden Syrup (cocky's joy) poured over them.
>
> (1988 p. 89)

Langford Ginibi's reticence about using such meals to assert symbolic capital—for instance, identifying the bunning as part of an 'authentic' Indigenous culinary tradition or of superior quality to non-Indigenous foods—means the privative context of limited economic capital and geographic isolation tends to overdetermine them as 'starvation tucker' (see Bradley 2006 p. 121). This diminishes the extent to which her sense of enjoying a luxurious meal is recognised as such.

Dualities of privation and pleasure are apparent in the alimentary habitus Langford Ginibi presents in *My Bundjalung People*, which makes reference to food, meals, or cooking on 109 of its 218 pages. Food-related childhood memories in the text's first chapter oscillate between hardship and enjoyment. Alongside pleasurable memories of coconut iceblocks and fresh fruits from local orchards, Langford Ginibi recalls the privation of rationing, spoonfuls of sulfur ingested as a laxative, and being sent to bed without dinner after breaking a basket of eggs (1994 p. 7-11). Subsequent chapters recount distressing histories of Indigenous people enduring disrupted foodways, hunger, and fatal clashes with colonists over food (1994 pp. 72,178,185). Despite recording these undesirable food-related experiences and collective memories, Langford Ginibi exhibits considerable pleasure in eating throughout the text. On more than one occasion food is used to alleviate anger and sorrow, which suggests its valency as a source of pleasure (1994 pp. 13, 130)[34]. The text reveals some distancing from food-as-primary-need: unlike *Town*, most of the meals Langford Ginibi enjoys in *My Bundjalung People* are sourced from cafés, restaurants, and the homes of friends and acquaintances she visits during her travels to Country (1994 pp. 113,145,151,184); nonetheless, as will be shown below, the alimentary habitus she records in *Town* persists.

Haunted by the Past contains alimentary references on only 59 of the text's 191 pages. These references are often brief and temporally or geographically locative (1999 pp. 106, 116, 136). Privation continues to contextualise and mediate the pleasure derived from food, as when Langford Ginibi describes her son 'makin [sic] up for all the good tucker he couldn't get in jail' (1999 p. 121,123). Langford Ginibi's emphasis on providing food when visiting remote-dwelling relatives reiterates a sense of it as need:

> I got Nobby to get some takeaways, and a couple of loaves of bread and some drinks. I never went over to Auntie's without a feed. I knew they lived in hardship all the time. Nob bought pies, hot chips and cold meats.
>
> (1999 p. 110)

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[34] Food as pleasure's primary is overshadowed by the text's emphasis on reconnecting with place and kin, which produces what Langford Ginibi considers 'the happiest time of my life' (1994 p. 57).

Alongside the diminishing frequency of reference to procuring and preparing meals in *My Bundjalung People* and *Haunted by the Past*, Langford Ginibi's food provision suggests her location in the social field has changed as a result of the social, cultural, and economic capital accrued from her storytelling[35]. Despite the distinction she had earned, continuing to observe food-sharing protocols demonstrates that she retains the dispositions associated with Indigenous culture and socio-economic marginality. Food mediates her relationships with a number of the elders from whom she seeks information and permission to write about Country and its people: throughout *My Bundjalung People*, for instance, she surreptitiously passes her Aunt money 'for nunghing' (food) while requesting her attendance at cultural events or introductions to extended family members (1994 pp. 38, 110, 180). This need not be read as attempted coercion; instead it is Langford Ginibi demonstrating, through correct alimentary conduct, her connection to kin and the propriety of her writing about and representing Bundjalung. In this way, maintaining the alimentary habitus of her earlier life plays an important role in allowing her to continue to accrue capital and maintain or improve her position in Indigenous and, consequently, non-Indigenous social spheres. This suggests the relationship Bourdieu poses between class-based habitus and location in the social field needs to be attenuated in Australian settings to recognise Indigenous culture's mediating effect and the value attributed to working-class and raced cultures (see Turner & Edmonds 2002).

Consistencies of taste in *Town* and *My Bundjalung People* further demonstrate that Langford Ginibi's alimentary habitus remains fixed. Like the working classes in Bourdieu's analysis, Langford Ginibi foregrounds meals' substantiality in both texts (1988 pp. 268-269; 1994 p. 145). Size and volume are frequent and common descriptors of items of food and meals (1988 pp. 6,10-11,84,198; 1994 pp. 68,178,199). A predilection for hearty eating is evident in *My Bundjalung People*'s account of dining at an outback café, where she enjoys 'lasagna and salads and…two big plates of vegetables—it was good home-cooked food and we got stuck right into it, washing it down with coffee' (1994 p. 203). While valorising home cooking suggests a *bourgeois* perspective, Langford Ginibi's enthusiastic appraisal of eggs on toast— 'Boy I was getting spoiled! I lapped it up' (1994 p. 107)—manifests something of the partiality for plain foods that Bourdieu associates with the taste of necessity. As in *Town*, the sense that some of her meals are forms of relative luxury that the middle classes may not recognise is apparent when Langford Ginibi's travelling companion describes her as needing 'a good breakfast', which they obtain at a Red Cross café[36] (1994 p. 199).

Unlike the French working classes, who Bourdieu records disparaging certain types of food, Langford Ginibi and her family rarely indulge or express preferences or reservations about different meals. Aside from an incident during her childhood in which she and her young siblings refuse to eat a goanna that their Uncle kills with an axe and cooks in front of them (1988 pp. 6-7), meals are uniformly framed as desirable. For Langford Ginibi, the taste of necessity entails enthusiastically and reliably consuming whatever foods are available. Such indiscriminate eating is distinct from the omnivorousness identified as a marker of the middle class, who exhibit an 'openness to appreciating everything' rather than 'liking everything indiscriminately' (Peterson & Kern 1996 pp. 904-905). One manifestation of Langford Ginibi's indiscriminate eating is a refusal to distinguish or valorise particular foods or meals in a hierarchy according to normative bourgeois *or* proletarian values. *My Bundjalung People* mentions the 'real healthy' fare at a vegetarian restaurant (1994 p. 191), but also

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[35] In the years following *Town*'s publication, Langford Ginibi was awarded an honorary doctorate from La Trobe University, history fellowships from the New South Wales Ministry of Arts and the National Museum of Australia, and several domestic literary awards (see Haag & Westphalen 2012 p. 2).

[36] Red Cross shops are charitable organisations that provide inexpensive meals, often to a homeless clientele.

enthusiastically recounts the purchase and consumption of hot chips (1994 pp. 109, 131); *Haunted by the Past* segues without distinction from the 'delicious' vegetarian food that Pam Johnston, a 'deadly cook', has prepared to the 'good feed of Kentucky Fried Chicken' Langford Ginibi's son craves after his release from jail (1999 pp. 96-97). Such indiscriminate eating prevents Langford Ginibi's occasional enjoyment of luxury foods distinguishing her from exhibiting the taste of necessity in these texts. Although *Haunted by the Past*'s references to food occasionally consider variety, novelty, and the relief of a monotonous prison diet (1999 pp. 96, 125), the luxury foods it mentions, such as avocadoes, macadamia nuts, and pineapples, are not deemed to be more or less desirable than the chips and pies that she and her son eat during their journeys (1999 pp. 121, 123). Similarly, *Real Deadly* and *Mob* contain make passing references to Langford Ginibi enjoying champagne (2007 p. 253, see also 1992, p. 108), but hearty feasts of fish and chips, enjoyed on the bonnet of a car, are equally appreciated (1992 p. 77). Langford Ginibi's indiscriminate eating may be attributed to conditions of food insecurity, limited economic capital, and a large family that precludes the indulgence of individual preferences. While indiscriminate eating suggests the 'adaptation to and consequent acceptance of the necessary' that Bourdieu associates with the sub-proletariat and the taste of necessity (1984 pp. 395, 372), Langford Ginibi's reluctance to valorise or disparage luxury foods in relation to those associated with the working class is a distinct element of her alimentary habitus.

Langford Ginibi occasionally accrues social capital from her knowledge of foreign foods; however, its value is largely limited to her standing within the family: having been embarrassed in front of the children on one occasion, she recalls, 'I had to restore my dignity so I got some meat and string and showed them how to catch yabbies in the dam and later I made a curry' (1988 p. 89). Towards the end of the text, she describes cooking several foreign dishes:

> …there were twenty-seven of us planning our trip to Ayers Rock. We cooked for the pensioner luncheon each month, made hot meals for the medical service staff, sold cakes, held fêtes, and eventually we had $3000…I'd make a boiler of spaghetti sauce and cook noodles and make three dozen rolls of garlic bread and sometimes I made chow mein and it sold like hot cakes; anything to raise money
>
> (1988 pp. 231-2)

While this passage conveys Langford Ginibi's ability to prepare cuisine originating in or associated with other countries, the social and cultural capital that cooking across cultural boundaries affords her is curtailed by the observation that she would prepare 'anything to raise money'. This reiterates her proximity to the taste of necessity rather than of luxury. The brief, functional reference to the dishes she prepares does not invoke the conventional class markers applied to ethnicised food, such as invoking its authenticity, geographic specificity, historicity, or rarity (see Johnston & Baumann 2007); instead, the commercial emphasis reifies existing class (and racial) divisions premised on the Other's servitude (see Hage 1997). This distinguishes it from the enjoyment and knowledge of foreign cuisines that affords the middle classes distinction in Anglophonic society (see Johnston & Baumann 2014 pp. 61-112). Similarly, although Langford Ginibi consumes a considerable amount of foraged and wild-caught game in *Town* (1988 pp. 63, 83-84) she makes no overt attempt to valorise this aspect of her diet and improve her position in the social field by deploying the dominant class and culture's food discourse, which would identify such meals as more desirable than the mass produced foods perceived as constituting working-class diets (see de Solier 2013 pp. 21-23).

The aspect of meals that Langford Ginibi foregrounds most frequently is the difficulties and means of procuring and preparing them. She tends to emphasise the limited facilities and provisions available rather than the qualities of the food she produces. When her daughter gets married:

> [m]oney was scarce so I rallied all the mates to help with sandwiches and Bob McDonald was out the back with a boiler full of eggs, cooking them on the open fire. We had no gas. Neddy and Gert wrapped Alfoil around sandwiches and packed them in cartons. Mum and my sisters from Beaumont Street made cakes and savouries, Aunt Beryl made angel food cakes.
>
> (1988   p. 156)

The passage presents some of the taste of necessity's positive social elements. The communality and informality of the meal preparation suggest working-class preferences—although Langford Ginibi usually attributes food-sharing practices to Indigenous rather than class-based culture and low economic capital (see 1994 p. 195)—while the disjunction between the meal's commemorative function and the paucity of fare connote the taste (or, perhaps, practise) of necessity. The passage also exhibits some of the emphasis upon form that Bourdieu attributes to the middle classes who exhibit the taste of luxury by emphasising meal-related conduct. Langford Ginibi orients her account towards the manner in which the meal is produced rather than consumed. Her capacity to prepare meals under adverse circumstances may be considered one of the 'distinctive forms of cultural competence and expertise' that Smith-Maguire proposes the working classes exhibit through food (2016 p. 16). As Brewster describes,

> [r]ather than being ashamed of her struggle to survive and the measures she had to take, Langford gives it pride of place in her narrative. We learn, in the course of reading *Don't Take Your Love to Town*, how to make a firebucket, an oven from an empty four gallon drum, some metal stakes and some bricks in an inner Sydney suburb when you can't pay the gas bill…how to make damper (269), how to sterilise babies' bottles in the bush, how to live off the bush, and a shopping list of the basics you need to survive in the bush with a large family; how to fish for various kinds of fish even if you can't afford bait, and how to catch and cook porcupine…
>
> (Brewster 1996 pp. 35-36)

Brewster apprehends these details as evidence of 'subjugated knowledges'[37]. She argues that revealing and recording them in autobiographical writing resists the imposition of class-based European norms that determine the appropriate subject matter of biography or novel (1996 p. 36). While Langford Ginibi's lifewriting may challenge traditional hierarchies of knowledge and cultural parameters of appropriate expression, the use of food and cooking as a political signifier and means of constructing the self has traditionally been seen as a class marker: as Anne Goldman argues, '[f]or those writers whose gender, race, or class may seem to preclude access to 'high art' and its literary forms, the very domestic and commonplace quality of cooking makes it an attractive metonym for culture' (1992 p. 172).

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[37] Brewster invokes the second of Foucault's meanings of the term—those knowledges 'which are 'located low down on the hierarchy, beneath the 'required level of cognition or scientificity'' (Brewster 1996 p. 49 citing Foucault 1980 p. 82). The first sense in which Foucault defines subjugated knowledges, as 'the historical contents that have been buried and disguised' (1980 p. 81), is also appropriate to Langford Ginibi's account.

In terms of meal-time conduct, in accordance with Bourdieu's reading of the taste of necessity, communality, conviviality, and informality are the dominant aspects of the meals Langford Ginibi and her family enjoy. The scatological humour in which the family participates after a guest nearly cracks a tooth on a date pit in a Christmas pudding is characteristic (1988 p. 239; see also 2007 pp. 186-187). Her accounts of meals make no reference to non-Indigenous norms concerning table manners or appropriate behaviours and expressions of appetite, although she does express dismay at the conditions of a friend's house to which the family have been invited for a Christmas meal:

> Neddy and I were standing out on a corner of King Street, Newtown, holding ten chooks and a leg of pickled pork, the hot sun on us, joking about what it would be like at James' place. We got ourselves, the food and the kids to Wattle Street, Ultimo, and looked in the door. Horrible mess. Without a word, Dianne and Pearl started to clean the place up and set the table. Neddy and I began cooking. As fast as I stuffed she was sewing them up and by two o'clock it was on the table, including a big ham baked.
>
> (1988 pp. 139-40)

Langford Ginibi's more frequent refusal to observe *bourgeois* norms of food-related conduct and form renders her liable to class-based censure: one journalist's vituperative review of *Real Deadly*, which draws attention to the author's regular consumption of fast food and perceived inattention to 'creating an attractive home', is almost parodic in its performance of middle-class disdain for the working classes (Liverani 1992 p. 6). The journalist asserts that Langford Ginibi, 'seems to lack the self-regulating mechanism that normally operates in adult humans' or the 'formal education and a literary or social context within which to appraise her experiences'. She describes a gleeful food fight recounted in the text as 'pack behaviour' (Liverani 1992 p. 6). As Beagan, Power, and Chapman note, '[e]xpressions of disgust and repulsion at working-class lives entrench the middle classes as superior to the subordinate Other' (2015 p. 94). Following Pini and Privite, Langford Ginibi's unwillingness to 'express an appropriate sense of inferiority in their dealings with the middle class…explains the ferocity' of such responses (Pini & Privite 2013 p. 262). The pair go on to point out that, 'what Bourdieu (1984 p. 56) labels the violence of 'aesthetic intolerance' may be magnified for a 'group not demonstrating imitative behaviours or shame and deferential dispositions in terms of their supposed lack of appropriate capitals' (2013 p. 262). The negative review evidences how the taste of necessity determines social, economic, and cultural capital and reproduces the social order: the disciplining of Indigenous deviance in which the journalist indulges has potential material consequences: a damning review in a major broadsheet potentially diminishes the sales of a book that might otherwise help lift the author from socio-economic marginality and facilitate her upward class mobility. In accordance with Langford Ginibi's belief that Indigenous people experience greater oppression than the white working class, race explicitly colours the critique, which reiterates a civilised/savage binary and social structure in which Indigenous people are deemed to fall short of normative bourgeois standards of non-Indigenous conduct.

Conclusion

Langford Ginibi's alimentary habitus has much in common with Bourdieu's description of the taste of necessity. She exhibits a strong sense of food as a primary need and pleasure and a preference for generously sized and hearty meals, which she enjoys communally and informally. This alimentary disposition persists as she garners increased social, cultural, and economic capital, although some changes do occur in her food-related conduct. In contrast to

Town's accounts of foraging for food and cooking on makeshift stoves, *My Bundjalung People* and *Haunted by the Past* describe her dining in cafés and restaurants. Langford Ginibi mentions food-as-need less frequently in her later texts and performs acts of food provision more often than food receipt. While these behaviours manifest her increased economic capital and distance from the taste of necessity, continuing to observe food provision and sharing protocols indicates that she retains a habitus grounded in Indigenous tradition and associated conditions of social, cultural, and economic marginality. Rather than distancing herself from those possessing lesser capital, she continues to behave in accordance with their race and class-based expectations of appropriate food-related conduct.

Langford Ginibi's improved social position does not lead her to exhibit or aspire to the taste of luxury. Her texts do not reproduce *bourgeois* ways of assessing and evaluating meals or use taste in food to secure an improved position in the social order. Instead of critiquing or contesting class-based food discourse and distinctions, Langford Ginibi largely ignores them. While this resists the dominant class and culture's symbolic violence, it also facilitates readings consistent with the raced and working classes' representations as a negative foil for the tastes of those with more privileged dispositions. Langford Ginibi's indiscriminate eating is the most prominent example of what middle class discourse construes as a lack of taste. While her eating habits are omnivorous and she enjoys some luxury aliments, her practice of reliably and uniformly representing all food as desirable distinguishes her habitus from that of the middle classes. Reading Langford Ginibi's lifewriting as a primary source, however, provides an important context that allows such practices to be read positively. While her indiscriminate eating may be attributed to privative circumstances and low economic capital, it is not an unthinking or unagential practice. *Town* reveals that Langford Ginibi grapples with the possibility of relinquishing her children to the State because she cannot feed them (1988 pp.102-103). The food-related choice she makes is not between different aliments or meals, but between feeding her children and giving them up for adoption. Understood in this way, a positive case may be made for her alimentary habitus and the skills and knowledge she deploys. Her indiscriminate eating is in part the consequence of a discriminating choice.

Langford Ginibi's emphasis upon detailing the privative conditions under which she and other Indigenous people procure and prepare meals allows her to make a virtue of the survival practices that, in Bourdieu's analysis, would locate her in an undesirable position within the social order. Contrary to Bourdieu's sense that such adaptation to the necessary leads subjects to internalise tastes that reproduce their subordinate social positions, Langford Ginibi's account of her raced and working-classed disposition generates much of the economic, cultural, and social capital she acquires. This suggests that exhibiting a working-class disposition can serve as a means of improving one's position within the colonial social order. Valorising the survival tactics of Indigenous people and the resulting dispositions they exhibit may serve to gradually reshape the social order from below by restructuring the field. This strategy may be contrasted with seeking to improve one's own position by acceding to the dominant class and culture's hierarchies of dispositional taste and conduct. The potential for change to occur from below in this way suggests an important devolution of Bourdieu's argument that tastes serve to reproduce the social order.

Author Bio

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More than a 'Curious Cultural Sideshow': Samuel Slater's Sunday School and the Role of Literacy Sponsorship in Disciplining Labor

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Abstract

This article investigates the concept of literacy sponsorship through the introduction of textile factories and mill villages in New England during the American Industrial Revolution. Specifically, the article focuses on Samuel Slater's mill villages and his disciplining and socialization of workers via the 'family' approach to factory production, and, in particular, his support of the Sunday school. As an institution key to managerial control and new to rural New England, the Sunday school captures the complicated networks of moral and literacy sponsorship in the transition to factory production.

Keywords

Industrial revolution, textile mills, literacy sponsorship, Sunday school, Samuel Slater

Describing the bucolic New England manufacturing scene of the early nineteenth century, Zachariah Allen (1982 p. 6) writes, '[A]long the glens and meadows of solitary watercourses, the sons and daughters of respectable farmers, who live in neighborhood of the works, find for a time a profitable employment.' A textile manufacturer and pro-industry voice in America, Allen sought to distinguish the 'little hamlets' of New England from the factory cities of England in the early nineteenth century. Undoubtedly, one of those 'small communities' to which Allen refers is Samuel Slater's mill village in Pawtucket, Rhode Island. Unlike the factory system of England, or the factory city of Lowell, Massachusetts, to the north, Slater's village approach cultivated a 'new work order' relying on families, specifically children, and villages, located along pastoral landscapes, such as the Blackstone River Valley in northern Rhode Island.

In such settings, the responsibility of workers' (especially children's) moral and literacy education fell squarely on the shoulders of industrialists, such as Slater. Paternal mill owners sought ways to discipline, assimilate, and educate workers as they transitioned to an industrial order tied to the factory time clock rather than the setting sun. In turn, mill owners, such as Slater, played a pivotal role as entrepreneurs, industrialists, and sponsors of worker education. According to literacy scholar Deborah Brandt (1998 p. 166), sponsors 'are any agents, local or distant, concrete or abstract, who enable, support, teach, model, as well as recruit, regulate, suppress, or withhold literacy—and gain advantage by it in some way.' In Brandt's use of the concept, sponsors hold the power, as they 'set the terms for access to literacy and wield

powerful incentives for compliance and loyalty' (Brandt 1998 pp. 166-7). However, as witnessed in Slater's early approach to manufacturing villages, this 'compliance and loyalty' was a carefully mediated balancing act as mill owners sought ways to sponsor workers both in literacy and morality, maintain the agrarian culture and social order familiar to workers, and introduce factory production. Therefore, within Slater's factory village existed another nascent institution of the early nineteenth century—the Sunday school.

This Sunday school, a product of the 'father of the industrial revolution,' captures (however briefly) a transition in America's industrial revolution. Illustrated in what follows, Slater's Sunday school served as both a locus for social control and worker education by sponsoring working families, in particular children. Children learned the basics of reading while also learning the moral code of the factory system—a system that required not only a new 'method of order' but also a new system of discipline that reinforced the Protestant work ethic of rural Rhode Islanders (Kulik 1987). In turn, Slater's school was more important for its non-cognitive functions than for its literacy skills, highlighting the crucial role discipline, rather than education, played in the transition to a new labor structure (for more on religion and labor, see McCarlin 2009). After all, young workers attending Slater's school did not require literacy skills for their mill work:

> 'In factories 'tis grinding work...Nor have we time to learn to read./Many of us can't write nor spell;/A Fact'ry is a Gothic hell./E'en a head clerk can't read the news' (Buhle, Molloy & Sansbury 1983).

Specifically, by providing a place within mill villages for moral and literacy education, Slater facilitated a subtle shift towards the discipline necessary for economic change (see Kulik 1987). In such an institution, some historians might see the early symptoms of a 'market revolution,' whereby a local agrarian economic system yields to a growing industrial economy revolving around distant markets (see Sellers 1991; Stokes and Conway 1996). In describing such a transition to capitalism in rural New England, historian Christopher Clark (1996 p. 230) posits that mill villages 'provided the basis for the emergence of commercial networks and infrastructure and helped provide a wage labor for new manufacturers.' Such an emergence, however, relied on 'disciplining' institutions that bridged the past and the future, easing labor into new relationships under the guise of literacy and moral education. As David Harvey (1990 pp. 123-4) asserts:

> The socialization of the worker to conditions of capitalist production entails the social control of physical and mental powers on a very broad basis. Education, training, persuasion, the mobilization of certain social sentiments (the work ethic, company loyalty, national or local pride) and psychological propensities (the search for identity through work, individual initiative, or social solidarity) all play a role and are plainly mixed in with the formation of dominant ideologies cultivated by the mass media, religious and educational institutions, the various arms of the state apparatus, and asserted by simple articulation of their experience on the part of those who do the work.

In this essay, I focus on the 'religious and educational institutions' noted by Harvey (1990), specifically one that merged moral and literacy education in an effort to socialize workers to a new order of labor. I rely on Samuel Slater's Sunday school as an example of how discipline and literacy sponsorship evolved and, ultimately, helped transition labor and laborers into the Industrial Revolution. Slater's 'novel' and 'genius' approach to managing workers and families, referred to as the 'Rhode Island' or 'family' approach, would ensure his 'imperishable

fame' (*Pawtucket Record* 1888) even after his Sunday School disappeared and the factory, as both concept and institution, spread. I push at Kara Poe Alexander's (2017 p. 22) depiction of literacy sponsorship witnessed in scholarship that 'forwards a view of literacy sponsorship as a one-way, top-down endeavor, where the 'sponsored' and 'sponsor' retain fairly fixed roles.' Rather, Alexander (2017 p. 22) calls for work that offers 'a notion of reciprocal literacy sponsorship where the roles of sponsor and sponsored are fluid, interchangeable, or nuanced.' As opposed to a one-way, top-down, hierarchical flow of power, the new factory discipline, at least as it existed in Slater's mills in Rhode Island, extended the family metaphor to all involved, leading to a seemingly more complicated network of sponsorship. Slater needed these families, especially the children, not just as workers but also as citizens of the early mill villages.

Samuel Slater: The Father of American Manufactures

In 1890, the town of Pawtucket, Rhode Island held the Cotton Centenary, a celebration of the 100th anniversary of the first cotton spinning by power machinery in America. Parades, complete with military personnel and schoolchildren, were held honoring Samuel Slater, 'the hero of the day' (Leavitt 1997). Each day during this week-long celebration had a theme—for instance, Monday was Sunday school day. This legacy proves quite surprising since Samuel Slater entered the United States, on the heels of the Revolutionary War, a young British man with few possessions and 'no far-back ancestry' (Hunt 1858 p. 451).

The details of Slater's life merge fact and myth and they prove worth sharing as context for understanding his approach to management. For example, Freeman Hunt (1858 p. 455), in his entry on Slater in the *Lives of American Merchants*, calls Slater's life 'more like fancy than reality.' Few attempts have been made at a serious scholarly biography and most newspaper stories memorialize Slater, as a 'man of rare talents, of indomitable energy, of sterling worth, and…imperishable fame' (*Pawtucket Record* 1888). Nonetheless, George S. White's (1836) *Memoir of Samuel Slater* is largely cited as the central source for insight into Slater's life despite White's clear admiration for the subject (see also Cameron 1960; Lewton; Tucker 1984). Born in Belper, Derbyshire, in 1768, Slater found himself singled out by his father for an apprenticeship with Jebediah Strutt at the age of 14. Slater acquired a 'common business education' and was strong in arithmetic and 'learned to write a good hand,' owing much to his education with Master Thomas Jackson—'a very approved teacher in Belper' (White 1836 p. 40; Cameron 1960 p. 12). Slater apprenticed under Strutt and Strutt's partner, Richard Arkwright, for six and half years during which he learned the 'Art of Cotton Spinning' (Kulik 1981). As opposed to a specific apprenticeship, Slater learned all aspects of spinning and management. In learning the Arkwright system, Slater, perhaps most importantly, was exposed to understanding the management of workers, earning him, over time, the nickname, the 'Arkwright of America' (see also Fitton & Wadsworth 1968).

At the end of his apprenticeship, Slater, for reasons not known, secretly emigrated to America, never to return to his homeland. White (1836 p. 39) indicates that Slater felt 'cotton spinning would be overdone in England, and listened to overtures held out from the United States.' Britain had established restrictions on the emigration of craftsmen, so Slater traveled, disguised as a 'farmer's boy,' with no plans, blueprints, or drawings of the textile machinery. According to White (1836 p. 37), Slater told him, 'he had nothing about him but his indenture, which he kept concealed, and this was his only introduction and recommendation in the new world.' Slater quickly engaged in work with the New York Manufacturing Company, but soon found himself frustrated. Through an encounter with a ship captain from Providence, Rhode Island,

Slater learned of Moses Brown's attempts at manufacturing cotton by machinery. Slater wrote to Brown, 'I flatter myself that I can give the greatest satisfaction, in making machinery, making good yarn, either for stockings or twist, as any that is made in England' (White 1836 p. 72). This inquiry excited Brown, as up to that point his attempts with spinning were 'too imperfect to afford much encouragement' (White 1836 p. 73). He offered Slater 'all of the profits,' if Slater could perfect and conduct the water-frame spinning successfully. This correspondence led to Slater agreeing to terms and traveling to Pawtucket, Rhode Island, to establish a co-partnership between William Almy, Smith Brown, and himself. Slater, an 'owner and proprietor,' was required to 'devote his whole time and service, and to exert his skill according to the best of his abilities, and have the same effected in a workmanlike manner, similar to those used in England' (White 1836 p. 74). Eventually, Slater completed a spinning frame based on Arkwright's model, illustrating, in White's biography, Slater's 'excellent memory' as well as his 'mathematical and mechanical genius' (White 1836 p. 78; see also Davis & Robinson 1985 for a less mythic take on Slater's 'genius'). In 1793, Slater opened operations in the first water-powered textile mill, now referred to as Slater Mill, along the Blackstone River in Pawtucket. Along with Slater, 'seven boys and two girls, seven to twelve years of age, tended the machines six days a week' (Bonham 1979 p. 56).

While the partnership between Almy, Brown, and Slater eventually dissolved, the spinning mill thrived, leading Alexander Hamilton, as Secretary of Treasury in 1791, to report, 'The manufactory at Providence has the merit of being the first in introducing into the United States the celebrated cotton mill (meaning Arkwright's patent) which, not only furnishes materials for that manufactory itself, but for the supply of private families, for household manufacture' (White 1836 p. 85). Besides Slater finding himself in favor with Hamilton, Andrew Jackson donned him the 'Father of American Manufacturing,' and Rhode Island found itself claiming the 'honor of being one of the earliest seats of the mechanic arts and of manufactures, on this side of the Atlantic' (White 1836 p. 92). In 1832, Slater was asked to report on the state of manufacturing in Rhode Island for a census of manufacturers; he noted in his report to the Secretary of Treasury that Rhode Island employed 24,000 workers in the mills (Slater 1833).

The Rise of Mills and Mill Villages

Despite the posthumous legends memorializing Slater for his memory, his bravery, and his ingenuity in bringing water-powered cotton spinning to America, Slater's 'greatest' contribution to the industrial turn in the States lies in his management of workers and their families. The factories and their surrounding towns in England had found themselves the subject of scorn by industrial critics on both sides of the ocean. Further, American leaders debated the role of factories and industrialization in America, hoping to avoid replicating 'the fetid slums and blighted landscapes of the already notorious factory cities of the English midlands' (Kulik, Parks & Penn 1982 p. xxii; see also Folsom & Lubar 1982). This debate over the role of manufacturing in the United States led to two approaches being developed in America. One approach, witnessed in towns such as Lowell, Massachusetts, involved creating factory cities. These cities and factories favored farmers' daughters for employment, witnessed in the 'Lowell girls'. These girls moved to the city, worked in the factory, and lived in dormitories created for workers—illustrated in the rows of brick boarding houses characteristic of New England factory cities (see Ware 1966). These cities and corporations were financed by Boston merchants, such as Francis Cabot Lowell, with individual factories operated by local agents.

The alternate approach towards housing and recruiting workers, labeled by many the Rhode Island, or 'family,' system, was identified by its 'personal and local nature' (see Hadcock 1946 p. 7; Prude 1987). Generally, this approach was financed by Providence merchants and involved a mill village set in a rural area near a water source. Zachariah Allen's (1982 p. 6) description of such villages captures their supposedly pastoral nature:

> 'The manufacturing operations of the United States are carried on in little villages or hamlets, which often appear to spring up as if by magic in the bosom of some forest, around the water-fall which serves to turn the mill wheel.' These villages housed multiple families, most of whom worked for the mills, and were most prevalent in American manufacturing from 1790-1860 (Kulik, Parks & Penn 1982).

Moreover, these families were native born, many living on rural farms throughout the countryside of Rhode Island, Massachusetts, and surrounding areas. Over time, immigrant workers replaced native workers, and, as Kulik, Parks, and Penn note, 'The years from 1845 to 1860 witnessed the transformation of the New England textile mill work force, as immigrant workers came to replace the native born in virtually every production task' (xxix; see Leavitt 'The Hollingsworth Letters' for more on immigrants' impact on the textile mills).

Slater's managing of mill villages is noted as a reason for the 'superior relative condition of the manufacturing villages of Rhode Island...in moral and social respects' compared with other locations, including England (Bagnall 1890 pp. 68-9). Further, White (1836 p. 117), in his homage to Slater, contends, '[T]he founder of the cotton manufacture in America, abundantly demonstrated, that under right management, [workers] had no immoral tendency.' Slater was keenly aware of the rural social hierarchy, ensuring the 'conditions of labor…represented a compromise between the demands of householders and the requirements of the new production system' (Tucker 1984 p. 160). As evidence, the 'traditional status of the male and female householder as provider and protector of the family was preserved' (Tucker 1984). According to Paul Rivard (2002 p. 41), mill owners, such as Slater, 'wanted to believe they were providing an environment beneficial to the families in the mill village.' As Tamara Hareven (1982 p. 55) has documented,

> The most persistent feature of nineteenth-century paternalism was its concentration on the family unit as the linchpin of the industrial order. Although industrial development would shift the focus of production from family to factory, the family was still the primary unit of production at the beginning of the industrial revolution in the United States. It was also considered the base of morality and stability and the socializer of the young.

But the industrious nature and mutual beneficence of these 'hamlets' required a balancing act between the needs of the family/workforce and the mill owner.

A New Factory Discipline

The 1790s saw Slater develop what has been described above as the Rhode Island (family) system: small mill villages enlisting entire families as labor units, but providing them with housing, merchandise, education, and religion. In order to offset their cash shortage, Almy, Brown, and Slater established a company store where workers could gain credit. It is worth repeating that every member of the family over seven years of age worked in/for the mill. Further, newspaper ads sought out families with five or six children, enticing them to relocate

to mill villages, such as Pawtucket, and away from their rural family farms (regarding child labor, see Feldman 1989; Spilka 1983; Hadcock; Gilbane 1969; Buhle, Molloy, and Sansbury 1983). This form of organization, Hadassah Davis and Natalie Robinson (1985) maintain, helped keep labor costs down. But more than costs, such organization allowed for the integration of a new factory discipline into the lives of families working within Rhode Island mill villages. As outlined below, a key institution responsible for implementing and supporting this new approach to discipline was the Sunday school, both as a concept and physical place. Capturing the complicated role of paternalism, discipline, and education in mill villages, the school, however, did not introduce such traditional themes to American life; according to Tucker (1984 p. 23), 'lessons in piety, obedience, reverence, and deference, as well as lessons in reading and writing, formed the basis of education and discipline.' As early as the seventeenth century, fathers felt responsible for their children's development into 'responsible, moral citizens' (Tucker 1984 p. 23). Slater's 'genius' lied in his ability to seamlessly shift these traditional themes into a new model of work and discipline.

To counter criticism aimed at mills and factories, Slater depicted rural Rhode Island as a landscape of 'universal bankruptcy and poverty; the utter extinction of the arts of civilized life; in fine, a retrograde movement of the whole community to ignorance, weakness, and barbarism' (Prude 1987 p. 114). In turn, the mill villages were designed to reform such rural landscapes and populations; however, the industrial order did not 'challenge customary prerogatives' rather it 'bolstered patriarchy among the lower classes' (Tucker 1984 p. 26). After all, it supported the 'householder's position as provider, guide, and teacher of wife and children' (Tucker 1984 p. 26). Slater encouraged villagers to 'hold on to the past'—the hierarchy of the family and importance of religion—while also moving to the future—to work not based in the field or home. In this way, Slater simultaneously fostered an 'old' work order—centered on family and the village—while pushing into a new economic structure. Christopher Clark (1996 p. 233) maintains that 'for much of the first half of the century at least, farming and industrial labor were…intertwined' (see also Martin 2010 for more recent example of overlap in labor). But this intertwining relied on the successful management of workers—a management feat new to America.

Slater borrowed much of his management style and order from his former mentor, Richard Arkwright. Andrew Ure (1835 p. 15), an enthusiast for the Industrial Revolution's new systems of manufacturing, posits, 'To devise and administer a successful code of factory discipline, was the Herculean enterprise, the noble achievement of Arkwright.' As Gary Kulik (1987 p. 165), a labor historian and former curator of Slater Mill Museum, notes, others before Arkwright had attempted to 'refashion the hard clay of eighteenth-century humanity into a disciplined workforce' (see also Pollard 1963). However, Arkwright introduced continuously moving machines, relying on all workers to maintain the flow of production. This accomplishment was financed by his partner, Jebediah Strutt (in much the same way Brown financed Slater). Kulik (1987 p. 165) asserts that the uniqueness of factory work laid in its regimen of 'stress, fatigue, and monotony rarely known before and only dimly perceived by contemporaries.' Workers needed to be trained for such work, such discipline. Individual mill owners developed their own responses to such a need, as there was no collection of management literature.

There were two general approaches to factory discipline in English and American manufacturing operations. The first approach involved the formation of mill or factory villages. This approach allowed mill owners to enact their power 'through the institutions of village life' (Kulik 1987 p. 165; Pollard 1963). Much of this approach relied on the 'moral machinery' of the villages such as church, chapel, or Sunday school (Kulik 1987 p. 165). According to Kulik

(1987 p. 166), 'The inculcation of such virtues, would, they were sure, promote a contended and better disciplined workforce.' The second approach emanated from inside the factory through rules on attendance, punctuality, and piece rates. The factory bell, indicating the working schedule and controlled by the mill owner, represented the only timepiece in the mills (see Kulik, Parks & Penn 1982 pp. 165-266). Though the rules and times might differ between mills, a strong sense of order was key to maintaining a mill's continuous production.

We know that Slater employed both approaches to discipline within his enterprises. Regarding the latter, his correspondence and ledgers highlight a concern for attendance and punctuality (echoed in mill owners' posted rules). In the next section, I focus specifically on the former approach to discipline through the rise of the Sunday school, in general, and Slater's version, in particular. This institution, despite a lack of records and notes on its existence and daily happenings, remains one of Slater's lasting socialization of workers via organizational and institutional measures, and also captures an early attempt at control of workers removed from outright indoctrination and pecuniary discipline. Slater's village approach to discipline, devoid of the boarding houses to the north, proved amenable to families as the weekly basic education sponsored young workers' moral and literacy development, assimilating and educating simultaneously.

The Rise of the Sunday School

'The story of the Sunday school,' writes Anne Boylan (1988 p. 5), 'is the story of an American institution.' And the nineteenth century witnessed the rise of many institutions; most of which, Boylan (1988 p. 4) contends, 'assumed the social tasks of maintaining order, cohesion, and control.' Clearly, one can see how the Rhode Island (family) system proved fertile ground for the growth of at least one such institution—the Sunday school. As noted above, opponents of industrialization pointed to the factory towns of England and their masses of workers and families as examples of the ills of manufacturing. Daniel Webster, in his 'Debate on the Repeal of the Embargo,' cautioned against reproducing manufacturing in America, claiming, 'Habits favorable to good morals and free governments, are not usually most successfully cultivated in populous manufacturing cities' (Folsom & Lubar p. 196). Webster saw manufacturing districts as recruiting sites for England's armies, for those living in such districts 'have the least hold on society' (Folsom & Lubar p. 197). Even Mr. Thomas Jackson, in his correspondence with his former student, confirms for Slater that 'the morals of a particular set are not at all improved since you left them' (White 1836 p. 40).

Slater witnessed firsthand the ways in which a Sunday school might alleviate the concerns of mill owners and opponents. R.S. Fitton and A.P. Wadsworth (1958 p. 102), in their extensive study of the Strutts and Arkwrights, position the 'wave of enthusiasm' for Sunday schools in England as 'the discovery of a cheap solvent of the twin problems of vice and ignorance.' Much of this enthusiasm is owed to Robert Raikes; the man most often cited as the 'founder of Sunday schools' (Lacquer 1976 p. 21). In many public accounts of Slater's introduction of the Sunday school to Pawtucket, Raikes is cited, not Strutt, as the source of the school movement. While working with prisoners, Raikes empathized with them, seeing their 'ignorance as stepping stone to their crimes' (Power 1863 p. 33). Raikes quickly established a Sunday school for the youth, relying on four female teachers, noting how the early sessions 'produced a wonderful change in the manners of those little savages' (Power p. 45). Beginning in Gloucester, Raikes's model proved unique in its quest to educate mill children in basic reading and writing; moral improvement was integrated into the lessons but the schools were 'organized by individuals or by an association of individuals, and were independent of church control' (Trumbull 1888 p.

190). They may have been independent of church control but Raikes's model placed the Bible at the center of instruction alongside *The Sunday Scholar's Companion*. For basic literacy education, Raikes' relied on *A Copious School Book* and *A Comprehensive Sentimental Book*— the latter containing the alphabet, spelling, moral, and religious lessons and stories and prayers adapted to 'the growing powers of children' (Rice 1917 p. 18). Despite their local practice, the schools spread to the nation—within England, the schools 'were the beginning of popular education' (Trumbull p. 117). Nonetheless, Sunday schools also had their critics, many of whom feared such schools represented 'harbingers of a potentially dangerous reading public' (Soltow & Stevens 1981 p. 14). Some in England even saw the institutions as 'dangerous, demoralizing, bad institutions, and agents of the devil' (Rice 1917 p. 20).

While an apprentice under Strutt and Arkwright, Slater witnessed Strutt implement Sunday schools in both his Milford and Belper mill villages. These schools operated on Sundays, avoiding any interference with the six-day work week, and included broad pedagogical goals, such as reading and writing. Additionally, Slater witnessed these Sunday schools' promulgation of factory rules, including the virtue of hard work, temperance, punctuality, and self-discipline. As Jonathan Prude (1983 p. 38) observes, such schools 'permitted Strutt to link workplace discipline with Protestant notions of moral amelioration.' According to Pollard (1963 pp. 194-5), 'All the hands at Strutt's and Arkwright's under 20 had to attend school for four hours on Saturday afternoons and on Sundays to 'keep them out of mischief.' Further, Pollard (1963 p. 197) limits the mission of such Sunday schools to 'raising the level of respectability and morality among the working classes'—a means of 'building up a new factory discipline.' In turn, the schools were more successful as 'instruments of instruction than of conversion' (Lacquer 1976 p. 119).

According to Thomas Lacquer (1976 p. 4), in his *Religion and Respectability: Sunday Schools and Working Class Culture*, three motivations aided the founding of Sunday schools in England:

> 'For some, the new institution was an instrument for the moral rescue of poor children from their corrupt parents...Others saw in the schools primarily a means of spreading the Word of God...Thirdly, a new, soft, kind, more optimistic and sentimental view of children and childhood induced benevolent men and women to direct their attention to the young.'

Michael Sanderson (1972 pp. 81-2) argues the Sunday school proved more than a 'curious cultural sideshow,' contending they 'may be an innovation fundamentally important for an understanding of the eighteenth century as the steam engine and mule.' Regardless of motivation, the schools prospered in England with nearly 2.1 million working class children attending in 1851 (Lacquer 1976 p. i).

Although the specific details are debatable, we know that Samuel Slater established a Sunday school (adapted from Strutt via Raikes) in Pawtucket, Rhode Island, shortly after the opening of Slater Mill, with the backing of his partners (see Bagnall 1890; Conrad 1973). The genesis of Slater's Sunday school involves an oft-repeated tale included here in its entirety, as it captures the mythic status of Slater:

> Among the boys who came to work in his mill was one that was to make this place his home for nearly three-score years and ten...He came here a boy eleven years of age, and found an irreverence toward the Sabbath which shocked his sensibilities. Not

knowing what to do on that day, he was subjected to peculiar temptations. It so happened that some of the lads who worked with him in the mill were conferring together, one Sunday morning, as to where they should go. Says one of them, 'Let's go up to Smithfield, and rob Mr. Arnold's orchard; that will be fine sport.' But the youth first named demurred. 'I don't believe it is right to go off Sundays to rob people's orchards,' said he. Mr. Slater happened to be passing at that moment, and caught a part of the reply. He stops and asks, 'Boys, what are you talking about?' He is told of what had been proposed, and one of them adds, 'Nat. doesn't think it is right to go off so on Sunday.' 'No, nor I neither,' responded Mr. Slater; and he doubtless feels, if he had never realized the matter before, that he owes a duty to those youth whom God had placed for a time under his charge. He resolves to remove from them one form of temptation; and promptly says, 'Boys, go into my house, and I will give you as many apples as you want; and I will keep a Sunday school.' (Goodrich 1876 p. 123).

Included in Massena Goodrich's (1876) *Historical Sketch of Pawtucket*, this story bolsters Slater's paternal role in the mill village and to his young workers. Further, the tale captures the widespread concern over the moral depravity of mill children, as opposed to their literacy education.

Much has been made about the potential uniqueness of Slater's Sunday school in America—with many proclaiming Slater's the first Sunday school in the States. The actual inception date of Slater's Sunday school is placed somewhere between 1795-1797. We know that other Sunday schools were opening in the States, but Slater's is likely the first New England version of these institutions, especially one modeled on Raikes's schools (see Gilbane 1969 p. 308). Recounted in an article from the *Pawtucket Record* in 1888, the school likely began in Slater's house in the 'south east room on the first floor' and included seven boys (presumably the boys from the orchard): 'Nathaniel G. B. Dexter, Isaac and Samuel Tabor, Reuben and ___ Alexander, Thomas Blye and Clifford Thomas' (*Pawtucket Record* 1888). Slater's introduction of the Sunday school to his mill villages further differentiated the Rhode Island family system from the Waltham boarding house system. Recall that Boston merchants, such as Lowell, were 'determined to avoid making a permanent mill village of poor families whose children worked in the mill and who were entirely dependent on factory labor' (Ware 1966 pp. 64-5). Slater's Sunday schools were a direct response, and necessary component of, the family-style approach to manufacturing favored by Slater, where entire families did relocate to the mill village.

Again, separating myth from reality proves difficult with Slater, and this is no less true with the Sunday school. Clearly, it was a celebrated institution, owning a day at the 1890 Cotton Centennial Celebration. Moreover, the Slater Mill museum holds various items related to the Sunday school, including a brick from the chimney of the first school as well as memorial glasses from the 1890 celebration. But specific details of the actual institution are scattered, especially due to its brief history as a secular school, resulting in hyperbolic stories such as the tale of the school's genesis. Barbara Tucker (1984 p. 75) speculates that since the school was patterned after Strutt's, it probably 'emphasized the teaching of certain moral values, including obedience, honesty, temperance, punctuality, and deference.' Initially, Slater taught the children himself but eventually employed students from nearby Rhode Island College, now Brown University, with Slater's ledger noting on November 5, 1797: 'Cash paid Benjamin Allen, for teaching a school first days, £2, 14s' (Goodrich p. 129). And, unfortunately, Slater himself, in his copious ledgers and correspondence, fails to mention the school (Kulik 2007).

Nonetheless, we have some circumstantial details from sources familiar with the institution.

Capt. N.G.B. Dexter, who worked under Almy, Brown, and Slater for thirty years recalls that reading, writing, and arithmetic were central to the school: 'Our lesson-books were five Webster's spelling-books, and our library consisted of three new Testaments' (*Pawtucket Past and Present* 1917 p. 12). Other sources note the schools 'common school-education' (Benedict 1860 p. 310). Unlike Raikes's model, the Bible did not seem to be the center of instruction and the school remained free, initially, of church control (see Brown 1996 p. 106 for more on Bible as indication of religious teaching). Yet, teachings clearly emphasized a moral code of conduct conducive to manufacturing. A popular hymn sung by children in the Sunday schools of Slatersville and Webster began:

> Why should I deprive my neighbor
> Of his goods against his will?
> Hands were made for honest labour,
> Not to plunder or to steal. (Tucker 1984 p. 168)

By 1815, the schools came under control of the churches due to the introduction of 'Bible reading and a moderate share of religious instruction' (Benedict 1860 p. 310). Parents and the adult community supported the school, following a belief in the related nature of 'idleness, sinfulness, and ignorance' (Conrad 1973 p. 124). Moreover, as Tucker (1984 pp 171-2) notes, 'The tenets of the church were reinforced by lessons learned in the home…[for] the home became another training ground for a generation of factory hands.' One factory agent, writing in 1816, warned parents:

> O, anxious parents! Train your rising youth,
> In all the faithful elegance of Truth;
> Lest, where paternal care has failed to gain,
> A dread futurity the wretch restrain.
> Obedience teach; the base whereon thy skill
> May raise 'high towers' and mighty schemes fulfill;
> But mark the means that to the end conduce,
> And frame them fit, at least—for mortal use. (Tucker pp. 171-2)

The state of Rhode Island proved a unique site for such a school and may have contributed to its success and legendary status (despite the school's discontinuous operation). As Caroline Ware (1966 p. 286) comments in her study of New England cotton manufacture, 'Rhode Island was very backward in all provisions for public education, including that of children in manufacturing establishments.' And despite doubts as to the contributions such schools made to the rise in American literacy within the nineteenth century, within Rhode Island especially, 'Sunday schools ought to be included in any assessment of educational resources' (Boylan 1988 p. 29). After all, Rhode Island was alone in colonial America in its lacking laws on compulsory education (see Soltow & Stevens 1981). Connecting this tardiness to the 'heterogeneousness in the population,' Goodrich (1876 p. 123), in his history of Pawtucket, positions Rhode Island as the last 'New England State to establish common schools.' Brendan Gilbane (1969 p. 297) similarly points out that the State 'left the matter to individuals and private societies until 1828.'

As historian Nancy Beadie (2010 p. 13) illustrates in *Education and the Creation of Capital in the Early American Republic*, 'the place of education in the social and economic transformations of the countryside remains largely unexplored.' One such 'place' is the Sunday school, where education coexisted with a transition to capitalism, including the 'development

of outwork manufacturers, the accumulation of capital by local merchants and entrepreneurs, and the establishment of factory production' (Beadie p. 13). The 'place' of the Sunday school offered an institution in which the traditional aspects of rural New England could not only continue but intertwine with the industrial order: good workers and good citizens. Slater showed a profound attention to the local history and social relations within which he operated his mill. Slater recognized that colonial New Englanders' identity relied largely on the family, the church, and the community. Tucker (1984 p. 27) reminds us that even under the new factory system, 'Religion remained a potent force in the lives of New Englanders.' And as Clark (1996 p. 236) outlines, the 'role of the American countryside was less to create agrarian capitalism, as such, than to contribute conditions in which commercial and industrial capitalism would flourish.' Slater proved adept at nurturing and utilizing those conditions, as well as those 'potent forces,' in introducing and building his manufacturing system in Rhode Island— pointing to his true 'genius'. In contrast to fighting irreligion, as its evangelical successors would attempt, Slater's Sunday school stressed to families of rural New England that the shift from the farm and marketplace to the market was not to be feared.

Undoubtedly, there was a 'benevolent paternalism' that occupied mill owners such as Slater as they convinced rural villagers to join his workforce (Hadcock 1946 p. 37). Bagnall (1890 p. 68) notes that Slater showed a 'kindly and paternal interest' in his employees, an interest which included 'their personal, domestic, and social relations.' Yet, Slater's sponsorship as an approach to discipline was not fulfilled solely in a top-down hierarchy. It also reflected the precarious position manufacturers utilizing the village approach occupied, as living near the workers (as opposed to merchants financing Lowell, for example). The mill families did not 'hold Slater in awe, nor did they defer to Almy & Brown' (Kulik 1987 p. 173). Tales tell of him breaking the waterwheel free from ice, in order to begin mill operations on cold mornings. Further, Kulik (1987 p. 167) describes Slater's attention to punctuality and attendance but an aversion towards pecuniary punishment. Rarely was a fine recorded in his ledger. More interestingly, Slater repeatedly plied Almy and Brown for money and supplies for employees, as he was not permitted to purchase supplies himself. One request reads, 'The mill is now destitute of the following articles cotton to pick, corn, rye, coffee, tea, molasses and flour therefore if you have a part or all or can produce the above said articles, you will please send them as soon as [convenient]' (Almy, Brown & Slater Papers 1801). Another request demands, 'Brushes much wanted!! none to sweep the mill with' (Almy, Brown & Slater Papers 1801). Moreover, they asserted themselves in resisting and contesting issues related to factory discipline. Rhode Islanders' strong sense of independence ensured they would not assume the role of second-class citizens. Ultimately, the employee had one strategy for subverting the industrial order that may have encouraged leniency on the part of mill owners such as Slater: the ability to leave. Transiency was a common problem for mill owners, including Slater; so as Jonathan Prude (1987 p. 116) explains in his history of rural New England, mill owners had to 'rely on their good reputation to attract sufficient employees.' Education, both literacy and moral, offered one means for Slater to institutionalize a code of conduct and reciprocation outside of the mill, yet within the village.

While there was demographically no shortage of labor, especially child labor, Slater encountered an unwillingness of many local farmers and artisans to send their children for employment in his mills. Many factors played into this, including an anti-manufacturing sentiment, a general British hostility, and a concern for water rights on the Blackstone River (see Kulik 1985 on battles over water rights). Almy, Brown, and Slater's search for a sufficient workforce led them to seeking out families 'not in affluent circumstances, with children aged seven to twelve' (Almy, Brown & Slater Papers 1800). Despite the Sunday school's role as the

'first institution in the village which buttressed the values of the factory system,' attendance was not mandatory at Slater's Sunday school, as opposed to its English model (Kulik 1987 p. 170). As Kulik (1987 p. 171) writes, there is 'no economic argument [to] adequately explain that...choice.' But we must remain cognizant that mill owners were more than simply economic sponsors. In *Ten Hours Labor: Religion, Reform, and Gender in Early New England*, Teresa Murphy (1992 pp. 21-2) contends, millowners 'assumed the permanent moral dependence of their work force.' Jonathan Prude (1987 p. 92) depicts the relationship and its importance as such: 'early textile employers and employees taught themselves...how to respond to one another. They deciphered—or, more accurately, they created—the rules of the game for being industrial employers and employees. And by doing so they implemented a pivotal lesson in the social meaning of industrial capitalism.'

Exposing children to the 'three Rs' and a moral code of conduct represented a version of sponsorship, or what we might now term managerial control, amenable to most rural villagers. At the same time, such sponsorship proved invaluable to the success of the village approach in Rhode Island and elsewhere. Both the Sunday school (albeit in a more evangelical form) and mills proliferated throughout New England and the rest of the country. And while the education of factory children filled a gap in the literacy needs of rural families, basic literacy instruction would not in itself prove revolutionary. In looking at Slater's village approach and the role it played in shifting the work order of New England, we see managerial sponsorship as 'event, as action, as ideological, as local, as gendered, as complying with the structures of society, and as resisting those structures' (Daniell 2003 p. 3). Indeed, the non-cognitive functions of such schooling proved more lasting for both employers and employees: Through activities such as the Sunday school, Slater and others may have strengthened the paternalism—and Protestant work ethic—of the village but they also allowed working people to construct 'moral autonomy,' providing a 'critical component in the challenges working people made to New England paternalism' (Murphy 1992 p. 22). Others, including Tucker (1984 p. 30), position both groups as 'forging' a system that 'met their respective requirements.' Jonathan Prude (1987 p. 117) even goes so far as to position mill operatives as successful in 'limiting the hegemony of their employers,' while Andrew Ure (1835 p. 329) calls the factory system 'the labouring population['s] grand palladium.' Pointing to the role of early Protestant Sunday schools in England as sponsors of reading for working-class families, Deborah Brandt (1998 p. 168) acknowledges the 'reciprocal relationship' sponsors engage in with those they 'underwrite'.

But she also points to the 'ideological freight' such relationships, even, and perhaps especially, Slater's manufacturing villages, inevitably carried. In an October, 1961, issue of *The Spinner*, the Bulletin of the Old Slater Mill Museum, an advertisement reads: 'Slater's school represents the beginnings of personnel programs in American industry insofar as personnel operations go beyond mere recruitment and training in the immediate duties of the particular job. Slater understood that the well-being of employees and the community could contribute much to business success. Owens-Corning Fiberglass Corp. management understands that, too.' As a sponsor of textile workers' literacy and moral education in the American Industrial Revolution, Samuel Slater introduced an approach to managing labor that foreshadowed corporations of the twentieth century, including Owens-Corning Fiberglass Corporation and Ford Motor Company, where managerial control, paternal capitalism, and worker education became harder to distinguish from each other (see Hull 1997; Pennell on labor and literacy transitions; Burgy on Americanization classes in New Bedford mills). For example, in looking at undocumented migrant workers in poultry processing plants, Miranda Cady Hallett (2017 p. 27) describes 'disciplinary measures that…extend far beyond…a shop floor or assembly line.' She looks to

Henry Ford and his welfare programs designed 'to avoid the 'social ills' of industrial urbanization,' claiming, 'The interest in crafting worker morality and sociality under Fordist practices has only become more intense in the post-Fordist era' (Hallett 2017 p. 28). Literacy sponsorship in workplaces such as today's poultry processing plants may be far removed from the sponsorship of New England's textile mills; yet, the usefulness in investigating such sponsorship, by seemingly benevolent corporate leaders, especially during economic transition, remains important. As a harbinger of institutions to come, Slater's mill village, as well as the Sunday school, provides an early 'canary in the mines' with which to skeptically reflect on current worker socialization movements, operating under the guise of training, education, and development.

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Caring for the Internet: Content Moderators and the Maintenance of Empire

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Abstract

Scholarly and journalistic investigations of content moderation have thoroughly documented its emotional impact on workers, but have yet to analyze moderation as care labor. Out of sight from U.S. and European consumers, content moderators are hired by third-party outsourcing firms primarily in the Philippines or India to remove offensive or violent content from internet platforms in order to preserve their profitability and users' emotional well-being. Situating content moderation in the long history of domestic labor relations in the U.S., which were designed to support the expansion of imperial power, this essay proposes new ways of understanding the relationship between affective labor and the procedures of empire.

Keywords

Emotional labor, affective labor, empire, digital labor, content moderation, social media, globalization

Introduction

In the final minutes of Moritz Riesewieck and Hans Block's 2018 documentary, *The Cleaners,* an anonymous Filipina content moderator says of her work: 'When there's something important in your life, you have to keep giving a part of yourself and sacrifice for that cause. I sacrifice myself, yes. Sacrifice is always there. It will always be a part of my life. It's my job to prevent sinful images. I'm a preventer' (*The cleaners* 2018). As a moderator inundated with 'sinful' images that governmental and corporate powers deem too sensitive for common users, she removes violent and offensive content from sites like Facebook or YouTube. The documentarians overlay her narration with video footage of a Good Friday Christian ritual, featuring a Filipino man posed as a crucified Christ. The overlay sets up an analogy that calls viewers' attention to the extent to which moderators are required to sacrifice their mental health—possibly even their souls—in the production of the internet's spaces as comfortable sites of consumption for users in the U.S. or Europe. By romanticizing this Filipina worker as a martyr laboring out of love for the greater good, Riesewieck and Block feminize the labor of content moderation. Indeed, they introduce what has been an unexplored possibility: that content moderation may be understood as a form of care work which demands intense emotional labor performed not just for the well-being of the internet's consumers, but, more aptly, for the imperial powers that her sacrifice sustains. By removing violent content from various virtual spaces, moderators maintain the profitability of social media platforms, facilitating their expansion as they preserve the psychic and emotional well-being of users in the U.S. and Europe.

The Filipina moderator's narration recalls Arlie Hochschild's definition of emotional labor, a form of work demanded across the service sector industries in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. According to Hochschild, 'emotional labor' may be defined as that which 'requires one to induce or suppress feeling in order to sustain the outward countenance that produces the proper state of mind in others—in this case, the state of being cared for in a convivial and safe place. This kind of labor calls for a coordination of mind and feeling, and it sometimes draws on a source of self that we honor as deep and integral to our individuality' (1983 p. 20). Content moderators must sublimate their own emotional and social responses to what they witness, taking on the burden of potential trauma in order to sustain the virtual space as one 'convivial and safe.' And while this kind of labor is certainly unique to our current juncture, it has precedents in the history of 'women's work.' Indeed, Silvia Federici and others theorize that the present expansion of service sector jobs may be best understood as the commercialization of domestic labor historically performed within the home by both housewives and their paid, often racialized and/or immigrant servants (Federici 2012). The so-called 'women's work' of the domestic sphere, in other words, is now more formally integrated into the market in the service sector and gig economies. This economic and cultural transformation initiated the expanded use of what I call 'domestic labor relations'[38] across various economic sectors, albeit in adjusted form. It is not only that the care work, housework, and social reproductive responsibilities of housewives as well as servants are commercialized in the service sector economy, in other words, but that the labor relation between housewife and servant is reproduced among workers, employers, and customers in new forms.

This essay will suggest that, though dispersed across transnational networks of production and consumption, U.S. and European consumers and Filipino content moderators are set in a domestic labor relation, a hierarchical arrangement in which racialized workers are emotionally exploited, poorly compensated, and relegated to the 'underside' of the internet in order to support the production of a pseudo-domestic sphere that users of the Global North virtually inhabit. Such a proposition encourages us to recognize that contemporary affective labor occurs within a system of hierarchical relations reminiscent of those forged in the past. Taking its cue from studies of empire which have focused on its 'tense and tender ties,' (Stoler 2001 p.831) how imperialism was lived on the ground, I consider the internet as both a narratively produced and virtually inhabited space in which the designs of empire are played out, and, accordingly, in which its sentiments, affections, and affinities are forged. As currently constituted, the intimate relation between user and moderator is designed to be hierarchical and exploitative. However, by reconceptualizing moderators within a 'global chain of care,' (Hochschild 2000 p. 121) we may imagine alternative affinities and solidarities that resist the reproduction of inequalities.

Domestic Labor Relations and the Imperial Organization of Care

Across various colonial and postcolonial contexts, women's work in the so-called domestic sphere has symbolically as well as materially furthered imperial expansion, both culturally and

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[38] Labor relations as a concept in the U.S. emerged in the early twentieth century when the labor movement sought to mitigate against the abuses of capital through unionization and by petitioning for labor legislation which safeguarded workers' rights. The National Labor Relations Act of 1935, a foundational statute of U.S. labor law, is representative of the concept's institutional uses which, like the most powerful voices of the labor movement, narrowly defined work and excluded a variety of workers including housewives (who were, of course, unwaged), domestic servants, and agricultural laborers. I use the term 'domestic labor relations' to expand its meaning to recognize housewifery and servitude as forms of labor that are essential to the production of capital.

territorially. The 'domains of the intimate,' Ann Laura Stoler argues, play an important role in shoring up imperial power by 'shaping appropriate and reasoned affect (where one's sympathies should lie), severing intimate bonds and establishing others (which offspring would be acknowledged as one's own), establishing what constituted moral sentiments (family honor or patriotic duty)' (Stoler 2006 p. 2). Since the early nineteenth century, when the figure of the housewife emerged as the 'sovereign of an empire,'[39] and poorly paid domestic servants or enslaved black women were deemed her 'subjects,' the care work involved in the maintenance of the nation as well as the forwarding of its imperial designs has been distributed across hierarchical networks of feminized and racialized workers. Although the expansion of the service sector redistributed affective labor and care work across various industries and commercial contexts, these forms of labor continue to operate within structures that reproduce the inequalities of the domestic labor system. The 'outsourcing' of care work in transnational service industries has further changed the shape of domestic labor relations, as workers of the Global South perform emotional labor for consumers in the Global North across vast geographic distances and cultural differences. And while scholars have done well to highlight the exploitative nature of content moderation and other contemporary forms of care work, a critical framework attuned to the history of domestic labor allows us to apprehend the conditions of their possibility.

During the nineteenth century, domestic service across the U.S. was largely performed by black and immigrant women and men, whether Irish, German, and black in the Northeast, or Mexican and Chinese in the Southwest and West (Dudden 1983; Boydston 1994; Urban 2017). These labor arrangements were generally spontaneously devised, differing across regions; yet all were coercive, since they demanded that workers assimilate to the cultural mores of Anglo-American domesticity through the suppression of any evidence of cultural, class, or racial difference. Unlike the relation between employer and wage worker which was narrated as a market relation that facilitated the formal equality through use of a contract, domestic labor relations were narrated as occurring within a network of affective bonds using a metaphorics of kinship. The best servants both performed a labor of love, acting as 'part of the family,' and expected nothing in return. In her *Letters to Persons Who Are Engaged in Domestic Service* (1842)*,* Catharine Beecher argues that the emotional labor of servitude is beneficial not just for the family, but for the domestic herself: 'a domestic is brought into contact with a great variety of tempers, and learns to accommodate, and to govern her temper and tongue as she never could do without this kind of trial. A domestic, too, is in a situation in which she is, all the time, called on to give up her own ease and time to promote the comfort of others, and this tends to make the duty of *self-denying benevolence,* more easy to learn' (p. 75). Resonating remarkably with Hochschild's definition of emotional labor, Beecher's advice to domestics recommends that the practices of self-effacement and sublimation will ultimately make them better workers and women. This domestic labor system reinforced the supremacy of Anglo-American cultural practices, demanding that workers renounce an allegiance to their own homes and home cultures to better serve the needs of the American empire.

These demands served not only to reinforce the supremacy of Anglo-American cultural and national interests to which all were beholden, but also to incorporate racialized women into the nation as immutably subordinated workers. The home was narrated as a site of domestication in which housewives were armed with their 'influence' to contain and neutralize the 'savage'

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[39] Catharine Beecher uses this phrase to describe the duties of the housewife in her 1841 *Treatise on the Domestic Economy*, and in each of its 14 reprints. The term is later repeated in *The American Woman's Home* (1869), authored by Beecher and her sister, Harriet Beecher Stowe.

passions and persons which threatened the stability of the home and nation. The domestication of the nation's foreigners was not merely symbolic—by the end of the nineteenth century, domesticity was institutionalized as a disciplinary mechanism for acculturating Indigenous, convict, and immigrant women to the American home. As Evelyn Nakano Glenn shows in her study of the interrelated histories of care and coercion in the U.S., racialized and working-class women were 'Americanized' through their incorporation into the domestic labor system as servants. 'Even in teaching English,' she observes, 'it was assumed that the immigrant women would want and need to learn to talk mostly about domestic matters. Thus the first 20 English lessons outlined in the Commission of Immigration and Housing of California's *Primer for Foreign-Speaking Women* centered on homemaking duties. After the first set of eight lessons on buying groceries for the family, the lessons moved on to housekeeping. The first lesson in the series began with: I cook. / I wash. / I iron. / I sweep. / I mop. / I dust.' (2010 p. 76). These workers were assimilated into domesticity as its hard laborers, assigned the 'dirty work' of domesticity that Anglo-American housewives were too gentle to do themselves. Such a hierarchical racial order and labor relation was further reinforced in the spatial organization of the home, displacing servants from their former place at the dining room table to dwell in servants' quarters and kitchens, out of sight. The production of domestic space was thus divided between the performance of an aesthetic—the creation of an image of ideal femininity, family life, and bourgeois virtue—and the intense physical, mental, and emotional labor that such performance demanded.

Over the course of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, as domestic labor has been increasingly commercialized in service economies, the domestic labor relations forged in the home are reconfigured among workers, employers, and customers in new ways. Spaces of consumption have sought to make reproductive labor more profitable and efficient by redistributing care work, cleaning, cooking, etc., among a greater number workers. An especially telling example of this reconfiguration occurs in the restaurant industry. Using the metaphor of the home to describe both the spatial organization and the gendered, racialized division of labor, restaurants are divided between the 'Front of House' and 'Back of House' staff. In the front, the most visible staff, hostesses, servers, and bartenders, are 'expected to look presentable, and be able to deal with the customers. Often they are educated, and have useless degrees in things like 'English,' 'History'—or worse yet—'Art History'' (Prole 2010 p. 20). These staff are frequently white, and usually women, involved primarily in a performance of affective labor to accommodate customers' desires. Conversely, the back of house staff is hidden from view, tasked with the hardest and often lowest paying work. Prole, a contemporary proletarian collective, explains: 'It is common for the entire back of the house to be illegal immigrants working under the table. They don't have any contact with the customers, and therefore don't have to look like or speak the same language as the customers' (2010 p. 19). The kitchen is the loudest, hottest, and most cramped part of the 'house' where all of the 'dirty work' takes place, usually out of consumers' view. The commonplace practice of racializing back of the house service labor partakes of the same discursive patterns and practices as domestic servitude in the nineteenth century, and the spatial organization of the restaurant reproduces the aesthetic demands of domesticity. In the restaurant, hard labor is reserved for those who have a precarious relationship to the nation and stand outside of pathways to political enfranchisement or social inclusion. And though the express purpose of the restaurant industry is not necessarily to strengthen U.S. imperial power, the discourse of corporate expansion and entrepreneurial conquest share an obvious affinity with the logic of empire.

By distributing the care work of content moderation among digital laborers of the Global South, U.S. corporations, acting in cooperation with state powers, repurpose historical domestic labor practices on a transnational scale. Sociologists and anthropologists have suggested that the labor of call center workers in India, for example, is best understood as a form of distant care work, one that demands an intense emotional labor at great personal and social cost (Mankekar & Gupta 2017; Aneesh 2012). These studies, however, have yet to consider the historical labor arrangements which have made the outsourcing and dispersion of care work possible. In the broadest sense, that U.S. tech corporations find sources of 'cheap labor' in the Philippines, presently governed by a repressive dictatorial regime which the U.S. unofficially supports, is consistent with the historical legacy of U.S. empire (Gonzalez 2011). A former colonial holding and a state over which the U.S. continues to exercise neocolonial economic and cultural power, the Philippines is home to, their employers boast, the best qualified and most adept content moderators, given their knowledge of U.S. cultural and political mores (Roberts 2015 p. 36). And while some moderation occurs in the U.S. (usually performed by recent college graduates), when outsourced, it is uniformly a poorly paid and under-supported form of work. The labor is generally performed by both men and women who see it as an opportunity to work in a growing field as well as a profitable sector of the global economy. However, most do not advance beyond the rank of moderator, and many do not endure the work for very long. The labor of witnessing suicides, child pornography, acts of war, or other violent threats and acts of violence takes too serious a toll on their mental, emotional, and social health. Given the history of domestic labor relations, it is no surprise that content moderation is largely performed by cultural 'outsiders,' who are poorly compensated, abused, and unseen. It recalls too easily the spatial organization of nineteenth-century domesticity in which racialized servants worked, lived, and cared out of sight.

Domesticating Cyberspace

Since its popular availability in the late twentieth century, the internet has been developed in accordance with the ideological assumptions and political interests of its creators and users. Feminist social media and internet scholars have shown, for instance, that social media platforms reinforce the normative gender relations of the offline social world, intensifying women's role in maintaining social networks (Arcy 2016; Duffy 2015; Ouellette &Wilson 2011; Portwood-Stacer 2014). Safiya Umoja Noble (2018) has also argued that technologies like search engines, and the code that underwrites them, reflect the racial politics of their creators. The design of social media platforms, I suggest, reproduces beliefs about the production and management of domestic space—both 'private' and national. As new 'domains of the intimate,' social media platforms act as pseudo-domestic spaces, sites on which social relations are played out, and where cultural affinities and moral sentiments are forged. These virtual domestic spaces operate according to the same rules as domestic space offline: while some inhabit it, others are called upon to care for it.

Corporations claim that virtual spaces, especially social media platforms, simulate the social relations of worlds offline, creating the expectation that users should inhabit these spaces as they would their own living rooms. Facebook and YouTube herald their platforms as sites of community and sharing, entreating users to be on their best behavior. Insists Facebook's Community Standards page: 'Every day, people come to Facebook to share their stories, see the world through the eyes of others, and connect with friends and causes. The conversations that happen on Facebook reflect the diversity of a community of more than two billion people communicating across countries and cultures and in dozens of languages, posting everything from text to photos and videos' (Facebook 2019). In this narrative, Facebook offers a

cosmopolitan fantasy of global integration familiarly peddled by advocates of globalization's capacity to 'flatten' the world (Friedman 2005), imagining that the platform constructs, in more idealized and globalized form, the social relations of the offline world. YouTube's content policies similarly claim that, 'When you use YouTube, you join a community of people from all over the world. Every cool, new community feature on YouTube involves a certain level of trust. Millions of users respect that trust, and we trust you to be responsible too. Following the guidelines below helps to keep YouTube fun and enjoyable for everyone' (YouTube 2019). YouTube instructs its users in their civic duty, setting the terms of ideal user interactions by deploying the language of social responsibility. Both platforms appeal to users to be polite, to perform as responsible members of communities, emphasizing the wholesome, even 'family-friendly,' aesthetic that they seek to uphold. In order that the experience of the virtual world conforms to the aesthetic criteria of American bourgeois sociality, U.S. corporations and users assume, interactions must be strictly policed. In their conception of virtual platforms as social spaces in which affective bonds are formed, therefore, tech corporations create the conditions of possibility for content moderation.

If on the one hand, corporations represent these virtual spaces as a cultural ideal of sociality, on the other, cultural narratives often represent them as the end of democratic social relations as we know them. Phrases like the 'dark web' register fears about the unknown and 'savage' forces that lurk in the internet's unkempt spaces. TV shows like *Catfish* (2012-) or *To Catch a Predator* (2004-2007) stoke fears about the dangerous potential of unregulated social interaction. Moderators themselves experience the virtual world not as a 'safe environment,' but an endlessly hostile and 'uncivilized' space. In one of Adrian Chen's journalistic exposés, for instance, a former moderator explains: 'Think like that there is a sewer channel and all of the mess/dirt/waste/shit of the world flow towards you and you have to clean it' (Chen 2012). Without the careful attention of the moderators, the virtual world is far from the 'cool community' described by corporations; rather, it is described here as a vulgar space that *needs* domestication, maintenance, and care. Says one moderator, 'Nowadays, everybody has access to internet and if it is not controlled well, it becomes a porn factory' (*The Moderators* 2017). During her interview in *The Cleaners,* Google executive Nicole Wong alludes to this implication, explaining that when you are building a platform, 'You start with the question what's the vision for what should be on your platform. What isn't appropriate? What don't you want in your community?' (*The Cleaners* 2018) The social production of the internet as a nefarious space works to naturalize the desire for surveillance and therefore the necessity of content moderation. Not merely scenes of leisurely socializing and consumption, social media platforms are sites of domestication in which content moderators, equipped with surveillance technologies as well as the rules for interpretation, contain and neutralize the 'savage' passions and persons which threaten the safety, security, and emotional well-being of the platforms' users.

Like housewives' concerns about hiring 'foreign' domestics who were unprepared to meet the challenges of caring for American households, corporations and users register a nativist anxiety about 'outsourcing' the apparently necessary care work of moderation to foreign workers whose affections may lie elsewhere. U.S. third-party companies anticipate this anxiety by highlighting their workers' native-born status as a selling point, distinguishing themselves from 'foreign' moderation services who, they imply, are ill-equipped to develop quick and accurate interpretations of culturally specific content. One company's former slogan recommends: 'Outsource to Iowa—not India' (Roberts 2015 p. 32). A central preoccupation of *The Cleaners*, too, is moderators' inability to distinguish politically important but potentially inadmissible content from that which is in clear violation of corporate policy and cultural norms. The

documentary stages the moderation process in Manila, asking experienced moderators to determine whether an image is in accordance with corporate guidelines. Among these images, moderators identify the iconic photographs of the 'Napalm Girl' and of an Abu Ghraib prisoner as images flagged for removal. Though the documentarians' broader point, one hopes, is that the corporate guidelines lack the ability to discern the nuances of cultural and social context, the 'foreign' moderators' complicity with guidelines, as well as their apparent ignorance in their performance of labor, remains another looming implication. As they narrate it, content moderation appears to demand not just emotional labor, but cultural affinity. Users and corporations expect that a worker perform their labor effectively as well as for the right reasons, out of love, care, and respect for the space and its occupants.

Designing social media platforms as virtual domestic spaces creates the necessity for digital care work, euphemistically described as either 'cleaning' or 'policing.' This metaphorics pervades even among scholars who liken moderators to 'cleaners,' 'janitors,' 'custodians,' engaged in the 'dirty work' of 'scrubbing' the internet; or otherwise figure them as 'snipers' or 'policemen,' those who 'enforce' laws, 'secure' borders and 'protect' citizens of the U.S. and Europe from all things 'evil' and 'suspicious' (Gillepsie 2018; Madrigal 2017; Roberts 2016; *The Cleaners* 2018; *The Moderators* 2017). And while the symbolic and metaphorical nature of these descriptors has been generally overlooked, under the pressure of scrutiny, and within the framework of 'imperial domesticity,' they appear neither arbitrary nor politically neutral (Kaplan 1998, p. 587). Taken together, they position workers within a racial order, enlisting them in the affective labor necessary for the maintenance of a pseudo-domestic space designed to further imperial power. By deconstructing the narrative production of cyberspace as a virtual domestic sphere, we can begin to imagine beyond labor relations that reproduce inequalities and advance imperial power.

Caring for the Internet

Reading content moderation as care work reveals that the trauma moderators endure is not merely an unfortunate consequence. Rather, it is a functional necessity of empire which seeks to secure the stability of its communities in order to extend the reach of its power. Neither natural nor inevitable, that moderators are tasked with absorbing all that is menacing in the virtual world is a condition made possible by the carrying forward of historically produced domestic labor relations and the imperial logic on which they rested. However, situating moderators within a 'global care chain,' a 'series of personal links between people across the globe based on the paid or unpaid work of caring,' recovers the set of relations in which these workers care (Hochschild 2000, p. 121). Such a project of critical recovery allows us to deconstruct the hierarchical relations that have long structured care work to imagine alternative solidarities. Users and moderators, after all, participate in the cultivation of affective bonds in different ways, but are no less a part of the same virtual space and 'global community.'

Over the past decade, since Adrian Chen and other journalists began investigating content moderation, several confidential sources have leaked corporate guidelines and training materials used to instruct moderators (Koepler 2019; Newton 2019; Madrigal 2017; Chen 2012, 2014, 2017). These documents detail criteria used to delineate what constitutes permissible and illicit hate speech, violence, terrorism, or sexual content. Differently enforced around the world, these guidelines have changed to become more elaborate over time in response to cultural shifts and political pressures. Since the concept of content moderation is fairly new, and many of these technologies are developed and implemented in the absence of any legal regulation, its logistics have been constantly shifting. What this means for

moderators, of course, is that the terms of their labor, too, are in constant flux. In spite of this, many third-party companies allow an extremely small margin of 'error,' demanding near perfect decision-making from moderators that must understand not only U.S. cultural, political, and social history to enforce guidelines, but also how these discourses are evolving in the present (Newton 2019). Whether they are housed in the U.S. or the Philippines, as the internet's care workers, moderators engage in physical, mental, and emotional labor, all of which are entangled in the act of viewing, interpreting, and 'clicking' through user-generated content.

Moderators' work is not only to bear witness to the deeply personal, disturbing evidence of human suffering, but remove evidence of its existence in order to sustain the emotional and psychic well-being of the virtual world's other inhabitants. As one moderator puts it:

> '[You perform this labor] just for the people to think it's safe to go online, when in fact in your everyday job it's not safe for you' (*The Cleaners* 2018).

While emotional labor is perhaps exploitative by design, content moderation extracts this labor with a novel intensity. Though these virtual domestic spaces avow to connect persons and bring users together in a community, they forge no connections between the users and their moderators. Denied access to these social spaces, and even prohibited from socializing with each other, moderators are required to sign non-disclosure agreements that isolate them from even their co-workers. By abstracting moderators from any 'global care chain,' corporations burden moderators with long-term psycho-emotional effects as well as social alienation. And while corporations like Facebook have ostensibly attempted to improve the conditions under which moderators labor—exclusively in their U.S. offices—such attempts appear futile. By equipping offices with more counselors and providing increased screening for workers with 'resiliency,' who are best suited for the job, employers appear to mitigate against some of the most troubling aspects of content moderation. However, this attempt at redress assumes that the emotional labor of content moderators is a 'necessary evil.' The maintenance of the internet—and the sustainability of a profitable platform—demand that someone be traumatized.

In fact, corporations have begun reframing the emotional labor involved in moderation as a personal benefit and sign of workers' inner strength. Reporter Casey Newton recounts an interview with a counselor at a content moderation firm in Phoenix: 'When I ask about the risks of contractors developing PTSD, a counselor that I'll call Logan tells me about a different psychological phenomenon:

> 'post-traumatic growth,' an effect whereby some trauma victims emerge from the experience feeling stronger than before. The example he gives me is that of Malala Yousafzai, the women's education activist, who was shot in the head as a teenager by the Taliban' (Newton 2019).

The counselor's sense that some persons have a greater emotional capacity to endure extreme forms of epistemological violence reads, of course, as absurd. Within the history of care work, however, this has been the status quo: like 'foreign' domestics who must assimilate to a cultural system which perceives them as inherently inferior, content moderators must subordinate their own epistemological and ontological orientation in order to support the 'safety' of a worldview that refuses to see them. What is more, his example of Yousafzai fetishizes racialized and feminized women as uniquely capable of sustaining emotional trauma or abuse, deploying the

same rhetoric which justified the exploitation of immigrant, indigenous, and black domestic servants.

This prompts us to consider further how the kinds of emotional labor demanded of moderators depends on their subject positioning. Moderators in India, for example, confront the same beheadings and sexual violence as their U.S. counterparts, but must also negotiate vast and alienating cultural differences. Since they are required to make judgments quickly, in some cases maintaining a speed of 2,000 images per hour, it is essential that they internalize corporate regulations which attempt to construct the perspective of a common user from the U.S. or Europe. Adrian Chen's 2017 documentary, *The Moderators*, for example, takes place at an office in India where Hindu men and women are required to differentiate between forms of offensive and inoffensive nudity, identifying the image as permissible or pornographic. As their training manager acknowledges, viewing images of naked or near naked women is likely an alienating experience, since it may be deeply offensive to their personal, religious, and cultural beliefs. In this way, the work of content moderation extends the reach of U.S. cultural imperialism to act on individual subjectivities in a highly oppressive way. Asked to suppress their personal and social identities, moderators are required to forget themselves in order to keep intact the subjectivity of users in the U.S. and Europe.

Akin to the accent, affect, and cultural training that call center employees undergo, the demand to adopt a foreign worldview results in what A. Aneesh calls the 'disintegration of the self.' 'Although the story of globalization is often a story of integrations, connections, and flows,' he argues, 'it is difficult to ignore disintegrations, contradictions, and divides that constitute the experience of globalization to a similar degree' (Aneesh 2012 p. 528). The experience of global integration, which is to say, the experience of consuming 'safe' images of foreign cultures and worldviews from home, depends on the alienation of workers from their own social worlds and selves. Says one moderator:

> 'I'm different from what I am before. It's just like a virus in me where in it slowly penetrating in my brain and the reaction of my body is like I'm working as a moderator day to day and then I quit. I need to stop. There's something wrong happening' (*The Cleaners* 2018).

The 'intrusions and interventions of body and person' involved in the labor of content moderation sustain a form of colonial intimacy between moderators and U.S. consumers, and are therefore illustrative of a powerful tactic of neoliberal global capital (Stoler 2006 p. 5).

Though it is this intimacy that presently sustains inequalities, it may also be a site of possible solidarity. The culturally imperialistic demand that moderators across the globe become acculturated to American and European political and social contexts forges, too, an intimacy between moderators and users, who both have a stake in international developments of all kinds. These guidelines resonate, of course, with nineteenth-century domestication programs used to prepare immigrants to perform care work in the domestic sphere; however, they also have the consequence of constructing cultural links between moderators and users who are differently engaged in the production of public discourse and the content of virtual spaces. Implementing the criteria that Facebook sets for users in the U.S., for example, requires that moderators in India or the Philippines adeptly distinguish between forms of 'white nationalism,' 'white separatism,' and 'white supremacy'—an interpretive distinction that even those living in the U.S. may fail to discern (Cox 2018). From this perspective, moderators share the burden of identifying neo-fascist rhetoric, learning with the users that they protect how

these ideologies adapt to changing historical conditions. Moderators and users are differently empowered to shape the contours of political discourse online—users frequently issue demands on Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube that result in policy changes; and moderators, though theoretically under the direction of corporations, nonetheless apply guidelines at their discretion. Seeing users and moderators within a 'global chain of care,' engaged in related immaterial and affective labor, encourages us to reconsider the role of moderators in digital social interactions.

The case of livestream content, which requires moderation to occur in real-time, represents another possibility of empathetic intimacy. Though the cultural and geographic distance between moderators and users is maintained, the demands of livestream moderation create a temporal proximity in which all bear witness to videos together and simultaneously. This instance of care work demands that moderators act quickly to take down livestream videos of suicides or terrorism in order to sustain other users' experience of the platform as a 'convivial and safe place' (Hochschild 1983 p. 20). In recently leaked training materials, Facebook recommends that its moderators look out for 'Warning Signs' that signal a livestream video is likely to become impermissible content. Among these they list: 'Evidence of human despair,' such as 'crying, pleading, [and] begging' (Cox 2019). Moderators can act in these moments not only to protect the platform, but also the users offline. While this was not always the case, the recent terror attack in New Zealand, broadcast on Facebook Live, has prompted users to demand that moderators be empowered to enlist the support of law enforcement if it could save users' lives. In fact, reportage of the attack has begun to recover the global care chain in which moderators labor, as journalists express empathy for the workers who, with the world, helplessly watched the livestream of a mass shooting. A source is reported as saying, 'I couldn't imagine being the reviewer who had to witness that livestream in New Zealand' (Koebler 2019). Recognizing moderators as active participants in public discourse, as personally affected by global acts of violence, refutes their positioning as either empowered and threatening overseers, or lowly custodians in subordinated positions of service. Instead, we might begin to see them as agents actively participating in communities and intervening into the social lives of users, both online and offline.

Conclusion

In an effort to recognize content moderators and deconstruct assumptions as well as prevailing narratives which persist in describing their labor either as either a necessary evil, or of secondary importance to consumers' interests, this essay has situated their labor in the history of domestic labor relations. In difference with scholarship that 'attempt[s] to locate utopian potential in the forces of production…[by] idealizing women's and reproductive work as spheres free from alienation and domination' (Schultz 2006), I suggest that affective labor, including content moderation, has historically occurred within coercive, hierarchical, and exploitative arrangements. That workers themselves are enlisted to do the labor which effaces their own conditions of possibility is not a coincidence, but a well-trod tactic, used by housewives who entreated their workers to self-discipline and self-efface, and by many others thereafter who capitalized on the exclusion of care work from dominant conceptions of labor. Recognizing content moderation as not just occurring within, but produced by, an imperial labor system, we can move beyond the question of improving the labor conditions of moderation, or securing 'freedom of expression' for users, and begin to consider how alternative alliances and intimacies may be forged.

With her project 'Offline-Online,' for instance, activist Jillian York has already begun making connections between the lived experiences of inequality by historically disenfranchised communities'offline' and the regulations imposed by corporations which restrict their capacity for self-representation 'online,' making infographics which hold these systemic violences side-by-side (Onlinecensorship.org). She suggests that the fact that, offline, 'Black Americans are 3x more likely to be killed by police than White Americans,' bears some relation to the fact that, online, 'In 2017, a coalition of 77 social and racial justice organizations wrote to Facebook about censorship of Facebook users of color and takedowns of images discussing racism' (Onlinecensorship.org). The alternative way of seeing content moderation that I have here proposed begs the question of how a project like York's would change if we more fully considered the potential for solidarity between exploited content moderators and the communities of consumers that are also systematically excluded from membership in Facebook's 'safe environment.'

Author Bio

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College Rankings: Creating an Equitable Model of Transformation and Institutional Effectiveness

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Abstract

Colleges that serve working-class students show up poorly in traditional rankings of US colleges. Without appropriate outcome measures, measures of 'quality' of inputs drive most current ranking systems. The trouble is that quality is often just a measure of pre-existing privilege (e.g., selectivity, average SAT scores). In this article, I demonstrate the viability of a model that uses economic returns data while factoring in the relative lack of privilege of students attending any particular institution as a way of ranking that institution's transformative efficacy and institutional effectiveness. The model was then tested on a diverse sample of 655 US colleges and universities for whom reliable economic returns and institutional effectiveness data are available. Unlike widely used rankings models, this proposed alternative model can distinguish between reproducing privilege (high economic returns as expected, low defaults, timely year to degree and fewer incompleters) and facilitating social mobility (higher returns and persistence than would be expected given the incoming characteristics of students). The article concludes with a discussion of the uses to which such a model could be best put.

Keywords

College rankings, working-class college students, social mobility, institutional effectiveness

Introduction: what do college rankings measure – prestige or outcomes?

The most widely known, used, and criticized college rankings model belongs to *U.S. News & World Report*. USNAWR first published its annual 'America's Best Colleges' rankings in 1983. A key part of the rankings are based on reviews by peer institutions. This has made it difficult for colleges with strong academic reputations to be displaced in the rankings. Indeed, a handful of colleges and universities have remained at the top of the rankings since the first publication. Other criteria used to rank colleges are its rate (the percentage of admitted students), average SAT scores of admitted students, and yield rates. All three of these criteria reward colleges for their being choosy about whom they admit. For this reason, open admissions colleges or colleges that serve populations who may be underprepared for college never make it into the top of chart.

Sociologists, economists, and educational researchers have repeatedly demonstrated the weaknesses of this hegemonic ranking system (Ehrenberg 2003, Brooks 2005, Leo 2011, Volkwein & Grunig 2005). It is a particularly poor measure of institutional effectiveness, as 'numerous factors that frequently lie beyond institutional control strongly influence degree completion rates, such as the socioeconomic status and academic preparedness of incoming students' (Horn and Lee 2016 pg.470). While USNAWR has long been criticized, it's also

been viewed as the only game in town. More than two million viewed its 'Best Colleges' webpage in 2014, according to USNAWR, and most parents and potential college students have probably allowed its rankings to factor into their decision about what college to attend. In fact, moving into its 'Top 50' substantially improves admission (number and quality of admissions) the following year (Bowman & Bastedo 2099). Colleges thus feel bound to make decisions based on how these decisions will affect their ranking. Attempts to displace these measures have failed in the past.   In 2015, for example, the Obama administration retreated from a plan to rate colleges based on completion rates and time to degree, two measures that might have shifted focus to measuring student success. It is worth noting, however, that such a plan might also have effectively punished schools that accept large numbers of underrepresented students, as these students often take longer to complete a degree (Field 2013).

One of the largest problems with all existing and planned rankings systems is the absence of an agreed upon measurement outcome. USNAWR's rankings rely heavily on the quality of *inputs* (e.g., selectivity measures). In other words, a school's ranking is determined less by student success *through and after* college and more on the *quality of students admitted.* The rejected Obama plan considered a variety of outcome measures – completion rates, transfer rates, employment and earnings, graduate school attendance, and student loan repayment rates. No agreements were ever made on how these measures would be used, in what proportions, or, as with the case of employment and earnings, how obtained. Ideally, we would like an outcome measure that captures learning and growth over time (e.g., Arum and Roksa 2010), but graduates and their parents might prefer a more basic measurement of economic payoff – do graduates find jobs that pay well? Working-class college students in particular need to know how choosing college X over college Z may affect one's economic security ten years down the line. This is basic consumer information nearly impossible to acquire in the field of higher education and its absence has perhaps allowed college rankings to become the game of prestige that they presently are.

No federal or state agency regularly collects employment and salary information on college graduates of particular institutions. This is the reason we have so far been unable to rate individual colleges and universities using an outcome measure of performance. Into this vacuum has arrived Payscale, a for-profit company that has used crowdsourcing to amass a huge amount of data on the beginning and midcareer salaries of approximately 1000 colleges and universities. To date, more than thirty-five million profiles have been added to their database. The company sells individual reports on companies and colleges to individuals and investors but makes the aggregate median average pay available to all. Reported midcareer salaries on Payscale range from $40,300 (Shaw University) to $138,800 (Harvey Mudd College), with 50% falling between $65,000 and $85,000. With this tool, we can devise an alternative rankings system that actually measures economic returns. There will still be a place, of course, for rankings of academic prestige. If, however, the administration wants to reward schools that make a difference in the lives of students, it will need a model very different from the USNAWR's 'Best Colleges.'

In this article, I demonstrate the viability of a model that uses economic returns data while factoring in the relative lack of privilege of students attending any particular institution as a way of ranking that institution's transformative efficacy. I offer this as a heuristic model, and leave mathematical refinements and implementations to other researchers. With publicly available data, any person can use these models to assess an institution's overall effectiveness

and thereby compare institutions. I offer suggestions for such comparisons for legislators and institutions later in the article.

Measuring outcomes in a stratified higher education field

The higher education system in the US is less of a system than a configuration of often autonomous regional and institutional networks. Unlike many European systems, where students compete to find a place in a fixed hierarchical system, such as entry to the *grands écoles* vs. universities in France, students in the US confront a bewildering set of options. They can choose to enter a two-year program or a four-year program, public or private, for-profit or non-profit, comprehensive or liberal arts or technical, religious or non-denominational, in-state or out-of-state, to name only the most obvious choices. Surely part of the appeal of the *US News system* and rankings in general is to provide some clarity to this universe.

Although we often talk about having a meritocracy in the US, the complexity of the higher education system makes it difficult to properly assess this claim. Some schools cost much more than others, and they may or may not be any more 'selective' than less expensive schools. Some of the most academically rigorous institutions are state flagships (for example, UC Berkeley) that have low in-state tuition and so should be open to the best and brightest from all social backgrounds. On the other hand, some private universities are quite expensive, have long histories of serving elite students, and are also incredibly selective in their admissions policies. The recent cheating scandal involving celebrities in the US buying access to elite universities is a case in point[40]. An excellent study by Winston and Hill (2005) concludes that many smart working-class students never apply to these institutions. We have a system that, perhaps partly due to its bewildering complexity, often sorts students into particular parts of the system based on factors that have less to do with ability and more on perceived affinities and expected costs.

Researchers have long remarked upon the ways that class background intersects with the US higher education landscape (Berg 2010; Crane 1969; Engberg 2012; Grodsy & Jackson 2009; Kahlenberg 2004; Reynolds 1927; Stuber 2011). Beyond the 'public vs. private' or 'four-year and two-year' divide, there are many ecological niches. In general, low-income and working-class students are less likely to attend college and more likely to attend a less selective institution when they do (Walpole 2007). Astin and Oseguera (2004) shockingly reported that US higher education was more socioeconomically stratified at the time of their study than at any time during the past three decades, with elite students often crowding out middle-income students at the top colleges. Things do not appear to have reversed course.   Low-income, working-class, and first-generation students are particularly underrepresented at selective private liberal arts colleges, and their difficulties attending such colleges have been well documented (Ostrove & Long 2007; Aries & Seider 2005; Mullen 2009).

Colleges and universities in the US are also raced and gendered. There are currently forty-two four-year institutions serving women exclusively, and sixty-six serving men exclusively (NCES *College Navigator* data, author analyses). Ninety-one Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU) and twelve Tribal Universities currently operate in the US and there are many more newly emerging (newly identified, at least) Minority-Serving Institutions (defined as enrolling 25% or more of a particular ethnic group). What these latter designations are capturing are historic ties between particular demographic groups of students and particular

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[40] https://www.nytimes.com/2019/03/12/us/college-admissions-cheating-scandal.html

institutions, but these exist to some extent at all colleges and universities. Ask an 'enrollment manager' and they will be able to tell you exactly what the 'target' student is for a given campus. The universe of Minority-Serving Institutions (MSI) is diverse in terms of class. Some colleges, like Howard University, a private HBU, are difficult to get into, expensive, and serve many elite students while others, like South Carolina State University, a public HBU, are relatively easy to get into, affordable, and serve mostly low-income students (NCES *College Navigator* data, author analyses).

The complex stratification of the American higher educational universe makes measuring institutional effectiveness extremely difficult. A recurring question in the literature is how much of a particular outcome (whether it be learning, retention rates, employment, income, and even satisfaction) can be attributable to the institution and how much is more of a product of the types of students the institution serves (Alon 2007; Hussey & Swinton 2011; Kim, Kim, Jacquette & Bastedo 2014; Mattern, Shaw and Kobrin 2010; Melguizo 2010; Sibulkin 2011). Studies that show different economic returns by *type* of college attended often highlight the difficulties of evaluating institutional type effects when types serve and attract significantly differentiated student bodies. For example, Thomas and Zhang (2005) demonstrate that graduates from what they refer to as 'higher quality' colleges earn more early in their career, but leave one wondering, 'do elite students earn more because they attend elite colleges, or because they are elite' We still don't really know (Brand & Halaby 2006). We do know that returns to attending highly selective colleges have been increasing since 1972 (Hoxby 2001), but how much this is attributable to greater horizontal stratification within higher education is not known.

Students are increasingly concerned with the costs of college. An all-time high of 88% of first-year students in 2011 reported that they went to college 'to be able to get a better job' (Pryor et al. 2012). A majority (67%) believed that the current economic situation affected where they enrolled. This may amplify stratification within higher education. It also puts a great deal of pressure on public colleges and universities, whose students tend to be most concerned about post-graduate outcomes, to demonstrate their institutional effectiveness. Many state legislators are expressing concern about the rising costs of college and demanding results. Some states, like Maine, are linking unemployment insurance wage records with college student records to measure the impact of various colleges and major fields of study (Leparulo 2015). There are privacy concerns with this type of analysis, however, and most states currently block use of this data.

Researchers have explored the impact of college on the economic outcomes of graduates, and the differences of this impact for various groups and majors (Brand & Yu 2010; Hu & Wolniak 2010; Liu, Thomas & Zhang 2010; Torche 2011. Put simply, college does not seem to have the same returns for all students, although the patterns are quite complicated as different majors and different types of institutions interact with student background to produce a wide array of possible outcomes. For example, attending an elite institution seems to make a bigger overall impact on low-income and racial minority students, although these students still earn less than their peers (Brand & Yu 2010). Female graduates appear to earn less than their male peers, even controlling for differences in fields of study (Zhang 2008). Payoffs to more 'practical' majors also may appear larger immediately out of college than in the long term (Roksa & Levey 2010), but this may have less to do with the major and more with the types of students attracted to practical vs. liberal arts majors (Goyette & Mullen 2006). Suffice it to say, research into the forms and mechanisms of 'horizontal stratification' within higher education is an ongoing project (Garber & Cheung 2008).

As useful as this line of research has been, it has not linked outcomes to particular institutions. Research at the institutional level often lacks economic returns data. For example, Eff (2012) evaluated the cost effectiveness of roughly 1000 US four-year colleges and universities. He generated scores that allowed the ranking of institutions by a weighted sum of institutional characteristics per dollar of average net price, arguably providing an objective means of ranking institutions as the best values in higher education. But Eff's ranking does not include any measure of economic returns to the student. The rankings tell us how effective a college is in the use of its dollars, but not how this effectiveness translates to better outcomes for its graduates. What we need is a similar measure of individual institutional effectiveness of outcomes, taking into account the types of students that attend the institution.

Constructing a transformative effectiveness ratings system for colleges and universities

This section will describe the methods and criteria used to generate a model that allows comparisons of transformative effectiveness by institution. It is important to first be very clear about the purpose of the model in order to include criteria that advance that purpose. What will from now on be referred to as the Undergraduate Transformative Effectiveness Ratings Model (UTERM) provides comparative measures of average outcomes of students of a given college or university in terms of midcareer salaries *taking into account* the school's overall demographic profile. Its purpose is to evaluate how well the graduates of a particular institution fare economically *given their averaged points of origin*. Unlike *US News* ratings, colleges and universities are not penalized for having working-class students; in fact, institutions that only serve elite students will NOT score well in UTERM, because they will be unable to show transformative effects. This means, too, that any attempts to 'game' the system by increasing selectivity will have no or negative effects. Conceptually, there are only two ways to advance one's place in the UTERM ratings – either increase participation of underserved students or improve economic returns for graduates.

The primary users of such a model would be those interested in comparing institutional effectiveness for research or policy purposes. State legislators, for example, might use the model to compare effectiveness of its public institutions, or to see how the flagship university holds up against competitor private institutions in the state. Researchers might be drawn to examining how types of institutions (HBCUs, liberal arts colleges in the Northeast) are more or less transformative. The model is not intended for individual student applicants, for each individual's outcome may differ substantially from the averaged transformative effect. Because of the primary use for policy and research, the following criteria were included: (a) the model should be based on publicly available data; (b) the model should not rely on proprietary information or formulae that are not publicly made available; (c) the model should be easy to adjust (i.e., shifting the relative weight of a particular factor for purposes specific to the observer; (d) the model should include both an overall measure of institutional effectiveness as well as different benchmarks for different types of institutions (given the variability of demographic profiles by institutional type).

The model was created in stages, testing for validity and reliability with the successive addition of cases. The possible universe was limited to 1000, as that is the total number of colleges for which Payscale offers reliable midcareer salary data. The sample of 655 was chosen by pulling an equal number of colleges from each salary point, while purposively including the flagship university of each state and all AAU member institutions. Forty-eight HBCU are included in the sample. For profits were originally included (as they are included in Payscale's database)

but were found to not work well with the model; this could be that the information they provide is not as complete or reliable. Future research will need to be done in this area.

The first step in creating UTERM was an examination of the relationship of key demographic data with economic returns. Relationship to returns scatterplots were run for (a) percentage of underrepresented minority students; (b) percentage female; (c) percentage receiving Pell Grants (federally provided need-based grants that are often used in the US as an indicator of low-income status) relative to average midcareer salaries. Also examined was the relationship between cost of college and these variables and cost of college and returns. Linear regression models examined selectivity and SAT scores' relationship to economic returns and the demographic factors listed above. The results of many of these preliminary tests will be summarized below.

Only after examining the relationships between potential variables of interest was the UTERM model created. UTERM takes into account the relative lack of privilege of the admitted students, as described in more detail below. Colleges with good economic returns will score higher if their 'inputs' were lower than if they were higher. For example, a college whose graduates earn the same amount as another college but whose students scored 50% lower on the SATs will rank higher in the model. Colleges with the highest inputs should have much higher economic returns; if they are merely the same or slightly greater those colleges will not earn a very high score (although they may and probably will earn a good score). This is why the model is said to measure *transformation*. Schools with high scores are those that provide a decent economic return for a group of students whose future prospects may not have been assured at the outset. In other words, schools whose students do better than predicted, given where they began (e.g., low-income students, underrepresented students, non-traditional students, students with low SAT scores). In contrast, schools with low scores are those that fail to provide a decent economic return at all, for any group of students, but particularly for those who entered college with high SATs and high expectations.

UTERM is designed to be simple to use and share. Because we are not trying to measure academic quality or prestige, or proxies therefore, we can rely on a few key points of information, obtainable through the National Center for Education Statistics' *College Navigator* program, coupled with the information provided by Payscale.

There are three parts to the construction of a score. First, our outcome variable, *Economic Returns*, is constructed by factoring the reported annual net cost of tuition by the reported number of years to graduate (ranging from 4 to 6) and subtracting this from a constructed variable of five years' worth of midcareer salary as reported by Payscale.

Second, I constructed a 'lack of privilege' score, a variable summarizing the key demographic information examined above. This score was tested using linear regression and found to negatively predict economic returns (described in greater detail below in results). The colleges with the greatest residual scores do show up as particularly high (or low) in our rankings scheme. In other words, we can predict fairly well what the economic returns are of a particular college given its demographic makeup. This should not be a surprise to sociologists of education and higher education, but it is worth stressing here for the reader unfamiliar with this area of research. Schools that primarily serve working-class students generally have graduates who make less money than graduates of other institutions. This is true even for academically rigorous colleges whose working-class students scored high on the SAT. In contrast, the more elite the body of the school, the more college 'pays off.'

There are four elements to the *Lack of Privilege* variable: percentage of admitted students receiving Pell Grants, percentage of Black, Latino/a, and Native American students, percentage female, openness of admissions (here selectivity works against colleges not in their favor), and distance of average SAT scores from a perfect score. In our sample, Savannah State University has the highest constructed *LOP* score, 3.14. Eighty-percent of Savannah State's students receive Pell Grants, 89% are underrepresented minorities, the school admits 83% of its applicants, fifty-five percent of its students are female, and the average SAT score (math and reading) was 845 out of 1600. On the other end, Washington University in St. Louis (closely followed by University of Chicago and Harvard University) had the lowest *LOP* score. Only 5% of Wash U's student received Pell Grants, 11% were underrepresented minorities, 51% were female, only 16% of applicants were admitted, and the average SAT score was 1485 (out of 1600). The final score for Wash U was 0.610.

From these two variables I created an unadjusted score. For the two examples above, we note that Savannah State has a predictably low midcareer salary, $51,500, and Wash U a predictably high one of $107,000. At the same time, it cost $55,000 to earn a degree from Savannah State (even with an average time to graduate of 5.71 years) while it cost $136,767 to graduate from Wash U (4.15 years). Unadjusted, Savannah State scores 85 and Wash U scores just 32. We then make two adjustments. We note that Savannah State has a very high dropout rate, in addition to the almost six years' time to graduate. In fact, 66% of its students never graduate. It also has a very high loan default rate – 21%. In contrast, 94% of Wash U's students graduate and only 2% default on their loans. Adjusting for these 'bad outcomes', Savannah State's final adjusted score is just 43.96. This puts it in the bottom quarter of the sample. Wash U, meanwhile, falls to 28.59. It is in the bottom decile of the sample. Neither of these two colleges are very transformative. In Wash U's case, this is because its relatively elite students do slightly worse than expected, once the high cost of attendance is factored in. In Savannah State's case, it is because it is failing a large proportion of its admittedly challenging students. In contrast, South Carolina State University has a very similar *LOP* profile but has higher economic returns and fewer defaulting students and scores in the top quartile.

Limitations

Perhaps the most controversial element of UTERM is the reliance on midcareer salaries as its sole outcome measure. UTERM measures economic returns. It is neither a measurement of academic prestige nor excellence. Indeed, there is nothing at all about UTERM that evaluates the quality of instruction, instructors, campus climate, student subjectivity, or college infrastructure. UTERM is not a measure of learning-based institutional effectiveness. There are many things that make going to college worthwhile other than the projected midcareer salary upon graduation. Many readers will find the lack of other outcome measures a limitation, but this was a methodological choice. UTERM attempts to address the question, and only this question, of 'do graduates of X college have better or worse economic returns than would be predicted based on their incoming attributes?'

The data on midcareer salaries relies on aggregated self-reported data of graduates, as provided by Payscale. As described earlier, Payscale is a for-profit company that has used crowdsourcing to amass a huge amount of data on the beginning and midcareer salaries of approximately thirty-five million graduates of more than 1000 colleges and universities. Because graduates without jobs or graduates with poor jobs are less likely to add their data, the returns are probably higher than they are in reality. That said, the inflated returns should hold

constant across the database. The lack of reliable official data on economic returns of college graduates linked to institutions is a limitation of this study and any other studies exploring the value of higher education today. This is particularly noteworthy regarding for profit institutions, which were not included here for lack of reliable returns information.

The undergraduate transformative effectiveness ratings model (UTERM)

Table 1 provides descriptive data of the sample for some of the key variables used in the analysis. The average SAT score (out of 1600) is about 100 points higher than the national average, perhaps reflecting the exclusion of for-profits from the sample and the purposive inclusion of all AAU institutions. Note the range of reported midcareer salaries from Payscale are generally in line with what we know from Census data. Although there are probably selection biases involved in the self-reporting of salaries, the range of such salaries makes this a reasonably reliable measure of the aggregate economic returns of particular institutions.

The categories of region and type are mutually exclusive. Colleges and universities (C&U) were coded as 'elite' if they belong to the Ivy League, 'liberal arts' if they adhere to the liberal arts model and are not already coded as 'elite', 'private' if neither state-supported nor operating under a liberal arts model, 'flagship' if they are one of the flagship public universities of their state and 'public' if a public four-year not a flagship. Two other categories, HBCU and Specialty (e.g., Cooper Union, West Point, California Institute of the Arts) are not shown here but are included in the overall sample. There is clear demographic variation by region and type. For example, forty-one percent of students attending non-flagship universities receive Pell Grant assistance compared to less than a quarter at flagship universities. The proportion of Pell Grant recipients is highest among C&U in the South (42%). Similarly, the percentage of underrepresented minority students varies greatly by region (38% in the South compared to 13% in the Midwest). Table 1 also shows that years to graduate, percentage of incompleters (those beginning but failing to graduate), and default rate vary substantially by type of college and region. Southern C&U Have long years to graduate, high numbers of incompleters, and a very high cohort default rate. Years to graduate are longest at public universities. Flagship universities have a lower percentage of incompleters and a lower cohort default rate than any other type of C&U.

Table 1. Means of UTERM sample, by Region and Type of Institution

		REGION				TYPE[1]			
	Total	Northeast	Midwest	South	West	Private	LibArts	Flagship	Public
%Female	0.55	0.56	0.53	0.57	0.55	0.56	0.58	0.53	0.55
%Pell Grant	0.35	0.28	0.31	0.42	.036	0.30	0.30	0.24	0.41
%BLAI	0.25	0.18	0.13	0.38	0.23	0.20	0.16	0.14	0.27
%Admit	0.61	0.55	0.66	0.59	0.65	0.61	0.59	0.65	0.68
SAT	1096	1153	1116	1048	1088	1119	1140	1176	1043
Net Price (in US dollars)	20,669	23,418	20,726	18,514	18.532	26,432	25,220	14,722	13,140
Midcareer Salary (in US dollars)	82,105	85,388	80,138	77,530	83,761	83,425	80,167	83,190	77,117
YTG	4.80	4.52	4.68	4.95	4.96	4.53	4.37	4.85	5.24
Incompleters	0.39	0.30	0.35	0.46	0.40	0.35	0.32	0.29	0.47
Default rate	7.90	5.38	6.13	11.22	6.94	6.03	5.86	5.60	9.25
N	*655*	162	134	231	128	169	152	50	195

Types included in the total sample but not reported here are Elite (n=9), HBCU (n=48), and specialty (n=30).

The relationship between the demographic profile of a college and negative outcomes can be visually plotted.   Figures 1-3 demonstrate the relationship between three key pieces of demographic information (percentage of Pell Grant recipients, percentage of underrepresented minorities, and SAT scores) and incompletion, extended graduation rate, and cohort defaults. The percentage of incompleters clearly correlates with both low-income status and low SAT scores, and somewhat with the racial composition of a C&U. Years to graduate shows a more tenuous, but still apparent, connection, between these three demographic variables. Defaults are clustered among C&Us that serve low-income and minority youth. They also reduce as SAT scores increase

Figure 1. Incompletes by (a) Low-income students; (b) BLAI students; and (c) SAT scores
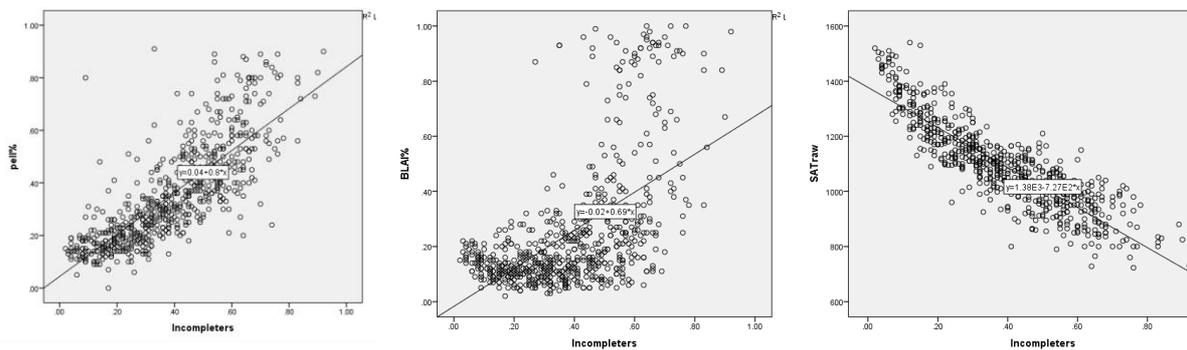
Figure 2. Years to Graduate by (a) low-income students; (b) BLAI students; and (c) SAT scores
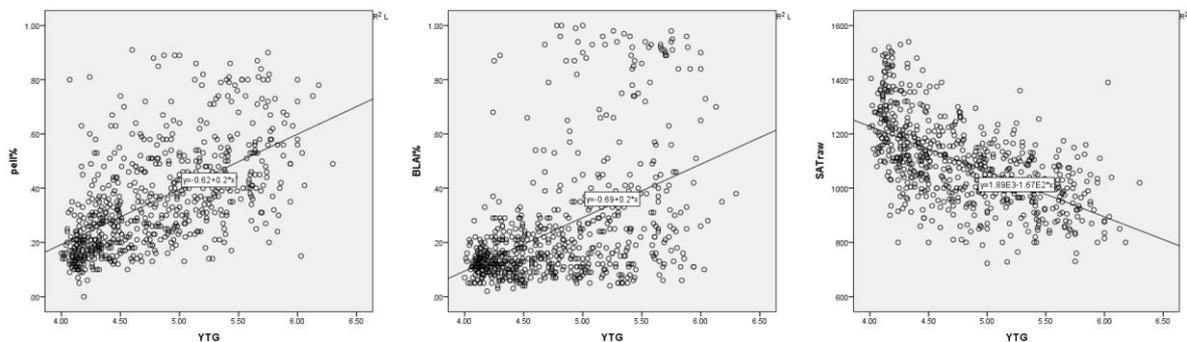
Figure 3. Defaults by (a) low-income students; (b) BLAI students; and (c) SAT scores
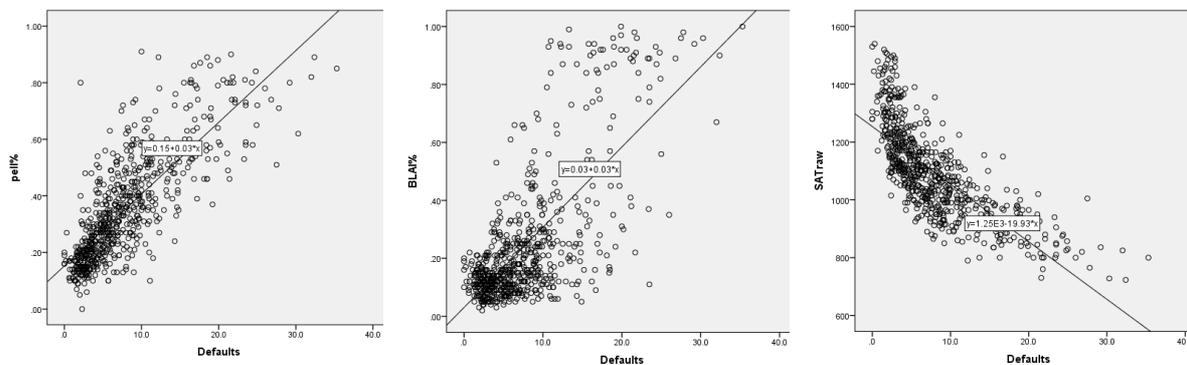
Regression models were run for each of these particular outcomes, first running the entire demographic profile (including percent female) and secondly with added controls (selectivity, net price, region, and type). The correlation between percentage low-income (Pell Grant recipients) was statistically significant at the $p<.001$ level for incompleters (Table 2). Racial composition was highly statistically correlated with years to graduation, even more so with added controls. Once controls of region, type, price were added, low-income status was not a significant predictor of years to graduate (Table 3). Both income and race were very significantly correlated with default rates (Table 4). Similar relationships were found correlating race, class, gender, and SAT scores with midcareer salaries (regression results available upon request).

Table 2. Percent Incompleters Regressed on Student Background Characteristics (Equation 1) and School Conditions (Equation 2)

	Equation 1		Equation 2	
Variable	*b*	*Beta*	*b*	*Beta*
%female	-.087* (.033)	-.048	-.075* (.034)	-.041
%low-income	.299*** (.036)	.300	.259*** (.037)	.260
%BLAI	-.018 (.022)	-.022	.011 (.024)	.013
SAT	-.001*** (.000)	-.656	-.001*** (.000)	-.593
%admit			.057* (.023)	.061
Net price			-.019*** (.004)	-.112
Region			.007* (.003)	.040
Type			-.002 (.003)	-.020
Constant	1.196		1.117	
R^2	.790		.804	

Table 3. Years to Graduation (of those completing) Regressed on Student Background Characteristics (Equation 1) and School Conditions (Equation 2)

	Equation 1		Equation 2	
Variable	*b*	*Beta*	*b*	*Beta*
%female	-.631*** (.165)	-.120	-.223 (.135)	-.043
%low-income	.806*** (.177)	.279	.174 (.146)	.060
%BLAI	.233* (.107)	.099	.333**	.141

			(.095)	
SAT	-.001***	-.326	-.001***	-.190
	(.000)		(.000)	
%admit			.286***	.106
			(.089)	
Net price			-.219***	.-.448
			(.016)	
Region			.033*	.065
			(.013)	
Type			.043***	.124.
			(.011)	
Constant	6.040		5.619	
R^2	.394		.630	

Table 4. Percent Defaulters Regressed on Student Background Characteristics (Equation 1) and School Conditions (Equation 2)

	Equation 1		Equation 2	
Variable	*b*	*Beta*	*b*	*Beta*
%female	-6.89***	-.123	-5.80***	-.103
	(1.21)		(1.26)	
%low-income	.9.48***	.305	9.35***	.301
	(1.30)		(1.37)	
%BLAI	7.99***	.313	7.30***	.286
	(0.79)		(0.90)	
SAT	-.01***	-.352	-0.01***	-.351
	(.00)		(0.00)	
%admit			-0.21	-.007
			(0.83)	
Net price			0.09	.016
			(0.15)	
Region			0.10	.018
			(0.12)	
Type			0.28**	.075
			(0.10)	
Constant	20.80		18.95	
R^2	.717		.721	

Although the relationships among key variables were empirically demonstrated, the UTERM model was developed theoretically, as a way of measuring the transformative effects of particular colleges and universities. The variables were chosen based on previous research in the sociology of education and social reproduction theory generally. There was no attempt to determine exactly *how much* race, class, or gender differences accounted for differing economic returns. As described above, a 'lack of privilege' (LOP) index was constructed using the percentage of Pell Grant recipients, underrepresented minorities (Black, Latino/a, Native American and Pacific Islanders), female students, distance of average SAT from perfect score, and percent admitted. The percentage of female students was included in the LOP index because women still earn less than men when graduating from college (something noted empirically when women's colleges were scoring lower than otherwise expected in an early model). The LOP index was created by summing all four elements, although percent admitted

was discounted by half. This is a relatively easy way for those interested to compare the privilege profile of colleges and universities of interest to them. Table 5 reports the mean average LOP scores by type of college. Unsurprisingly, elite colleges show very low LOP scores while public universities and HBCUs report high scores. Other researchers may wish to alter the relative weights of the four elements and, again, this is easy to do. For example, reducing the weight of the underrepresented minority variable would significantly alter the LOP score of HBCUs.

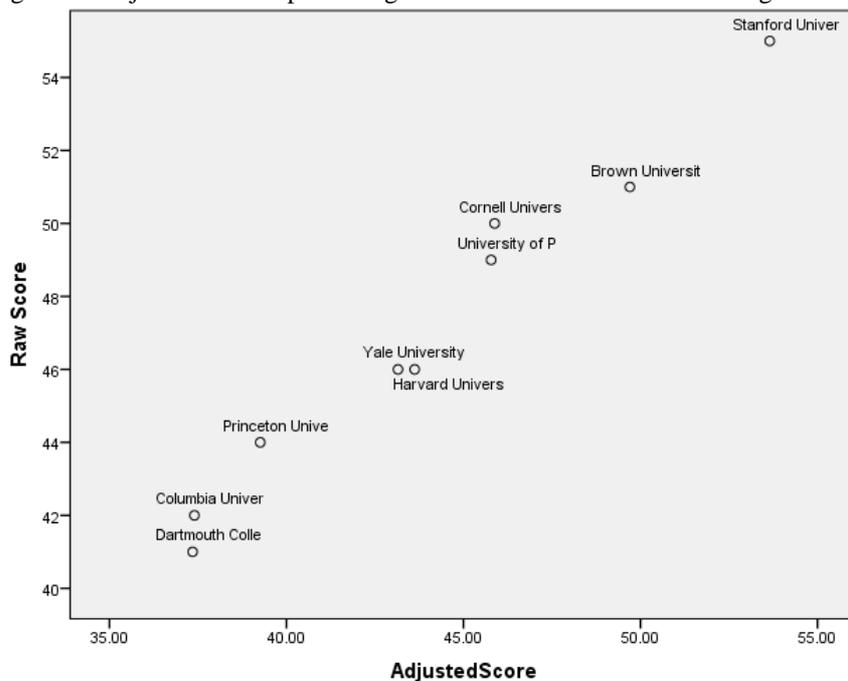Figure 4. Adjusted Scores plotted against Raw Scores for Elite Colleges

Figure 5. Adjusted Scores plotted against Raw Scores for Private C&U in South
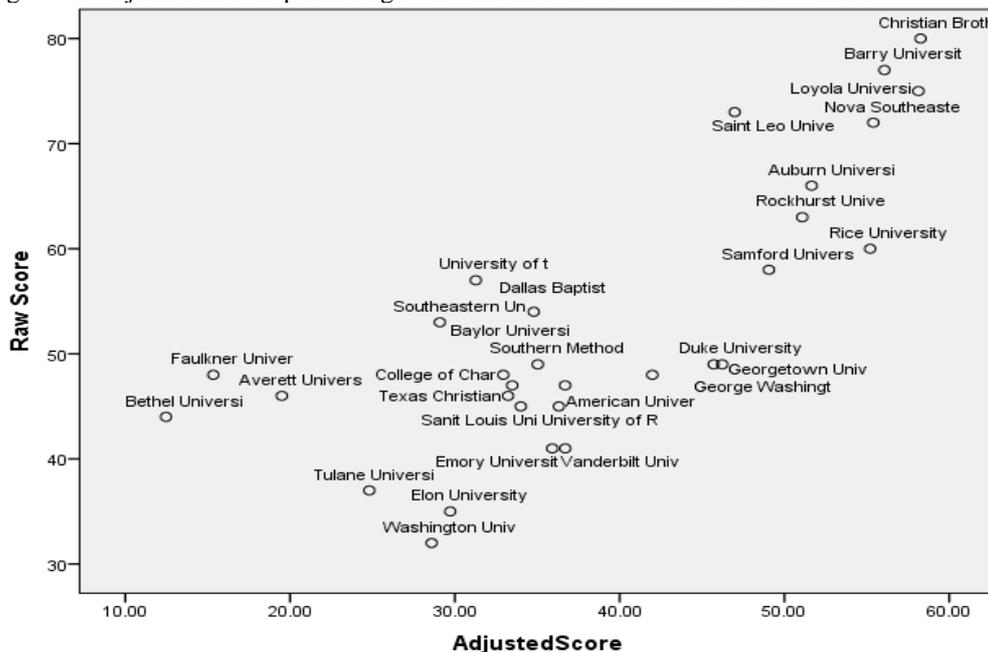
Table 5. Means of UTERM constructed variables, by Type of Institution

	Total	Elite	LibArts	Private	Flagship	Public	HBCU
LOP score	1.55	0.74	1.42	1.50	1.39	1.82	2.47
Total Cost of College (in US Dollars)	94,954	86,764	108,214	117,887	71,118	67,755	112,599
PayOut (in US Dollars)	631,319	956,250	585,238	598,478	689,660	635,655	484,469
RawScore	62.43	47.11	53.05	57.01	63.25	76.34	78.67
AdjustedScore	47.66	43.98	41.45	44.17	50.14	56.47	47.14
N	*655*	*9*	*152*	*169*	*50*	*195*	*48*

Table 5 also includes mean averages for the other constructed variables used in UTERM, as well as raw and adjusted scores. Total cost of college was constructed by multiplying the net price (as provided by NCES data) by the average years it takes to graduate from the school. As public universities tend to have longer years to graduate, this undercuts some of the cost differential between these institutions and more expensive private institutions.   Even so, public C&U have the lowest total cost while private the highest. Both flagship universities and elite C&U have lower than average total costs. PayOut is measured by taking a ten-year multiple of the average midcareer salary provided by Payscale and deducting the total cost of college. Elite C&U clearly outperform in this area.   Liberal arts colleges and HBCUs (perhaps attributable to high total costs) do the least well in terms of economic rewards. The RawScore simply factors PayOut by LOP. C&U with LOP scores lower than '1' will see their economic returns discounted, while schools with high LOP scores will see their economic returns amplified. Perhaps not surprisingly, public universities have higher raw scores than private universities.   Elite universities show the lowest. There is a great deal of variation at the institution-level, however, as will be described further below.

Raw scores can be useful indicators of a particular institution's transformative effects, but they do not perhaps differentiate sufficiently between similarly situated schools. The adjusted score modifies the raw score by factoring in defaults and incompleters (note that years to graduate was already factored in as part of the total cost of college). Various factors and strengths were modeled to find a formula that could differentiate between similar institutions without undercutting the main strength of UTERM. Deducting Percent Incompleters*20 and Cohort Default Rate*13 from the Raw Score was found to be optimal. Table 5 reports the adjusted scores by type of institution. The larger variation by type has been reduced but still exists. At the same time, variations at the institution level are more apparent. The formula can be rendered as:

LOP score * Economic Returns = Raw Score * Bad Outcomes score= Adjusted Score

Figures 4 and 5 demonstrate the effectiveness of the adjustment. When adjusted scores are plotted against raw scores for elite colleges, there is very little adjustment taking place (Figure 4). Elite schools have low default scores and very few incompleters. Brown University shows less impairment relative to the other schools in the group. In contrast, private colleges and university in the South show a great deal of institutional variation in adjusted scores relative to raw scores (Figure 5). Faulkner University, for example, has low adjusted core, relative to its raw score, indicating its students are dropping out and defaulting more than would be expected,

while Georgetown and Rice University are showing less negative outcomes than their place in the field would predict.

Table 6. Raw and Adjusted Scores of Selected Institutions

Institution	Raw Score	Adjusted Score	Type of Institution
UT-El Paso	148	122.31	Public
Howard University	108	87.11	HBCU
Brandeis University	76	70.98	Private
UC-Berkeley	66	59.65	Flagship
Brown University	51	49.7	Elite
Hiram College	68	49.2	Liberal Arts
Reed College	57	48.07	Liberal Arts
Duke University	49	46.22	Private
U Alabama	63	44.7	Flagship
Ithaca College	47	37.62	Liberal Arts
Western Oregon U	52	31.36	Public
Morehouse College	70	27.5	HBCU
Guilford College	33	12.19	Liberal Arts

Table 6 provides raw and adjusted scores for a variety of types of institutions. Although it is difficult for elite, private, and liberal arts colleges to score very high in UTERM, there is still significant variation within types as this table indicates. Complete results are available upon request.

A new typology: reproducers of privilege, transformative colleges, safe bets, and troubled returns

One of the major advantages of UTERM is the ability to distinguish colleges that merely reproduce privilege from those that are truly transformative. There is no presumption here that reproducing privilege is unworthy – if that is what some colleges are in the business of doing they can do this more or less well, as in the case of Harvard (46 raw score, 44 adjusted score) vs. the University of Chicago (33 raw score, 28 adjusted score). Harvard's mission is to train 'citizen-leaders' and it appears to be doing this well. It takes in enormously privileged students and produces economically successful graduates. The University of Chicago is an interesting comparison because it also takes in enormously privileged students but the outcomes of these students are much less what would be expected. It may be that the University of Chicago is much better at research than training its undergraduates for successful careers. If so, undergraduates should probably be aware of that.

Most public universities, on the other hand, have as their mission some notion of transforming the lives of the citizens of their respective states. Since UTEP ranked first in our sample, it may be worthwhile to take a look at their mission statement,

> 'The University of Texas at El Paso commits itself to providing quality higher education to a diverse student population. Classified as a Doctoral/Research-Intensive university, UTEP **seeks to extend the greatest possible educational access** to a region which has been geographically isolated with limited economic and educational opportunities for many of its people. The University **will ensure that its graduates** obtain the best education possible, one which is equal, and in some respects superior, to that of other institutions, so that UTEP's

> graduate**s will be competitive in the global marketplace** [website, emphasis added]

UTEP includes both aspects of UTERM in its mission statement: access to a diverse set of students and economic returns. Based on its place in UTERM, it appears to be living up to its mission. Other public universities include similar statements in their missions but do not. Surely it makes more sense to compare these would-be-transformative institutions against each other rather than with those colleges whose mission is more broadly the reproduction of elites. But in the world of rankings, UTEP and all other such successful public universities who serve less privileged students ranks much lower than the reproducers of privilege.

In addition to the reproducers of privilege (RP) and truly transformative colleges (TT), we can categorize schools as safe bets (SB) or troubled returns (TR). Safe bets are those colleges which take in a fairly average set of students and graduate most of them to expected average outcomes. Most colleges can be seen to fall in this category. Troubled returns are those colleges whose students fare much less well than would be expected, regardless of LOP score. The cutoff for what 'much less well' is probably debatable but as a starting place there were four colleges in the sample whose adjusted scores were in the negative range. Negative scores could be red flags. It is impossible to score in the negative range without very high numbers of incompleters and loan defaults. If we widen our reach to C&U scoring in the lowest quintile, we see a range of institutional types in the troubled returns category, but the majority are liberal arts and private colleges with relatively large price tags. Table 7 highlights representative colleges in each of the four categories. Note that just as there are no elite colleges and universities in troubled returns, nor are they truly transformative.

Table 7. Examples of Truly Transformative Institutions, Reproducers of Privilege, Safe Bets and Troubled Returns

	ELITE/Flagships	Private LIBERAL ARTS	PUBLIC/HBCU Institutions
TRULY TRANSFORMATIVE (upper quintile)	UC Davis	Fairleigh Dickinson	UTEP
	UCLA	Bloomfield College	CSU-LA
	UT-Austin	La Salle U.	CUNY – S.I
	UC-Berkeley	Mercy College	Howard U.
		Colgate	UC Davis
REPRODUCERS OF PRIVILEGE	Harvard	William and Mary	---------
	Stanford	C. of the Holy Cross	
	MIT	Reed College	
	Brown	Carleton College	
	Cornell	Kenyon College	

SAFE BETS	----------	Wofford College	UNC-Chapel Hill
		St. Thomas Aquinas	Oklahoma State
		Southwestern U.	Towson U.
		Hiram College	West Virginia U.
		Drew U.	IU-Bloomington
TROUBLED (lowest decile)	RETURNS ------------	Guilford	UNC-Asheville
		Rollins	Western Oregon U
		Drury U.	Boise State U.
		Marymount Manhattan	

One last point about these four categories must be mentioned. While students should probably avoid troubled returns, their choice between RP, SB, or TR institutions must remain a deeply personal one. A working-class student who does in fact gain admittance to Harvard may do well to accept rather than attending UTEP, despite UTEP's transformative capabilities, simply because Harvard's outcomes are, on average, much better than UTEP's. Additionally, an individual's aid package will alter the individual payoff calculus. UTEP is a transformative school because its outcomes are better than predicted by the type of students it admits.

The rankings are less helpful for individuals and more helpful as a national scorecard – pointing schools who rank low to reform 'bad practices' that are harming their students (wherever they may fall on the rankings system). It also alerts states to the great good that many of their publics are doing. Small changes – admitting more Pell Grant recipients, for example, or ensuring more timely completions of degrees can make substantial differences in the outcome scores. Thus, state legislatures can hold their public universities accountable. Not only does this allow comparisons between schools, but more importantly perhaps it can provide a measure of progress over time.

Finally, it is important to be clear that the Transformation Model is not designed to tell us what happens *inside* the university (although I would question what is actually being learned in schools that cost the same and serve the same populations and whose graduates default on loans and earn salaries below their peers). I think this is an advantage, however. Colleges are autonomous and teach according to different theories and practices. What works in a small college won't work in a university serving 50,000 students - one reason why teacher to student ratios always undercount the impact of flagship universities. A one-size-fits-all ranking system, even when broken down between private and public, liberal arts colleges and national universities, will always obscure the special strengths of particular institutions. It is important to have a measure of economic returns, however, one that takes into account the different starting places of entering college students. This allows us not only to be critical of those schools that are failing their graduates, but also to reward the very high number of mostly public colleges and universities that are truly transforming the lives of their students.

Author Bio

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acquisition, and deployment of social, cultural, and economic capital among college students attending two comparable public universities as well as a sociological social history project that, re-examines the most economically egalitarian period in US history, 1948 to 1964. Allison's most recent publication (co-authored with Sandi Kawecka Nenga) is *Working in Class: How Our Social Backgrounds Affect Our Teaching, Scholarship, and Work in the Academy* (Rowman & Littlefield, 2016).

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The Precarious plight of American Working-Class Faculty: Causes and Consequences

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Abstract

For working-class Americans, the path of the professor is precarious. The neo-liberalization of higher education and the hegemony of academic elitism have made working-class faculty an endangered, disadvantaged, and invisible minority within the professoriate. On one hand, financing a graduate school career from humble origins is an increasingly risky investment. On the other, working-class Americans who secure a faculty job are often under-matched to low salary, high workload positions and endure classist ostracism and micro-aggressions. This essay is intended to not only trace the tragic trajectory of American working-class faculty but, more importantly, to invite conversations and identify suggestions that lead to our colleges and universities becoming more personally supportive workplaces and professionally empowering platforms for working-class professors.

Keywords

Introduction: class hegemony in academia

> 'precarity' designates that politically induced condition in which certain populations suffer from failing social and economic networks of support.
>
> <div align="right">(Butler 2009 ii)</div>

Judith Butler's definition of precarity easily extends to the plight of America's working-class faculty. For example, the term is used in the titles of two recent papers on working-class professors (Vossen 2017; Warnock 2016). In Butler's terms, economic support has failed as working-class Americans are increasingly priced out of academic careers. Social support for working-class faculty has never been systematically provided. Therefore, those from the working-class are out of place in the academy, 'that most upper-middle class of social institutions' (Huxford 2006 p. 207). Indeed, invisibility and ostracism are longstanding features of professional life for working-class faculty:

> '… social class still permeates higher education even though matters of class are whitewashed in these institutions' (Soria 2016 p. 128)
> '… academia barely acknowledges working-class existence' (Fay & Tokarczyk 1993 p. 4)

While these declarations are remarkable considering that at least one-fourth to one-third of faculty in the U.S. may be considered working-class[41] (Arner 2016; Seifert & Umbach 2008), they are not exceptional. Indeed, laments like those above reverberate throughout the essays Fay and Tokarczyk collected for *Working-class women in the academy: laborers in the knowledge factory* (1993); echo the auto-ethnographies in Ryan and Sackrey's 1984 volume, *Strangers in paradise: academics from the working class;* and, foretell the narratives that comprise subsequent collections (Dews & Law 1995; Muzzati & Samarco 2006; Oldfield & Johnson 2008; Van Galen & Dempsey 2009; Welsch 2005). This genre's currency is evidenced in Hurst & Nenga's 2016 compilation, *Working in class: recognizing how social class shapes our academic work*, special editions of *Rhizomes* (Siegel 2014) and the *Journal of Working-Class Studies* (Chapple et al. 2017), and review essays (Brook & Michell 2012; Warnock 2016).

To convey their concept of class, many contributors to this literature appropriately refer readers to Pierre Bourdieu and his 1988 book *Homo academicus* (Arner 2014; Beech 2006; Provencher 2008; Rothe 2006; Warnock 2016). While Bourdieu's frame of reference was the 20th Century French academy, his work translates to the experience of contemporary American working-class faculty members. Of particular resonance is Bourdieu's presentation of cultural capital. Accumulated through 'habitus'—the ingrained routines of physical activity and subconscious thought that reproduce class relations—cultural capital includes not only status but mannerisms and sensibilities as well. For example, academic pedigrees, speech patterns, and fashion statements are all currencies of cultural capital. By locating class in culture, Bourdieu maps the terrain of class conflict in the academy.

Working-class faculty frustration stems from their cultural marginalization in the academic workplace; their persistent protests attest to the intensity of their class identity. Grimes and Morris (1997) surveyed 36 American working-class sociologists about the intersection of their gender, race, and social class with their academic careers. Not surprisingly, the working-class White men they interviewed, otherwise privileged by their race and gender, reported that class had the most career impact. White women, Hispanic women, and Hispanic men, however, also emphasized class over gender and ethnicity. Only for the African-Americans in Grimes and Morris's report did race have a larger effect than class (1997 p. 111). By no means, however, is class epiphenomenal in the experience of working-class African-American faculty:

> Black women's experiences with race and gender are unique intersections that often place them in an interlocking matrix of domination. And acknowledging the dimension of class makes our reality almost unbearable, volatile and highly toxic.
>
> (Gray & Chapple 2017 p. 9)

Intersectionality is also the unifying theme in the autobiographical essays in *Resilience: queer professors from the working class* (Oldfield & Johnson 2008). For many of these professors, their working-class background has had at least as much of an influence on their experiences in higher education as their sexual orientation (e.g., Johnson 2008). Christopher, reflecting on

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[41] Arner suggests that Ladd and Lipset's one-fourth estimate in their 1975 report has remained generally accurate. Seifert and Umbach's one-third estimate is based on parental educational attainment among a sample population of 4,231 faculty at research institutions taken from the National Center for Education Statistics' 1999 National Study of Postsecondary Faculty (Seifert & Umbach 2008). Because working-class faculty are more likely to teach at teaching institutions (Grimes & Morris 1997; Langston 1993), this sample of research university faculty may underestimate the proportion of working-class faculty.

the ambiguities she has faced as a queer, working-class professor, concludes that 'Class is harder to come to terms with [than gender and sexuality]' (2008 p. 45).

Masking class: ideology and performativity

Social class in faculty culture, then, presents a paradox: how can an essential and problematic aspect of faculty identity be invisible? Part of the answer lies in the meritocratic ideology that has long obscured the dialectic between social class and American education. Traceable to prominent exponents such as Thomas Jefferson in the eighteenth century and Horace Mann in the nineteenth, the idea that education is a class-leveling playing field is a fundamental American fiction (Bowles & Gintis 1978; Isenberg 2016). We are encouraged to believe that educational opportunity is seized by the worthy and wasted by the unfit; what we made of our time in school has charted the destiny we deserve. That is, academic credentials are produced by our personal determination and intellectual aptitude, not structured by social relations.

In reality, however, members of the upper classes demand schools that will confer class privilege to their children exclusively. The public and private sectors have, in response, sorted the supply of primary, secondary, and higher education institutions by social class to serve this purpose. At the local scale, public school quality varies widely by school district and private schools provide alternatives for a price. Regionally and nationally, colleges and universities are meticulously ranked to signal the social status they ascribe. Since the selectivity of admissions weighs heavily in college rankings and correlates closely with tuition costs, academic quality is conflated with the class background of the student body. Laundering educational privilege to make it redeemable as merit is oppressive in Friere's sense of the term—that is, the oppressed are compelled to accept the legitimacy of their oppressors (Friere 1981). Of course, this essential practice of educational provision contradicts our democratic principles. Hence, we are regularly reminded to avert our gaze and instead envision educational attainment as meritocratic[42].

This ideological interpretation extends uninterruptedly to faculty careers (Arner 2014). Professors earn appointments at prestigious universities, promotion, and tenure based on their publications, grants, and awards. Indeed, the privileged uphold the ideology of achievement with examples of working-class faculty success: 'The small number of professors from the working and underclasses is often constructed through the meritocratic lens of the American dream as being the hardest working, the most capable of manufacturing a systematic plan for achievement' (Muzzati & Samarco 2006, p. 71). According to the myth of the meritocracy, class is irrelevant to academic performance and is naturally invisible in the academy.

In reality, 'performativity' may outplay merit in setting the trajectory of one's faculty career. Writing on the French faculty, Bourdieu offers this exposé:

> The real fee for admission to the group, what is known as 'team spirit,' that is, the visceral form of recognition of everything which constitutes the existence of the group, and which the group must reproduce in order to reproduce itself, only appears

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[42] In 2019, however, the U.S. Federal Bureau of Investigation's 'Operation Varsity Blues' made a global spectacle of America's educational hypocrisy. The FBI charged 33 parents, some of whom are internationally known executives and entertainers, with paying bribes to gain their children's admission to elite American universities. The bribes, which totaled more than $25 million, were paid to misrepresent the children as athletes in order to qualify them for athletes' lower admissions standards or to falsify their scores on admission exams (Kates 2019).

> indefinable because it is irreducible to the technical definitions of competence officially required for membership of the group.
> (Bourdieu 1988 p. 56)

Lovell (2000) helps explain that Judith Butler's discussion of performing gender further articulates Bourdieu's cultural capital and extends his concept of habitus. By presenting gender identity as a process of becoming through performance, Butler's emphasis on subjectivity counterbalances Bourdieu's concern with establishing the inertia of routines rooted in class contexts.

Resting on Butler's authority, Fedukovich (2009) and LeCourt (2006) embrace the potential for constructive agency through performing class. They caution their working-class faculty colleagues against fixed representations of social class and describe their own voluntary accretion of middle-class cultural capital to their personal working-class identities. Conflict, however, comes when working-class students and faculty realize that to get faculty jobs and promotions they are expected to perform in conformance with middle-class cultural norms (Baker 2006; Muzzati & Samarco 2006). In the next section, I trace the history of working-class access to higher education and review working-class auto-ethnography to clear away the cultural and ideological smokescreens that blur social class in the academy.

Precarious times: from the Golden Age to the New Depression

Economic, political, and demographic currents create and constrain opportunities to go from a blue-collar background to college and then to a faculty career. In the early twentieth century, college was an elite reserve (Rudolph 1962). As of 1900, only two per cent of American 18 to 24 year olds were enrolled in college and total enrollment was less than 250,000 (Snyder 1993). By 1940, population growth, industrialization, urbanization, and expanded public education had driven enrollment to almost 1.5 million. But, with only 9 per cent of traditional age students enrolled, college remained unaffordable for lower-income Americans (Hunt 2006; Kinzie et al. 2004; Snyder 1993). Prior to World War II, 'financial aid was primarily a local matter supported through philanthropy and an occasional institutionally-generated loan program aimed at supporting student needs and later, student merit' (Fuller 2014 p. 61). Federal intervention would prove necessary to put college within reach of the masses.

The Serviceman's Readjustment Act of 1944 was the first large-scale government initiative to increase the working-class presence in higher education. The 'G.I. Bill' paid for World War II veterans' college tuition and living expenses. While higher-ed higher-ups like the presidents of Harvard University and the University of Chicago issued class-coded warnings that veterans were academically unqualified and would lower standards, veterans outperformed traditional students in the classroom (Olson 1973). By the mid-1950s, 2.2 million World War II veterans had used the G.I. Bill's education benefits, half of them first-generation college students (Fuller 2014; Simmons 2014). In socioeconomic terms, 'The G.I. Bill also indicated that a substantial portion of the nation's youth had the ability but not the money to enter college' (Olson 1973 p. 607).

Motivated by egalitarian aspirations espoused in the 1947 Truman Commission on Higher Education's *Higher education for American democracy*, financial aid initiatives continued in the 1950s with the re-authorization of the G.I Bill in 1952 and the establishment of federal student loans through the National Defense Education Act of 1958 (Fuller 2014; Simmons 2014). The goal of removing financial barriers to higher education access was best expressed,

however, in the Higher Education Act of 1965, which expanded federal loans and grants and funded student work-study jobs (Simmons 2014).

In step with Cold War defense spending, the postwar economic boom and the coming of age of the baby boomers, these government financial aid programs contributed to absolute and relative enrollment growth (Labaree 2017). Enrollment grew from 2.44 to 3.64 million in the 1950s, then more than doubled to 8 million during the 1960s. At the same time, enrollment as a percentage of the age 18 to 24 population grew from 9 per cent in 1939-40 to 24 per cent in 1959-60 to 35 per cent by 1969-70. The G.I. Bill-induced gender imbalance lessened in the 1950s and 1960s: by 1970, women were 40 per cent of the student body just as they had been before World War II (Snyder 1993).

To meet the unprecedented demand for higher education, colleges and universities scrambled to hire faculty. The 270,000 teaching positions added during the 1960s nearly doubled the professoriate and job openings for junior faculty exceeded earned doctorates every year between 1962 and 1968 (Cartter 1976; Snyder 1993). Indeed, at the peak of the professor shortage during the mid-1960s, there were twice as many openings as new Ph.D.s. (Cartter 1976). This mismatch between supply and demand resulted in an unprecedented and un-replicated seller's market for professors. Working-class kids of the Depression Era 'Lucky Few' generation who made it to college and liked the look of faculty life could ride their run of good fortune straight into the 1960s 'Golden Age' for working-class faculty (Carlson 2008; Ryan & Sackrey 1984). As Ryan and Sackrey put it, '…the system of higher education got big enough to let *us* inside' (1984 p. 42, emphasis in original).

Available data demonstrate increased hiring of working-class faculty during this period. As the Golden Age was peaking in the late 1960s, younger faculty members were significantly more likely to come from blue-collar families than were senior faculty. At that time, the Lucky Few generation faculty were in their 30s. One-fourth of them were working-class, while only 18 per cent of their colleagues in their 60s came from blue-collar families (Ladd & Lipset 1975 p. 173).

The 1960s bubble, however, burst in the 1970s. Bullish graduate departments had expanded their programs and produced an oversupply of would-be professors. In 1969-70, almost 30,000 doctoral degrees were conferred, more than three times as many as just 10 years earlier (Snyder 1993). For faculty hopefuls, the 1970s were not a Golden Age but, instead, a 'New Depression' (Hogan et al. 1978). Newspaper reporters attending the American Historical Association (AHA) meetings of the mid-1970s estimated that there were four to eight unemployed Ph.D. historians for every available job (Wood 2016). Supporting this anecdotal evidence, AHA data show that the 1973-74 cohort of nearly 1,200 new History Ph.D.s had to compete with each other and with senior colleagues for about 750 open faculty positions (Townsend & Swafford 2017).

By the 1980s and 1990s, Golden Age faculty were reaching their golden years. They promised their protégés that the job market would rebound with their retirements. Instead, colleges and universities responded by filling many vacancies with part-time faculty (Youn 2005). Under-represented groups—women, minorities, and the working class—were those most likely to be passed over for full-time jobs and left with part-time positions (Kerlin 1995). Writing in the early 1980s, Ryan and Sackrey foresaw '…shrinking possibilities for any hillbillies and meanstreeters who are, this moment, growing up with fantasies about being college teachers' (1984 p. 34).

Dwindling support for public higher education also undercut the aspirations of working-class students for academic careers. In the early 1970s, Carnegie Commission reports favored a 'market model' for public universities which would lead to sharp tuition increases (Bowles & Gintis 1976). In the 1980s and 1990s, taxpayer revolts and the dissolution of the USSR further eroded financial support for the 'Cold War university' (Labaree 2017 Ch. 7).

Transferring the cost of higher education to students increased their dependence on borrowing. Growing debt loads discouraged working- and lower-middle-class students to pursue and complete graduate degrees and modest faculty salaries made repayment arduous (Finkelstein et al. 1998; Kerlin 1995). By the 1990s, the costs of graduate education had shifted to students such that faculty work was, once again, becoming a 'genteel profession' reserved for the affluent with family financial support (Fay & Tokarczyk 1993). From a working-class perspective, an academic career became an ever-more irrational choice: the tight job market reduced rewards and the inevitability of indebtedness increased risk. Kerlin predicted that:

> To a large extent, it is likely that class backgrounds will play an increasingly substantial role in the years ahead in determining who will be able to attend and complete doctoral studies and, ultimately, who will enter the academic labor market for the college and university faculty of the 21st century. (1995 p. 13)

The precarity of the 1990s persisted into the twenty-first century and worsened as the financial crisis of 2007-08 rationalized deeper cuts into public higher education spending. Reviewing working-class faculty auto-ethnography since Ryan and Sackrey's 1984 volume, Warnock reports that debt is an 'overwhelmingly more present' topic among those who entered the job market in the last decade (Warnock 2016 p. 30). Indebtedness will undoubtedly plague the next generation of faculty as well: median debt among new bachelor's degree recipients exceeds $30,000 (AAUP 2016).

As financial exposure has increased, returns have become more uncertain. From 1975 to 2011, tenure liners' proportion of the professoriate fell from 56 per cent to 29 per cent while the percentage of contingent faculty increased from 44 per cent to 71 per cent. Part-timers grew from 31 per cent to 51 per cent of all faculty and non-tenure track full-timers from 13 per cent to 20 per cent (Curtis 2014 p. 2).

Much of this increased risk is borne by minority and female faculty. To the considerable extent that class conflates with race and ethnicity in the U.S., comparisons between White, Black, Hispanic, and Asian faculty are telling. Table 1 shows that Blacks and Hispanics are badly under-represented among the professoriate. Gendered discrepancies are also indicated in Table 1 and elaborated upon in Table 2. In particular, women are the majority of the contingent faculty workforce.

This sweep of higher education history shows that working-class faculty have become part of the '…reserve army of underemployed skilled white-collar workers whose jobs by no means exhausts the limits of their skills or abilities…' cultivated by the post-World War II expansion of higher education and exposed by the post-industrial decline of America's global economic supremacy (Bowles & Gintis 1976 p. 204). They are the last to be hired, the first to be fired, and over-represented in the part-time faculty ranks. In other words, their abilities are often under-matched to their positions and postings (Grimes & Morris 1997; Lang 1987; Vander Putten 2015).

Table 1. Proportion of faculty by demographic category compared with proportion of U.S. population, 2011

Demographic category	A. % of faculty-age population[1]	B. % of tenure-line faculty[2]	C. % of tenure-line faculty in proportion to % of faculty-age US population = B / A	D. % of contingent faculty[3]	E. % of contingent faculty in proportion to % of faculty-age US population = D / A
Hispanic women	7.1 %	2.3 %	0.33	2.7 %	0.39
Hispanic men	7.6 %	2.7 %	0.36	2.5 %	0.33
Black women	6.7 %	2.6 %	0.39	4.8 %	0.71
Black men	5.6 %	2.6 %	0.46	2.9 %	0.52
White women[4]	33.5 %	29.6 %	0.88	37.7 %	1.13
Asian women	2.7 %	2.9 %	1.09	2.3 %	0.86
White men[4]	33.1 %	45.6 %	1.38	35.4 %	1.07
Asian men	2.4 %	5.8 %	2.43	2.4 %	1.00
Other[5]	1.3 %	5.9 %	3.54	10.3 %	6.92
Total	100.0 %	100.0 %	1.00	100.0 %	1.00

Sources: US Census 2011; Curtis 2014

Notes:
1. Faculty-age population includes non-institutionalized US citizens between the ages of 25 and 64 on the basis that most faculty do not earn the graduate degree(s) required to teach undergraduate classes until at least age 25.
2. Tenure-line faculty includes tenured and tenure-track faculty.
3. Contingent faculty includes full-time non-tenure track faculty and part-time faculty.
4. Figures for Column A are for non-Hispanic Whites.
5. Other includes non-resident aliens, those belonging to unlisted races and ethnicities, and those with unidentified races and ethnicities.

Table 2: Faculty appointment by race, ethnicity, and gender, 2011

Appt. category	Black women	White women	Hispanic women	Black men	Hispanic men	Asian women	White men	Asian men	Total
Tenured	11%	17%	18%	18%	23%	19%	27%	35%	21%
Tenure-track	8%	8%	8%	8%	8%	16%	8%	16%	9%
Tenure line sub-total[1]	18%	25%	26%	26%	31%	34%	35%	50%	29%
Non-tenure-track	18%	21%	18%	17%	16%	26%	18%	23%	20%
Part-time	64%	55%	56%	57%	53%	39%	47%	27%	51%
Contingent sub-total[1]	82%	76%	74%	74%	69%	66%	65%	50%	71%
Total[1]	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Source: Curtis 2014

Notes:
1. Percentages, including sub-totals and totals, are rounded.

Under-matching career to class

A key contributor to working-class faculty precarity, under-matching in higher education merits examination at a systemic scale and at the level of lived experience. The provision of public higher education underwent a systemic shift in the 1960s and 1970s that accommodated class segregation. Namely, community colleges grew spectacularly to absorb the inflow of working-class students. Enrollment in public two-year schools nearly quadrupled between 1963 and 1973 from 739,811 to 2,889,621 (National Center for Education Statistics 1991). The two million additional community college students represented half the enrollment growth in public higher education over that 10-year span. From 1973 to 1983, the trend towards community colleges became more pronounced as two-year schools claimed two-thirds of enrollment growth and nearly half of total public post-secondary enrollment (National Center for Education Statistics 1991).

At the time, Bowles and Gintis claimed that 'the booming community college movement has created a class stratification within higher education' (1976 p. 208). Correlation of student SES with institutional categories supports their assertion. Under-represented at elite institutions, working-class students helped fuel the explosion of community colleges. Table 3 displays the composition of a representative 25-student class by institutional category and SES quartile from 1972 to 2004. In our hypothetically average classroom at the nations' elite universities, a token poor student from the lowest SES quartile would be joined by a colleague or two from the lower middle quartile in a learning environment dominated by affluent students. Analysis of subsequently available federal education data leads to the conclusion that low-income students' representation at selective schools remains low (Giancola & Kahlenberg 2016). Conversely, SES categories have been much more evenly represented at public community colleges. Beginning in the 1990s, students from the lower half of the SES scale have comprised the majority at these institutions.

Table 3. Composition of a representative 25-student class by institutional category and SES quartile, 1972-2004

Institutional category	Year	SES quartiles				Total
		Lowest	Lower middle	Upper middle	Highest	
'Most competitive' colleges and universities	1972	1	2	3	19	25 students
	1982	1	3	4	17	25
	1992	1	1	6	17	25
	2004	1	2	5	17	25
Public community colleges	1972	5	6	7	7	25 students
	1982	5	7	7	6	25
	1992	6	8	7	4	25
	2004	6	7	7	5	25

Source: Pell Institute 2018.

At the individual scale, auto-ethnography corroborates that the entire academic careers of working-class faculty are a series of under-matches. Under-matched as undergraduates, blue-collar students transfer seamlessly into under-matched graduate programs. Beech describes how she gravitated to a nearby regional state university as an undergraduate (then Livingston University, now the University of West Alabama). Based on minimal and anecdotal information, she moved on to Southern Illinois University and the University of Southern Mississippi for her M.A. and Ph.D., respectively. In retrospective reference to her final graduate school destination, she answers her rhetorical question, 'This time around did I research programs to match up my interests with their scholars and reputations or at least to make sure a program offered a decent stipend and health insurance?' with an emphatic 'Nope' (Beech 2006 p. 17). Similarly, Kauzlarich went from Sangamon State University (now the University of Illinois at Springfield) to Western Michigan University for graduate school 'because one of my undergraduate professors knew a guy there once.' He explains his selections by stating that, to him and his family, 'a degree was a degree, no matter where you got it.' Only towards the end of his studies did he realize that his academic pedigree made him 'an untouchable as far as being an employee' at 'fancy' colleges and universities (Kauzlarich 2006 p. 42).

Recent statistical analysis confirms and extends Kauzlarich's claim. Using *U.S. News & World Report* rankings, Colander and Zhou divided universities granting Ph.D.s in English into four tiers. They found that for graduates of programs in the lowest tier, which included 67 of the 130 departments, the chances of landing a tenure track job at a national research university or national liberal arts college are 'essentially nil' (Colander & Zhou 2015 p. 142). Clauset and colleagues documented the dominant influence that doctoral program prestige holds over faculty hiring in history, computer science, and business. They were left with the rhetorical question, 'How many meritorious research careers are derailed by the faculty job market's preference for prestigious doctorates?' (Clauset et al. 2015 p. 5).

Launching careers from off-brand graduate schools, uninitiated academics are buffeted by the job market. While those with rare right stuff become living legends by landing the tenure track

job at an R1, many end up under-matched, considering themselves fortunate to escape the fate of the adjunct instructor by catching on full-time at a community college, an under-endowed obscure liberal arts college, or a state teachers' college (Grimes & Morris 1997; Langston 1993; Soria 2016; Vander Putten 2015). Jobs at these working-class higher education institutions come with lower salaries. These positions also have higher teaching workloads that preclude time for research and writing. Indirectly but effectively, therefore, class-based matching of faculty to institutional category squelches scholarship from the working-class.

Precarious workplaces: class unmasked

Additional issues face working-class faculty at the super-structural scale of shared experience. Professors continue to fill edited volumes with their colleagues' first-person vignettes as successive generations, pressured to perform the part of the upper middle-class professor and keep their identity offstage, seek venues for their working-class voices. Their soliloquies, while intensely personal, form a chorus calling out the sharp contrasts in class-based values and behavior that make their academic workplaces socially and psychologically precarious.

The social psychology dyad of belonging and achievement underlies contrasting class-based faculty values and behaviors. That is, the working-class emphasis on belonging to family and community is at odds with the self-centered careerism normative in the academy. For working-class women and minorities, this conflict is particularly pronounced. Fay and Tocarczyk point out that some successful female faculty are stigmatized as 'male-identified' if their personal career goals are perceived to outweigh their responsibility to colleagues and students (1993). Similarly, African-American faculty stress that white America's capitalistic worldview is opposed to the working-class African-American spirit of collectivity (hooks 1993; Thompson & Louque 2005).

These conflicting values find expression in equally polarized behavior patterns. Achievement-oriented upper middle-class faculty are socialized to self-promote (Warnock 2016). Belonging-based working-class faculty are taught to be self-effacing (Wilson 2006). Upon arrival in graduate school, working-class students learn that the rules of humility and reciprocity they were raised to respect do not apply in the academic arena of individualized achievement and competition (Rothe 2006; Twale & DeLuca 2008). In academia, as a Dean once admonished the author, 'if you don't blow your own horn, people will think you don't have one.'

As researchers, demonstrating one's personal reputation is required for tenure. Consequently, some scholars covet recognition to a dysfunctional degree. Faculty lore is replete with cautionary tales of credit stealers and authorship appropriators. As teachers, uninhibited expressions of high self-esteem also serve a purpose. Two common measures of faculty performance, student evaluations and student enrollment, reflect the choices of impressionable undergraduates. Because bold-faced faculty bragging has a remarkable influence on students' opinions, bourgeois boastfulness may reinforce the gender and cultural biases documented in student evaluations (Fan et al. 2019; Mitchell & Martin 2018). In other words, a sure way to build the sought-after student following is through unquiet self-confidence. Observing the naturalness of these behaviors to their affluent peers, working-class faculty view self-promotion as reflecting the entitlement and arrogance of class privilege (Muzzati & Samarco 2006).

Warnock's review of working-class faculty narratives led her to categorize additional contrasts in class-based behavior including 'cultural capital' and 'dress and comportment' (2016 pp. 31-

32). Class-based consumption is conspicuous in our society as a whole and academia is no exception. Upper middle-class tastes in clothes, food, entertainment, and travel are normative to the point of being oppressive in academic circles. While some working-class faculty adopt and embrace the accoutrements that happen to be in fashion among their well-heeled colleagues, others refuse to conform. For example, Muzzati and Samarco avoid flaunting their faculty status in college bars and prefer the 'anonymous working-class environments of establishments outside of town' (2006 p. 79).

Another of Warnock's behavioral conflicts involves 'language and communication' and 'stereotypes and micro-aggressions' (2016 pp. 31-32). Language and communication refers to the sociolinguistics of the academy. Standard academic English is based on middle-class vocabulary, syntax, cadence, and pronunciation. Communication is emotionally restrained, reserved, and 'politically correct'. Conversely, working-class speech is emotionally direct, and occasionally irreverent and profane (Kauzlarich 2006; Rothe 2006; Wilson 2006). The working-class faculty member who is unversed in the idiom of academe or unwilling to code-switch is marked as an inferior, unwelcome outsider and subject to stereotyping and micro-aggressions. For example, a particularly pernicious classist stereotype faced by working-class faculty is the insinuation that they are racist and homophobic (Warnock 2016 p. 32).

Micro-aggressions towards faculty who threaten the status quo include bullying, mobbing, and ostracism (Twale & DeLuca 2008). For example, working-class faculty report that they are routinely talked down to and victimized by competitive 'game-playing' (Langston 1993; Soria 2016). Another disturbing aspect of the 'academic bully culture' is that it inculcates and rewards incivility (Twale & DeLuca 2008). Langston recounts that the classism of middle-class male 'pricks' in graduate school reinforced their reputations as 'brilliant' students (1993 p. 70). Like other hostile work environments, the academic milieu encourages working-class interlopers to consider changing jobs and careers (Vander Putten 2015).

These accounts suggest that academia's classism confronts working-class faculty with a Faustian bargain: they can keep their identity or have their career. There is, however, diversity of opinion regarding class intolerance in the academy. Lasane, a gay, African-American professor who grew up in poverty, writes that 'At the academy, I do not have to suppress any of my identity' (2008 p. 208). In general terms, Fedukovich (2009) and LeCourt (2006) warn that 'conflict-based' 'alienation narratives' cast the working-class – middle-class divide in mutually exclusive, oppositional terms that have problematic consequences. Their constructive perspective informs subsequent discussion of empowering working-class faculty. It does not, however, diminish the validity of their colleagues' feelings or the potential consequences of faculty class conflict. For example, flaunting working-class values and behavior and openly rejecting the hegemony of academia's ruling class has helped faculty get fired. Masking their blue-collar backgrounds to perform the part of the privileged professor will get them accepted and even ahead (Arner 2016; Fay and Tokarczyk 1993). First-person confessions are admirable for their authenticity:

> '… part of my education [at elite universities] included learning contempt for my family and the culture I came from, eradicating the dialect I grew up speaking, and learning values of hierarchy, ambition, individualism, and intellectual snobbery…' (Christopher 2003 p. 38).

> 'In some ways the social class origin of faculty is less important than their ability to conform to the expectations. If you can learn to play the game, you can stay. I suspect

that most working-class academics do exactly what I did—try to learn to play the part.' (Huxford 2006 p. 215).

'…transformative micro-identity management work is necessary to successfully continue in my upper-middle-class job.' (Baker 2006 p. 198).

Acculturation has a high cost, however. Socially, relationships with old friends and family members are compromised and often broken. Narrative after narrative includes professors' painful explorations of the gulfs opened between them and their working-class parents (Welsch 2005). Psychologically, many working-class faculty suffer from the 'imposter syndrome' (Begert 2005; Warnock 2016). The feeling of faking it leads not only to cognitive dissonance but also to the fear that one's true identity will be disastrously unmasked (Atkinson 2005 p. 91).

Inoculation from an identity crisis is available, however, at teachers colleges and branch campuses. While these workplaces are not homogenous working-class enclaves, those who came from Muzzati and Samarco's 'wrong side of the tracks' (2006) can easily find colleagues who share their sensibilities. That is, these obscure destinations offer belonging to erstwhile outsiders (Kauzlarich 2006). For example, the author felt at home upon arriving at a regional state college because his senior colleagues humorously yet vigorously discouraged anyone from taking themselves too seriously.

Two-year colleges and public baccalaureates are also the places to make a difference for typical working-class students. Driven by this purpose, some working-class faculty limit their job search to these schools (e.g., Begert 2005). Others, whom the academic hiring process (under) matched to the blue-collar campus, discover that they not only fit in but also make a difference. As discussed above, however, these psychosocial comforts come at the expense of salary and scholarship. Ironically, working-class culture may help obscure a class-based perspective on scholarship. To be sure, for some faculty on the '4-4,'[43] their personal passion for teaching makes this imbalance not only palatable but preferable. For others, their working-class identification with the collective interest exerts a powerful pull. At the campus level, many faculty, perhaps especially those at historical teachers' colleges, are quick to identify with the mission of their 'teaching institution.' Interpersonally, working-class faculty who place high value on belonging to a group of like-minded colleagues are inclined to sacrifice personal goals for the good of the order (e.g., McDaniel 2008). Peer pressure may also be a less laudable, more coercive influence. For example, a leading faculty figure at one of the author's former campuses derided dabblers in research as 'university wannabes'. These motivations combine to cause professors to not only shoulder the 4-4 but also teach extra classes on 'overload' to serve programmatic needs. At schools that pay part-time rates for overloads, these players are truly taking one for the team. Finally, for those who have lost time for research and touch with the cutting edge, scholarship's value tends to diminish in inverse proportion to the amount of effort required to reawaken a dormant research agenda.

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[43] '4-4' refers to a teaching load of 4 classes per semester. Most U.S. universities divide the academic year between a fall semester and a spring semester. Coupled with standard service expectations, a 4-4 teaching load leaves little time for scholarship.

Consequences and conversations

As we have seen, the precarity of working-class faculty has three consequences. In the first place, their prospects of even becoming faculty members are precarious. All aspirants to academic careers have faced a notoriously tight job market since the 'Golden Age' ended almost 50 years ago. Of particularly pernicious relevance to working-class job seekers, however, hiring is mightily influenced by the prestige of candidates' institutional and interpersonal associations, an unwritten rule understood to their privileged counterparts but unbeknownst to them. Consequently, most take part-time teaching jobs. Many of those that do catch on full-time do so as non-tenure track faculty. Finally, the few whose swim upstream finds a tenure line typically under-match to community colleges and baccalaureate teaching institutions.

Secondly, as described above, these jobs come with low wages and little time for scholarship. In other words, higher education also perpetuates class-based stratification in terms of faculty salaries and workloads. While the discrepancy in dollars and cents is painfully enumerable, the restrictions on research are equally significant and unfair. On an individual level, it is an insidious form of discrimination that robs human beings of the power to participate in the disciplinary discourses in which they invested years of education. Moreover, by successfully completing their grad school apprenticeships, they proved that they have something to say. On a societal scale, classism in the academy stifles the working-class voice in the scholarly conversations that shape our understandings of who we are and our decisions about who we will be.

Third, the psychosocial precarity of working-class faculty life is very real and widely felt. Working-class professors suffer in the classist academic milieu. Whether unwittingly or intentionally, colleagues make them well aware that they don't belong. Some internalize this ostracism and are haunted by the imposter syndrome.

Thus endangered, the further disappearance of working-class faculty will compromise American higher education. The robustness and the relevance of our teaching, research, and service depends on the working-class perspective. Working-class faculty are role models who relate to the experience of working-class students while broadening the viewpoints of affluent students (Vander Putten 2015). Similarly, working-class faculty expand curriculum and scholarship into areas that escape the attention and, often the approval, of elites. For example, the establishment of popular culture as a field of study required a movement led by working-class faculty (Browne 1989). Turning to service, the working-class experience with authority is an important basis for democratic traditions in faculty governance. As Muzzati and Samarco put it, the working-class worldview brings a 'healthy mistrust of those in positions of power' (2006 79). Identification with family and neighborhood contribute to working-class faculty members' commitment to meaningful community service. Lastly, institutional leadership from the working-class provides insight as higher education struggles to expand access and demonstrate impact.

We are challenged to make our colleges and universities more personally supportive workplaces and professionally empowering platforms for working-class professors. This essay is intended to invite conversations about how we may work to serve these purposes. For example, this agenda may include reversing the neo-liberalization of higher education;

increasing faculty access to collective bargaining; redefining faculty work; and, mentoring and dialoguing. Hopefully, exploration of these initiatives will expand opportunity for all who aspire to make meaningful contributions as higher education faculty.

Author Bio

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Counting the Working Class for Working-Class Studies: Comparing Three Occupation-Based Definitions

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Abstract

A wide variety of definitions of the working class are in use across disciplines and even within working-class studies (Cohen 2001; Zweig 2001; Metzgar 2003; Wilson 2016; Wilson and Roscigno 2018). Responding to Zweig's (2016) call to maintain continuity in thinking about the working class in working-class studies by recognizing that 'the working class continues to exist in capitalist societies, within capitalist class dynamics, in which the organization of production underlies material, cultural, and political experience' (14), I delineate several definitions of the working class and take a close look at three operationalizations of the working class by occupational aggregations, one each suggested by Metzgar (2003) and Cohen (2001) and one I define, inspired by Florida (2002). Using 2017 American Community Survey data, I compare the demographics and geography of the working class through each of these definitions. I illustrate that by many definitions, the working class is a broad and diverse group of workers who live and work in rural, urban, and suburban places, while inequalities both within the working class and between it and other social classes remain pressing issues for investigation. This paper provides a guide for understanding definitions of the working class that will be useful for working-class studies scholars from all disciplines, regardless of methodologies.

Keywords

Working class, occupations, industries, quantitative analysis, definitions, identification, new economy, labor market

Introduction

No single way of defining the working class captures the range of circumstances that are meant to be communicated in the various observations and experiences in which the category is referred to. A wide variety of definitions of the working class are in use across disciplines, even within working-class studies, and increased interest from broader society has renewed discussions of the best way to identify members of this class (Cohen 2001; Zweig 2001; Metzgar 2003; Wilson 2016; Wilson and Roscigno 2018). In the US, much of this interest has been occupied with an oversimplified view of the working class as rural white male laborers (Morgan and Lee 2017; Mathur and Kasmir 2018). By many definitions, though, the working class is increasingly acknowledged as a demographically and circumstantially diverse group, with a larger proportion of women, racial minorities, and other marginalized groups, and living across the rural–urban spectrum (Wilson 2016; Wilson and Roscigno 2018). Inequalities both within the working class and between it and other social classes are of substantial scholarly interest. This is reflected in the broad scope and the international contributor and reader base of this journal and other recent scholarship on the working class (Nelson 2017; Marambio-Tapia 2018; Wagner 2018; Wilson and Roscigno 2018).

So who are the working class? How do we go about counting today's working class for working-class studies? In this paper, I delineate and explore the working class as defined or operationalized in several different ways. I also take a close look at three occupational aggregations, two suggested by Metzgar (2003) and Cohen (2001) and one suggested by me and inspired by Florida (2002), and using 2017 American Community Survey data, I compare the demographic characteristics and geography of each of these three definitions.[44] The descriptive findings show that in the US the working class is larger and more diverse than popular discussion indicates, and that members of the working class are geographically situated mostly within metropolitan regions.

This paper answers Zweig's (2016) call to maintain continuity in thinking about the working class in working-class studies by recognizing that 'whatever the new labor processes or changes in the economy, the working class continues to exist in capitalist societies, within capitalist class dynamics, in which the organization of production underlies material, cultural, and political experience' (14). Casual observers may associate the working class with the 'rust belt' of the US or as a sought-after voting bloc. In this paper, however, I show that any meaningful definition reveals a diverse group of working people whose opportunities are shaped by the capitalist system in which they live and work.

Defining the Working Class

Self-Identification

Social-class self-identification can seem like the most straightforward way of identifying who is working class, because it basically asks people, 'Are you working class?' Major national polling, including Gallup and the General Social Survey (GSS), use this as a polling question in their surveys, and scholars have used it to study a range of characteristics of the working class, including vote choice (Bird and Newport 2017). For example, the GSS asks, 'If you were asked to use one of four names for your social class, which would you say you belong in: the lower class, the working class, the middle class, or the upper class?' (NORC 2019). This seems like a straightforward way of doing it. Gross described it as viewing social class as 'referent groups' (398), while Centers (1949) explained that it understands a person's social class as 'part of [their] ego, a feeling on [their] part of belongingness to something; and identification with something larger than [them]self' (27).

This approach to identifying a person's social class corresponds with what Wright (2005) describes as taking class as subjective location, and has been the subject of research on class culture and class identity formation (Lamont 1992; Stuber 2005, 2006). It asks how people '*locate themselves and others* within a social structure of inequality' (718) [emphasis Wright's]. As Wright (2005) explains, with this type of definition of class, 'the actual content of these evaluative attributes will vary considerably across time and place. In some contexts, class-as-subjective classification will revolve around life styles, in others around occupations, and in still others around income levels' (718).

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[44] Social class can be studied as either an individual or a family or household characteristic. In this paper I focus on it as an individual characteristic. Because we are mainly interested in the working class, and I take that class to be best identified through a person's job or their relationship to the means of production, I am not exploring all the ways that class identity might be complicated at the household or family level.

Of course, there are difficulties with this approach. One is that the self-identification question is not necessarily connected to the person's working conditions or material circumstances. For example, Sosnaud et al. (2013) examined contrasts between subjective class self-identification and what they call indicators of 'objective' class position to study vote choice (though the objectiveness of their 'objective' measures may be up for debate as well). Another difficulty is that many surveys that ask about subjective social class identification do not include working class as a specific answer. The Pew Research Center, for example, asks respondents, 'What class do you belong in?' and offers lower class, lower-middle class, middle class, upper-middle class, and upper class as possible responses, but not working class (Morin and Motel 2012). A further problem is that many surveys and polls—including the US Census Bureau's Decennial Census and its American Community Survey—do not ask about subjective social class self-identification.[45]

Education-based Definitions

Educational attainment is an increasingly popular proxy for identifying a person's social class. Wilson (2016), like many scholars, defines the working class as 'working people without a college degree' (1). Douglas Massey also uses educational attainment as a proxy for social class, in his 2007 book *Categorically Unequal*. In an economic context where a college degree is an important attribute in a worker's labor-market opportunities, there are good reasons for this approach.

However, the education-based definition of the working class obscures both the working conditions of the people being studied and the class relations that shape those conditions. As Metzgar (2003) noted, relying exclusively on an education-based definition can obscure the material circumstances of workers or lead to tiresome debates about variation within the class:

> If your definition is based strictly on education, for example, guardians of the middle-class vernacular will mention Bill Gates, who does not have a bachelor's degree but is a managerial worker and unarguably 'rich.' They will mention the social worker with a master's degree who makes only $32,000 a year, and the UPS truck driver, an overtime hog, who makes $100,000 a year. Guardians insist on a precise definition, and then delight in pointing out the exceptions to the rule, attempting to make any discussion of class in America seem ridiculous or tedious (71).

Of course, using educational attainment as a class indicator shows how a person's class position can change over time. The category is challenging enough to define, but we should note the significance of timing here. Because much of working-class studies is historical, once you have the boundaries of the class set, it's relatively easy to distinguish who is and is not a member of the working class. But of course, people move between social classes throughout their lives, and many develop a double-consciousness, as they live in multiple class-cultural worlds at the same time. Social-class transitions, and the frictions of negotiating between different class-

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[45] Self-identification as working class varies substantially across national contexts, too. For example, Graves' (2018) report, based on surveys in Canada, found that from 2002–2017 the proportion of respondents self-identifying as working class in response to a survey question very similar to the GSS question in the US was typically more than 10% lower than in the US, between about 22% and 37%: similar to the 30% found by some polling in Australia (Moore and Gibson 2018). In contrast, in the 33rd edition of *British Social Attitudes*, Evans and Mellon (2016) showed that a much higher proportion of respondents self-identified as working-class in Britain: more than 60% over roughly the same time period.

cultural worlds, are the subject of research that is highly revealing about class boundaries and the social circumstances of each class (Lehmann 2009 2013; Jack 2014; Warnock 2014). Attfield (2016) showed how appeals for respectability applied to working-class people can constrain working-class critiques of injustice and social inequality.

Scholars studying the working class in higher education are especially aware of how tangled a person's college education and social-class identity can be (Hurst 2007, 2010; Warnock and Appel 2012; Jack 2014; Warnock 2014; Lee 2016; Warnock and Hurst 2016; King, Griffith, and Murphy 2017). Hurst (2010) showed that many working-class students from diverse backgrounds took on strategic identities as they navigated college life: loyalists, who maintain commitment to their working-class cultural roots; renegades, who embrace middle-class culture and goals; and double agents, who work to keep a foothold in each world. Also, identifying the working class as all workers who have no college degree contributes to inaccurate stigmatization of the working class as 'uneducated.' So while educational attainment can be a useful indicator of a person's circumstances, it is an awkward indicator of social-class position.

Income and Wealth-based Definitions

This way of examining social class aligns with what Wright (2005) describes as taking class as a person's objective position within a distribution, because these definitions ask, 'How are people *objectively located* in distributions of material inequality?' (2). In these types of class definition, class is used to describe some objectively identifiable characteristics of economic inequality and the person's position in their society's class system. Common examples of this sort of class definition are those based on a person's or family's income or wealth. Reeves and Guyot (2019) at the Brookings Institution, for example, identified their middle-class category as all people in households within the middle 60% of households on the national income distribution. Income, or some combination of income and other assets, such as wealth, can certainly be useful for describing class categories and circumstances. For the working class in particular, though, these indicators don't quite get at a central characteristic that many scholars of working-class studies are most interested in: the work, or how a person generates income through their labor in the labor market.

The Working Class by Occupation Categories

Another way of defining the working class is to aggregate all workers in a particular group of occupations as working class. This is a common practice in working-class studies and other disciplines and interdisciplinary spaces (Nelson 2017; Marambio-Tapia 2018; Wagner 2018). For US workers, job codes are available as a common variable in surveys such as the US Census Bureau's Decennial Census and the American Community Survey (ACS). This use of occupations to study class position and structure in the US has a long history (Blau and Duncan 1967; Wright 1997; Grusky and Sorensen 1998; Freeland and Hoey 2018; Hout 2018; Zhou and Wodtke 2019).

As Wilson and Roscigno (2018) explain, 'Occupations, in fact, comprise aggregations of jobs – jobs that entail significant variations in workplace roles and accompanying rewards and status' (115). The job code schema used by the Census and ACS includes more than 500 job codes. Table 1 contains these codes and specifies which ones I included for each definition of the working class. Another common practice is to aggregate job codes within one of six major groups: management and professional specialty occupations; precision production, craft, and

repair occupations; technical, sales, and administrative support occupations; operators, fabricators, and laborers; services workers; and farming, forestry, and fishing workers. Table 1 includes these standard major occupation groups as headings, and also shows how I coded each job code for each of the three definitions I examine in this paper. Table 2 shows how each definition compares with the six-category standard grouping schema.

I see an alignment between the working class as a conceptual category and occupation-based definitions. Defining a social class by its members' jobs reflects an interest in the context and characteristics of the work and what it means for the people doing those jobs. It means focusing on the individual and their work circumstances. This is a different kind of definition from one that considers cultural associations or other elements beyond the job itself. In common discussion, which jobs are typically considered working-class or not is of course informed by other factors and by cultural norms. Certain job categories have historically been gendered or raced, for example, which then also influences which categories are associated with the working class or not (Cha and Thebaud 2008; Nixon 2009; Aguirre 2017). Income may also vary dramatically across this class category. Occupational-category-based definitions focus on social class as one characteristic, and highlight *how* a person earns a wage and how much autonomy and authority they have in their job.

Zweig's Working-Class Majority

Zweig's 2001 book *The Working Class Majority* laid the foundation in working-class studies for thinking about how to count the working class, and did so by applying a definition based on occupation categories. Zweig examined the detailed occupational content of each job title in the same job codes used by the ACS, and assigned employees to the working, middle, or capitalist class according to how much authority and independence they typically have on the job.

Zweig was also interested in a class definition that reflected relationships and power at work, not just job title, so he went further. He identified that in the professional specialty occupation category, some professionals, such as engineers, doctors, and lawyers, are middle-class 'given the degree of independence and authority they typically have at work' (30). But he also argued that many workers in the same category were working-class, including emergency medical technicians, teacher assistants, and broadcast sound engineers. As he examined more jobs closely, he decided to split portions of several categories into working and middle class. For example, he argued that about 75% of nurses were working-class, based on their work conditions. There certainly are large variations in the conditions and qualifications related to nursing jobs. As Table 1 shows, the job codes used identify both registered nurses (code 95) and licensed practical nurses (code 207), which are distinct from nursing aides, orderlies, and attendants (code 447). Sorting out these distinctions helps to clarify the boundaries of the working class and what a study means when using this label. While these fine-grained distinctions complicate the story that can be told with any one definition of the working class, we will see below that other scholars make such distinctions in trying to recognize the role of power and relationships in the workplace.

By rooting the definition in occupational standing, and by examining each category of worker's authority and independence, Zweig is taking social class as a 'relational explanation of economic life chance' (Wright 2005). One reason that occupation-based definitions of social class are useful is that the categorical definitions themselves (the jobs that define the categories) reveal the relationship of each worker to the means of production and their degree of

independence and authority in their job. These definitions are useful, as Wright (2005) highlights, because they identify 'certain causal mechanisms that help determine salient features of that system [of stratification]' (719). Another reason that occupation-based definitions of social class are popular is because they can more directly reflect people's working conditions. They allow researchers to usefully compare workers across other characteristics, both between and within class categories.

A drawback, however, is that because these definitions are rooted in a person's labor-market status, they usually exclude many people who might be considered working-class based on other characteristics but who are not currently in the labor market (Portes and Sassen-Koob 1987; Jensen, et al. 1995; Alderslade et al. 2006). For example, unemployed people, retired workers, or people working in the informal economy or being paid under the table could all reasonably be considered working-class for reasons beyond their occupation title, but they would not be identified by these types of definitions. Also excluded is the often-invisible domestic care work, much of it done by women, especially care of dependent children and elderly family members (Pernigotti 2010; Thebaud 2010). People who do not enter the labor force because of such responsibilities would be excluded from these definitions of the working class, especially in places without substantial family leave support.

While it is important to understand that there is meaningful variation in working conditions in these occupational categories, Zweig's unique categorization creates difficulties for replication in research. One difficulty is that Zweig does not identify specific working conditions or particular workers that he places in one class or another. So while it is possible for a researcher to allot the same portions of workers from these occupations to the working and middle classes, and then calculate characteristics such as mean or median incomes for each class, it is not possible to meaningfully intersect these class groups with other characteristics, such as industry categories. It is, unfortunately, not possible to know which particular nurses, for example, are to be counted as working-class and which as middle-class.

Metzgar's Working Class

Metzgar's (2003) writing focuses on how we, in broader society, identify and talk about the working class and how we attach meaning and political positions to working-class identity. But he also developed a simple and useful categorical definition of the working class. Metzgar (2003) takes a broad and inclusive view of the working class. The way we think about and discuss the middle class in our class vernacular, he explains, 'first hides the working class (by including it within the ubiquitous middle) and then forgets it is there by assuming that almost everybody is college-educated and professional' (64). He argues that we thereby 'miss the larger part of the working class that is not blue collar, most importantly clerical, retail sales, and other kinds of 'service' workers' (67).

For Metzgar, then, the working class should be thought of as 'everybody who does not fully qualify for the smaller, more exclusive 'middle class'' (68). He explains that if you define the working class by occupational categories, then 'Basically, this is everybody who is not in the BLS's 'managerial and professional workers' category' (68). So for Metzgar, the working class includes all workers in the other five major categories of the standard occupation schema: all workers in precision production, craft, and repair occupations; technical, sales, and administrative support occupations; operators, fabricators, and laborers; services workers; and farming, forestry, and fishing workers (69). Metzgar's definition is the broadest and most inclusive of the definitions of the US working class considered here, and because it is a simple

grouping of major occupation categories, it is relatively easy to work with in terms of replication.

Cohen's Working Class

While Cohen's (2001) research investigated a narrow test of how the proportion of black workers in a local labor market shaped class inequality among whites, he developed a thoughtful definition of the working class based on a careful grouping of occupation categories. Cohen is a prominent sociologist whose research focuses on family life, but he has also studied the working class and labor market inequalities (Cohen and Huffman 2003; Cohen 2014).

Cohen (2001) aggregates workers in several occupational categories as the working class, but he removed people in supervisory and managerial positions in several of the six standard occupational categories. Cohen refers to Szymanski's (1983) definition of the working class, explaining that it is 'based on relations of production and taking into account structures of authority, so that teachers, blue-collar supervisors, and police, for example, are not included as working class' (151). Cohen (2001) notes that his definition also 'roughly parallels the skilled and unskilled workers in Wright's [1997] typology (that is, all employees less experts, supervisors, and managers)' (152). As Cohen (2001) explains, 'In 1990 census categories, this definition of working class includes sales workers (except finance and business services and nonretail commodities); all technical, sales, and administrative support occupations (except supervisors); all service occupations (except protective service); and all nonsupervisory agriculture and blue-collar workers' (152).

In many ways, Cohen's (2001) definition of the working class attempted to make the same distinction as Zweig (2001) by separating out workers based on the power and class relations associated with their specific occupation. Like Kalleberg (2010), both Zweig and Cohen recognize that variations in authority create different work conditions and move workers with authority out of the working class. So while Cohen's and Zweig's categorizations differ in their particulars, they both aim to sort workers more carefully between the working and middle classes, based particularly on power and class relations. Unlike Zweig, though, in Cohen's definition each occupational category is wholly allotted to either the working or middle class, rather than splitting a portion of some of the trickier categories between each class category. For this reason, Cohen's (2001) definition is much more easily and usefully replicable.

The Creative Proletariat

Richard Florida is best known for his writing on the group of workers he calls the creative class, and how he sees their lifestyle preferences remaking city neighborhoods and metropolitan regions (2002). While his paradigm has been highly contested, it remains a popular way of discussing social classes in the new economy. And though his work might not be considered part of the working-class-studies canon, I find some useful ideas in his way of defining social classes.

Florida's (2002) somewhat nebulous definition of the creative class is workers whose primary function in their work is to 'create meaningful new forms' (69). However, like Metzgar (2003) and Cohen (2001), Florida's class categories (2002 pp.68, 73) are operationalized in a very concrete way as an aggregation of occupational codes from the standard classification system. He categorizes workers into his unique class structure: creative class, service class, and working class (with military personnel excluded and agricultural workers considered a separate

class).[46] In defining his creative class, Florida identifies the super-creative core as a direct recoding of four occupation groups, then adds what he identifies as creative professionals, which includes several other managerial or technical jobs. A unique distinction of Florida's class categories is that he adds what he describes as high-end sales and sales management to his creative class, while placing others sales categories in his service class. Markusen et al. (2008) described Florida's class categories as 'large lumpy occupational categories,' which is, really, an apt description for each of these three categorical definitions of the working class. Florida (2002) argues that this aggregation-based way of categorizing social classes creates economic classes along lines that Weeden and Grusky (2005) might call a 'stylized measure.'

Interestingly, Florida's creative class roughly parallels the non-working classes in Cohen's (2001) and Metzgar's (2003) research. While the working class is not Florida's focus, it is an interesting exercise to invert his class system and examine the workers he excludes from his creative class. As Table 1 shows, this means that combining Florida's working and services classes roughly parallels the working classes of Cohen and Metzgar. Florida's own aggregation that he labels the working class in his schema includes 'Construction and extraction occupations, Installation, maintenance, and repair occupations, Production occupations, and Transportation and material moving occupations' (2002 pp. 328–329). His service class includes 'Healthcare support occupations, Food preparation and food service related occupations, Building and grounds cleaning and maintenance, Personal care and service occupations, Low-end sales and related occupations, Office and administrative support occupations, Community and social services occupations, and Protective service occupations' (ibid.).

I argue elsewhere (King and Crommelin forthcoming 2020) that while Florida's class categories may reasonably dissatisfy many, they may also usefully reflect the new economy framework than the similarly lumpy standard occupational categories (Smith 2001; Nevarez 2002; Sweet 2007; Sweet and Meiksins 2017).[47] In particular, Florida's class categorization splits the standard category of managerial and professional specialty occupations, and allots those jobs between the super-creative core, creative professionals, and service classes. He includes 'high-end sales and sales management' in his creative class, which implies that only a few sales occupations are in the creative class, while the others are in his service class. But he does not specify which categories are included for each. For my analysis here, I included sales representatives, finance and business services occupations, including insurance, real estate, financial services, and advertising and related sales occupations, as well as sales engineers (code 258) as 'high-end sales and sales management,' and therefore in the creative class. I excluded from the creative class the sales occupational category of sales demonstrators, promoters, and models because they are likely not considered 'high-end' or management, even though their jobs may require some creativity.

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[46] Florida explains that in his class formulation, members of the creative class share a culture based on their desire to be creative and their place in the economy. In this sense, the creative class definition relates to Weber's (1946) concept of status as class members interact in their social worlds through shared cultural preferences. Florida argues that 'All members of the Creative Class – whether they are artists or engineers, musicians or computer scientists, writers or entrepreneurs – share a common creative ethos that values creativity, individuality, difference, and merit' (8). As he states, their 'social and cultural preferences, consumption and buying habits, and their social identities all flow from this' (68). Of course, many workers in occupations that Florida does not consider to be creative-class may also share these creative inclinations or social and cultural preferences.

[47] Florida's (2012 p. 40) calculations show substantial differences between his creative class and the group of all workers with a college degree. There is also substantial evidence that his creative class category is not the clear proxy for educational attainment that some have understood it to be (Stolarick and Currid-Halkett 2013).

Florida's categorization also splits the standard category of technical, sales, and administrative support occupations, allotting a small portion of those jobs among creative professionals while most are aggregated in the service class. We can set aside questions of creativity (and Florida's contention that these jobs drive economic growth and their workers promote tolerance) and see that the super-creative core and creative professionals occupation categories reflect jobs that are commonly understand as 'new economy' jobs (Smith 2001; Nevarez 2002; Sweet 2007; Sweet and Meiksins 2017).[48] Also, by combining low-end sales and administrative support jobs with standard service occupations, this categorization schema highlights the shared circumstances of workers in these jobs. Florida's working-class occupation category is a straightforward combination of the standard precision production, craft, and repair occupation with the standard operators, fabricators, and laborers occupation. Interestingly, the non-creative-class workers in Florida's aggregation (i.e. Florida's service, working, and agricultural classes combined) overlaps substantially with Metzgar's (2003) and Cohen's (2001) definitions of working class.

Is there an appropriate label for the group of all workers not considered in the 'creative class' by Florida? Florida (2002) suggests that workers outside of creative-class occupations are seeing their work 'de-creatified' by automation and other changes in working conditions (71). Some may therefore be tempted to label these workers as the 'non-creative class,' but that label does not work for me. Even workers engaged in the most rote activities find ways to be creative in their work. But in the context of the new economy, it could be said that these workers lack access to the means of 'creating meaningful new forms,' at least in their jobs at work. So I suggest the label of 'creative proletariat' for all workers outside of the creative class in Florida's system.

Summary of these Three Occupation Aggregation Definitions

Comparing these three occupation aggregation definitions of the working class, we see interesting similarities and differences. For example, sales engineers are counted in the working class in the Cohen and Metzgar typologies, but not in the Florida typology outlined here. The sales occupational category of sales demonstrators, promoters, and models is considered working-class in all three major aggregations. Interestingly, the inclusion of community and social service occupations in Florida's categorization means that Florida's service class also includes social workers, recreation workers, and clergy and religious workers (codes 174, 175, and 176), which neither Cohen nor Metzgar includes in the working class. Metzgar and Florida include protective service occupations (everyone from police and fire fighters to cross guards and doorkeepers) as part of their working or service class, while Cohen excludes these workers in recognition of their authority and social prestige.

More broadly, because any of these three definitions of the working class is based on a worker's specific job title, these definitions include real information about the kind of work that a person is doing. This information is not as apparent when a researcher is using another of the

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[48] If the new creative economy is taken as the defining economic system of our time, perhaps it is reasonable to consider the usefulness of Florida's conception of social class. Rather than class relations being understood as between owners (or supervisors) and workers, they could be understood in this way as between those who possess creative skills *and* the job positions in which to deploy them, and those who do not possess both of these things. For these reasons, I think it can be useful to combine Florida's working and service classes, and reasonable to add agricultural workers (at least those who are not owners or managers), into a class category understood to be in a contrasting class position from the creative class in the new economy.

definitions described above. But, of course, none of these definitions tell us everything about each worker's working conditions, and there are many reasons to expect substantial variations even within any particular job category.

Data and Methods

To examine the characteristics of the members of each of these definitions of the working class, I collected the 1% sample from the 2017 American Community Survey (ACS through the Integrated Public Use Microdata Series: Version 8.0 (IPUMS) (Ruggles et al. 2018). I used the PERWT variable to weight the sample to ensure the dataset is nationally representative for person-level analyses. I did not narrow the sample down to a 'prime age' group of workers, so the data includes workers aged 16–93.[49] Unlike other employment data sources (including the Bureau of Labor Statistics), ACS data provides both occupation and industry-category information for individual respondents, which is useful for examining cross-sections of these employment groups. The full count of employed people represented in this data is 155,057,257.

For this analysis, I use the IPUMS format for the US Census Bureau's 1990 occupational schema.[50] More recent categorization schemas are available, and crosswalks have been created to allow historical comparison (Morgan, 2017). However, because the categorical definitions that are of interest here were formulated based on the occupation-categorization schema reported by IPUMS with the OCC1990 variable, I applied the OCC1990 schema here as well.

Comparing these Three Working-Class Operationalizations

Size and Distributions

Examining Table 2, we can see that all three operationalizations for the working class identify these workers as a clear majority of people with jobs. Metzgar's definition is the broadest, and counts just over 66.7% (103,487,634 of 155,057,257) of the employed labor force as working class. Cohen's narrower definition is the smallest, identifying about 57.7% as working class. The creative proletariat definition lies between them, at about 61.4%.

Table 2 shows how each definition overlays with the six-category standard occupation grouping. Metzgar's is the simplest, identifying all workers in managerial and professional specialty occupations as non-working-class, and all workers in all five other categories as working-class. Table 2 also shows how Cohen's definition moves some workers from four of the other standard occupation categories (technical, sales, and admin; support; service; farming, forestry, and fishing; and precision production, craft, and repair occupations) into non-working class. Compared to Metzgar's definition, in Cohen's grouping, technical, sales, and administrative support occupations contribute the most additional workers to the non-working-class category, while each definition identifies all operators, fabricators, and laborers as working-class. The creative proletariat definition moves 10,222,595 workers from technical, sales, and administrative support occupations into the creative-class category, but, like Metzgar's definition, counts as working-class all workers in service; farming, forestry, and fishing; precision production, craft, and repair; and operators, fabricators, and laborers occupations.

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[49] Age is top-coded at age 93.
[50] For both the ACS and the Decennial Census, respondents with multiple jobs report the job that they earn the most money from or spend the most time at.

While the intersections of these three definitions with the standard occupational categories are relatively simple, their intersections with standard industry categories are more complex. Through Table 3 we can examine how the working class (and the non-working class) is distributed across 13 standard industry categories. Many observers associate the working class with the manufacturing industry, and we see here that 11–12% of the working class (and a little over 8% of the non-working class) are in the manufacturing industry according to all three definitions. If you combine all of the working class in the agriculture, forestry, and fisheries, as well as the mining and construction industries with those in the manufacturing industry, you get almost 25% of the working class labor force for all three definitions.

Which industries are underrepresented among the working class? Across all three definitions, the working class makes up around 20% of the professional and related services industry, while that industry is 42.44–52.37% of the non-working class, depending on the definition. Interestingly, despite the careful distinctions made by Cohen and Florida to remove workers with autonomy, authority, or creative responsibilities at work from the working class, we see here that patterns of industry distribution are roughly similar across all three definitions. One industry that does not follow this pattern is business and repair services. Following Metzgar's definition, this industry is a larger proportion of the working class than the non-working class (7.16% to 6.69%), but the reverse is true for Cohen's definition and the creative proletariat (6.88% to 7.16%, and 6.48% to 7.83%, respectively).

One industry that shows a large contrast between the working and non-working classes is retail trade. Retail trade makes almost 24% of the working class in both Metzgar's and Cohen's definitions, and more than 22% of the creative proletariat. The retail trade industry is more than 10% of the non-working class only if you adopt the creative-class definition, where it is 10.25% of the creative class. The high proportion of the working class in the retail industry underscores recent discussions in this journal (Nelson 2017; Marambio-Tapia 2018).

Descriptive Statistics for Each Working Class

Table 4 reports descriptive statistics for each of these definitions of the working class. Metzgar's working class reports the highest mean and median incomes for individuals ($36,169.38 and $27,400).[51] The creative proletariat reports the closest mean and median individual incomes ($32,871.27 and $25,900), suggesting that incomes for this group are the least skewed by high-income outliers.

According to IPUMS, the poverty variable expresses each family's total income for the previous year as a percentage of the poverty thresholds established by the Social Security Administration in 1964 and revised in 1980, adjusted for inflation. These family numbers are also used to report the poverty status for each individual. I calculated the proportion of individuals in families with incomes less than two times the poverty level, and we see that more than 25% of the working class lived below twice the poverty line in 2017.

Metzgar's definition includes the largest proportion of the working class with a college degree, at about 17.69%; Cohen's definition and the creative proletariat report about 15.7%. While some would identify only people without a college degree as working class (as discussed above), it is important to note that more than one in seven members of the working class have

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[51] Individual wage and salary income is top-coded at the 99.5% percentile for each person's state, with higher amounts coded as the state means of values above the listed top code value for that specific Census year.

earned a college degree according to any of the three definitions. These are higher numbers than might be expected, especially given that some of these people have not yet had a chance to earn a college degree, since the workforce as defined here includes many people under common ages for college graduation for traditional students.

Is the Working Class White, Male, Rural, and Old?

In the US, much national news reporting discusses the working class almost exclusively in terms of political persuasions, and almost always frames it as white and male (also as rural and in manufacturing). For example, in the lead-up to the 2016 presidential election, Khalid (2016) for *NPR* looked at the relationship between the white working class and the Republican party, while Brownstein (2019) for *The Atlantic* wrote an article describing 'The Diverse Left and White Working-Class Right.' Many scholars and commentators involved in working-class studies, such as Russo and Linkon (2016) and Francis (2018) have worked to dispel the overgeneralized stereotypes that emerge from such coverage. But given how news reports discussing the working class focus on the white working class in manufacturing, you might begin to imagine that the working class is white, male, rural, and old (Morgan and Lee 2017; Mathur and Kasmir 2018). Critiques of this view have also proliferated, however. In fact, back in 2003 Metzgar argued that this view of the working class is overly nostalgic. He explained that 'the 'blue collar' and 'thing of the past' connotations of 'working class' (sometimes accompanied by stereotypes of a white, male Joe Six-Pack) also restrict us, both from talking sensibly and from really challenging the existing vernacular' (67).

These numbers illustrate how the stereotype of the working class as white, male, rural, uneducated, and old is misleading and inaccurate. While this data includes all workers, even those aged 16–25, in each definition more than 15% of the working class has earned a college degree. Across all three definitions, more than 12.5% of the working class is non-Hispanic black, and more than 20.8% of the working class is Hispanic (compared to 11.36% and 17.17% of the total labor force, respectively). Regardless of definition, more than 10% of the working class are non-citizens, about twice the proportion among the non-working class. It is true that in each of the three definitions, most of the working class are white, but the working class is consistently less white than the non-working class across these definitions. Also, all three definitions report mean ages of 40.5–41 years, just below the mean age for the whole workforce, 41.96 years. Across all three definitions, the working class is a little more than half male, and also a percentage or two more male than the overall labor force. But, many occupations within the working class are female dominated, and women are nearly half of the overall working class reflect, so neither gender can claim the working class as its own.

The geographic distribution of the working class also shows greater diversity than might be expected. Using the metropolitan-status variable to identify respondents' geographies, I found that more of the working class lived in central cities than lived outside of metropolitan regions (over 8% and then over 10%, respectively, across all three definitions). This variable is tricky to work with, partly because among this sample, 12.3% of all cases had an indeterminable metropolitan status, and 42.5% had an unknown central-city status. We can identify spaces in metropolitan regions but outside of central cities as a proxy for 'suburbs,' and if we do this here, we find that among all workers with known metropolitan status across the three definitions, over 90% live in a metropolitan region, and about 90% of those live outside of the central city. Across all the definitions, then, we see that the working class is more diverse and dynamic than conventional wisdom suggests.

Maybe We're (almost) All Working-Class?

Because there are so many disparate definitions of the working class, many of them count people as working class while others would exclude them. What happens if we group all workers who would be identified as working class by any several of these definitions? While each definition largely overlaps with the others, seeing how large the group of workers becomes when you add together every worker included by at least one definition reveals just how many workers in the US are in precarious work circumstances, and how much these workers have in common.

In Table 5 I report descriptive statistics for all workers in a new working-class variable that includes any person who would be identified as working class based on any of these broad definitions. I included all workers who are working-class because they work in an occupation identified as working-class by Metzgar or Cohen, or are a part of the creative proletariat, and then I added all workers who have less than a bachelor's degree and all workers who live at or below 200% of the poverty level (regardless of occupation). This very broad definition of the working class includes 122,773,708 workers, or 79.18% of the entire workforce. This way of identifying the working class moves the descriptive statistics in directions that some would argue look less like the working class, as the mean and median individual wage and salary incomes are higher for this group than all three categorical definitions, and the proportion of workers in this group with a college degree is higher than the three narrower, occupation-based definitions.

Still, the exercise shows just how many workers might reasonably be identified as working-class by at least one definition. More than three quarters of all workers in the US can reasonably claim working-class status by at least one of these definitions (regardless of their self-identification). Does that render the category meaningless? I would argue no—instead, it provides another illustration of just how large a proportion of the workforce in today's labor market is marginalized, one way or another.

Discussion

This descriptive summary comparing the characteristics of the working class between three categorical definitions could underpin several threads of further analysis. One thread would be to update and align each definition with the 2010 occupation codes. While crosswalks have been created to update each category, it would be useful to have a specific list of all occupations from the 2010 schema identified for each definition (Morgan 2017). Another thread would be to analyze more deeply how well each definition captures what working-class-studies scholars mean when we use this label to describe characteristics of workers in this class. Does Metzgar's broad definition usefully capture the range of working conditions and material circumstances we are interested in? Is Cohen's more useful because of its narrow precision? Does the creative-proletariat grouping better capture something about work circumstances in the new economy?

The working class has changed substantially over time, and more research that examines these changes would be useful. Identifying when retail workers became a predominant group in the working class, for example, would be enlightening. Ongoing discussion about who are counted among the working class is an important practice in working-class studies (Linkon 2008). So is engaging with scholars across disciplines about how to count the working class and, critically, what those definitions imply about the class and their circumstances.

Further examination of the characteristics of the 'mismatched' workers, who are working class by one definition but not by another, could be a productive line of research. What do we see if we look specifically at those in working-class jobs who also have a college degree, or those without a college degree in middle-class jobs? What about individuals whose class position has changed over time, either because of their mobility in the labor market or their educational attainment, or some other change? One thread I am particularly interested in is the intersection of geography and working-class categorization. For example, what do we see if we compare the working class of the city center with those who live outside of metropolitan regions? We could also explore more deeply which cities, metropolitan regions, or even rural areas have larger or smaller proportions of working-class workers, and why. Of course, comparisons across national borders would be informative as well. We know that while working class subjective self-identification is relatively consistent over time in each country, the proportions of people self-identifying as working class are quite different between the US, Canada, and the UK. It could be informative to examine a broader set of national contexts and study to what extent these differences emerge from contrasts in labor market structures or cultural differences in the meanings associated with working class identification.

While there are several directions for future research to explore further, this descriptive comparison of three occupation-category-based definitions of the working class clarifies the differences in these definitions, and gives a sense of who we're counting when we count the working class. We see how Cohen creates a narrower definition of the working class than Metzgar, by removing supervisory occupations from the category. We see that Florida's creative-class social-class schema, for all its imperfections, could be usefully inverted to examine what I call the creative proletariat—or workers who cannot access the so-called creative-class jobs that he associates with new-economy opportunities. Moreover, we also see that working-class across all three of these dimensions, include a diverse and dynamic group of workers, and a group of people more complex and interesting than you or I might otherwise have expected.

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Colby King teaches and studies social class, stratification and inequality, urban sociology, sociology of work, and strategies for supporting working-class and first-generation college students. He has served as a member of the Working-Class Studies Association's Steering Committee, is a member of the American Sociological Association's Task Force on Working-Class and First Generation Persons in Sociology, and is a regular contributor for the *Everyday Sociology* Blog. He is headed back to Appalachia, and will begin working as an Assistant Professor of Sociology at USC-Upstate in August 2019, after six years of work, and being tenured and promoted, at Bridgewater State University.

Acknowledgments

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Appendix

Table 1. Occ1990 Codes included in each Categorical Definition

Standard Occupation Categories are identified with ALL CAPS headings.
Also, w=included in wc and both s and w included in creative proletariat.
Managerial and Professional Specialty Occupations which are not included in either of these three definitions have been excluded from the table (Codes 3 through 173, and 178-200).

Code	Label	Metzgar	Cohen	Creative Proletariat
	MANAGERIAL AND PROFESSIONAL SPECIALTY OCCUPATIONS			
	Executive, Administrative, and Managerial Occupations:			
	...Occupations coded 3-173 excluded from table...			
	Social, Recreation, and Religious Workers:			
174	Social workers			s
175	Recreation workers			s
176	Clergy and religious workers			s
	...Occupations coded 178-200 excluded from table...			
	TECHNICAL, SALES, AND ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT OCCUPATIONS			
	Technicians and Related Support Occupations			
	Health Technologists and Technicians:			
203	Clinical laboratory technologies and technicians	w	w	s
204	Dental hygienists	w	w	s
205	Health record tech specialists	w	w	s
206	Radiologic tech specialists	w	w	s
207	Licensed practical nurses	w	w	s
208	Health technologists and technicians, n.e.c.	w	w	s
	Technologists and Technicians, Except Health			
	Engineering and Related Technologists and Technicians:			
213	Electrical and electronic (engineering) technicians	w	w	
214	Engineering technicians, n.e.c.	w	w	
215	Mechanical engineering technicians	w	w	
217	Drafters	w	w	
218	Surveyors, cartographers, mapping scientists and technicians	w	w	
223	Biological technicians	w	w	
	Science Technicians:			
224	Chemical technicians	w	w	
225	Other science technicians	w	w	
	Technicians, Except Health, Engineering, and Science:			
226	Airplane pilots and navigators	w	w	
227	Air traffic controllers	w	w	
228	Broadcast equipment operators	w	w	
229	Computer software developers	w	w	

233	Programmers of numerically controlled machine tools	w	w	
234	Legal assistants, paralegals, legal support, etc.	w	w	
235	Technicians, n.e.c.	w	w	
	Sales Occupations:			
243	Supervisors and proprietors of sales jobs	w		
	Sales Representatives, Finance and Business Services:			
253	Insurance sales occupations	w		
254	Real estate sales occupations	w		
255	Financial services sales occupations	w		
256	Advertising and related sales jobs	w		
	Sales Representatives, Commodities:			
258	Sales engineers	w	w	
274	Salespersons, n.e.c.	w	w	s
275	Retail sales clerks	w	w	s
276	Cashiers	w	w	s
277	Door-to-door sales, street sales, and news vendors	w	w	s
	Sales Related Occupations:			
283	Sales demonstrators / promoters / models	w	w	s
	Administrative Support Occupations, Including Clerical			
	Supervisors, Administrative Support Occupations:			
303	Office supervisors	w		s
	Computer Equipment Operators:			
308	Computer and peripheral equipment operators	w	w	s
	Secretaries, Stenographers, and Typists:			
313	Secretaries	w	w	s
314	Stenographers	w	w	s
315	Typists	w	w	s
	Information Clerks:			
316	Interviewers, enumerators, and surveyors	w	w	s
317	Hotel clerks	w	w	s
318	Transportation ticket and reservation agents	w	w	s
319	Receptionists	w	w	s
323	Information clerks, n.e.c	w	w	s
	Records Processing Occupations, Except Financial:			
326	Correspondence and order clerks	w	w	s
328	Human resources clerks, except payroll and timekeeping	w	w	s
329	Library assistants	w	w	s
335	File clerks	w	w	s
336	Records clerks	w	w	s
	Financial Records Processing Occupations:			
337	Bookkeepers and accounting and auditing clerks	w	w	s
338	Payroll and timekeeping clerks	w	w	s
343	Cost and rate clerks (financial records processing)	w	w	s
344	Billing clerks and related financial records processing	w	w	s
	Duplicating, Mail, and Other Office Machine Operators:			
345	Duplication machine operators / office machine operators	w	w	s
346	Mail and paper handlers	w	w	s
347	Office machine operators, n.e.c.	w	w	s

	Communications Equipment Operators:			
348	Telephone operators	w	w	s
349	Other telecom operators	w	w	s
	Mail and Message Distributing Occupations:			
354	Postal clerks, excluding mail carriers	w	w	s
355	Mail carriers for postal service	w	w	s
356	Mail clerks, outside of post office	w	w	s
357	Messengers	w	w	s
	Material Recording, Scheduling, and Distributing Clerks:			
359	Dispatchers	w	w	s
361	Inspectors, n.e.c.	w	w	s
364	Shipping and receiving clerks	w	w	s
365	Stock and inventory clerks	w	w	s
366	Meter readers	w	w	s
368	Weighers, measurers, and checkers	w	w	s
373	Material recording, scheduling, production, planning, and expediting clerks	w	w	s
	Adjusters and Investigators:			
375	Insurance adjusters, examiners, and investigators	w	w	s
376	Customer service reps, investigators and adjusters, except insurance	w	w	s
377	Eligibility clerks for government programs; social welfare	w	w	s
378	Bill and account collectors	w	w	s
	Miscellaneous Administrative Support Occupations:		w	
379	General office clerks	w	w	s
383	Bank tellers	w	w	s
384	Proofreaders	w	w	s
385	Data entry keyers	w	w	s
386	Statistical clerks	w	w	s
387	Teacher's aides	w	w	s
389	Administrative support jobs, n.e.c.	w	w	s
	SERVICE OCCUPATIONS			
	Private Household Occupations:			
405	Housekeepers, maids, butlers, stewards, and lodging quarters cleaners	w	w	s
407	Private household cleaners and servants	w	w	s
	Protective Service Occupations			
	Supervisors, Protective Service Occupations:			
415	Supervisors of guards	w		s
	Firefighting and Fire Prevention Occupations:			
417	Fire fighting, prevention, and inspection	w		s
	Police and Detectives:			
418	Police, detectives, and private investigators	w		s
423	Other law enforcement: sheriffs, bailiffs, correctional institution officers	w		s
	Guards:			
425	Crossing guards and bridge tenders	w		s
426	Guards, watchmen, doorkeepers	w		s
427	Protective services, n.e.c.	w		s

	Service Occupations, Except Protective and Household			
	Food Preparation and Service Occupations:			
434	Bartenders	w	w	s
435	Waiter/waitress	w	w	s
436	Cooks, variously defined	w	w	s
438	Food counter and fountain workers	w	w	s
439	Kitchen workers	w	w	s
443	Waiter's assistant	w	w	s
444	Misc. food prep workers	w	w	s
	Health Service Occupations:			
445	Dental assistants	w	w	s
446	Health aides, except nursing	w	w	s
447	Nursing aides, orderlies, and attendants	w	w	s
	Cleaning and Building Service Occupations, Except Households:			
448	Supervisors of cleaning and building service	w		s
453	Janitors	w	w	s
454	Elevator operators	w	w	s
455	Pest control occupations	w	w	s
	Personal Service Occupations:			
456	Supervisors of personal service jobs, n.e.c.	w		s
457	Barbers	w	w	s
458	Hairdressers and cosmetologists	w	w	s
459	Recreation facility attendants	w	w	s
461	Guides	w	w	s
462	Ushers	w	w	s
463	Public transportation attendants and inspectors	w	w	s
464	Baggage porters	w	w	s
465	Welfare service aides	w	w	s
468	Child care workers	w	w	s
469	Personal service occupations, n.e.c	w	w	s
	FARMING, FORESTRY, AND FISHING OCCUPATIONS			
	Farm Operators and Managers:			
473	Farmers (owners and tenants)	w		
474	Horticultural specialty farmers	w		
475	Farm managers, except for horticultural farms	w		
476	Managers of horticultural specialty farms	w		
	Other Agricultural and Related Occupations:			
	Farm Occupations, Except Managerial:			
479	Farm workers	w	w	
483	Marine life cultivation workers	w	w	
484	Nursery farming workers	w	w	
	Related Agricultural Occupations:			
485	Supervisors of agricultural occupations	w		
486	Gardeners and groundskeepers	w	w	
487	Animal caretakers except on farms	w	w	
488	Graders and sorters of agricultural products	w	w	
489	Inspectors of agricultural products	w	w	
	Forestry and Logging Occupations:			

496	Timber, logging, and forestry workers	w	w	
	Fishers, Hunters, and Trappers:			
498	Fishers, hunters, and kindred	w	w	
PRECISION PRODUCTION, CRAFT, AND REPAIR OCCUPATIONS				
	Mechanics and Repairers:			
503	Supervisors of mechanics and repairers	w		w
	Mechanics and Repairers, Except Supervisors			
	Vehicle and Mobile Equipment Mechanics and Repairers:			
505	Automobile mechanics	w	w	w
507	Bus, truck, and stationary engine mechanics	w	w	w
508	Aircraft mechanics	w	w	w
509	Small engine repairers	w	w	w
514	Auto body repairers	w	w	w
516	Heavy equipment and farm equipment mechanics	w	w	w
518	Industrial machinery repairers	w	w	w
519	Machinery maintenance occupations	w	w	w
	Electrical and Electronic Equipment Repairers:		w	
523	Repairers of industrial electrical equipment	w	w	w
525	Repairers of data processing equipment	w	w	w
526	Repairers of household appliances and power tools	w	w	w
527	Telecom and line installers and repairers	w	w	w
533	Repairers of electrical equipment, n.e.c.	w	w	w
534	Heating, air conditioning, and refrigeration mechanics	w	w	w
	Miscellaneous Mechanics and Repairers:			
535	Precision makers, repairers, and smiths	w	w	w
536	Locksmiths and safe repairers	w	w	w
538	Office machine repairers and mechanics	w	w	w
539	Repairers of mechanical controls and valves	w	w	w
543	Elevator installers and repairers	w	w	w
544	Millwrights	w	w	w
549	Mechanics and repairers, n.e.c.	w	w	w
	Construction Trades			
	Supervisors, Construction Occupations:			
558	Supervisors of construction work	w		w
	Construction Trades, Except Supervisors:			
563	Masons, tilers, and carpet installers	w	w	w
567	Carpenters	w	w	w
573	Drywall installers	w	w	w
575	Electricians	w	w	w
577	Electric power installers and repairers	w	w	w
579	Painters, construction and maintenance	w	w	w
583	Paperhangers	w	w	w
584	Plasterers	w	w	w
585	Plumbers, pipe fitters, and steamfitters	w	w	w
588	Concrete and cement workers	w	w	w
589	Glaziers	w	w	w
593	Insulation workers	w	w	w
594	Paving, surfacing, and tamping equipment operators	w	w	w

595	Roofers and slaters	w	w	w
596	Sheet metal duct installers	w	w	w
597	Structural metal workers	w	w	w
598	Drillers of earth	w	w	w
599	Construction trades, n.e.c.	w	w	w
	Extractive Occupations:			
614	Drillers of oil wells	w	w	w
615	Explosives workers	w	w	w
616	Miners	w	w	w
617	Other mining occupations	w	w	w
	Precision Production Occupations:			
628	Production supervisors or foremen	w		w
	Precision Metal Working Occupations:			
634	Tool and die makers and die setters	w	w	w
637	Machinists	w	w	w
643	Boilermakers	w	w	w
644	Precision grinders and filers	w	w	w
645	Patternmakers and model makers	w	w	w
646	Lay-out workers	w	w	w
649	Engravers	w	w	w
653	Tinsmiths, coppersmiths, and sheet metal workers	w	w	w
	Precision Woodworking Occupations:			
657	Cabinetmakers and bench carpenters	w	w	w
658	Furniture and wood finishers	w	w	w
659	Other precision woodworkers	w	w	w
	Precision Textile, Apparel, and Furnishings Machine Workers:			
666	Dressmakers and seamstresses	w	w	w
667	Tailors	w	w	w
668	Upholsterers	w	w	w
669	Shoe repairers	w	w	w
674	Other precision apparel and fabric workers	w	w	w
	Precision Workers, Assorted Materials:			
675	Hand molders and shapers, except jewelers	w	w	w
677	Optical goods workers	w	w	w
678	Dental laboratory and medical appliance technicians	w	w	w
679	Bookbinders	w	w	w
684	Other precision and craft workers	w	w	w
	Precision Food Production Occupations:			
686	Butchers and meat cutters	w	w	w
687	Bakers	w	w	w
688	Batch food makers	w	w	w
	Precision Inspectors, Testers, and Related Workers:			
693	Adjusters and calibrators	w	w	w
	Plant and System Operators:			
694	Water and sewage treatment plant operators	w	w	w
695	Power plant operators	w	w	w
696	Plant and system operators, stationary engineers	w	w	w
699	Other plant and system operators	w	w	w

	OPERATORS, FABRICATORS, AND LABORERS			
	Machine Operators, Assemblers, and Inspectors			
	Machine Operators and Tenders, Except Precision			
	Metal Working and Plastic Working Machine Operators:			
703	Lathe, milling, and turning machine operatives	w	w	w
706	Punching and stamping press operatives	w	w	w
707	Rollers, roll hands, and finishers of metal	w	w	w
708	Drilling and boring machine operators	w	w	w
709	Grinding, abrading, buffing, and polishing workers	w	w	w
713	Forge and hammer operators	w	w	w
717	Fabricating machine operators, n.e.c.	w	w	w
	Metal and Plastic Processing Machine Operators:			
719	Molders, and casting machine operators	w	w	w
723	Metal platers	w	w	w
724	Heat treating equipment operators	w	w	w
	Woodworking Machine Operators:			
726	Wood lathe, routing, and planing machine operators	w	w	w
727	Sawing machine operators and sawyers	w	w	w
728	Shaping and joining machine operator (woodworking)	w	w	w
729	Nail and tacking machine operators (woodworking)	w	w	w
733	Other woodworking machine operators	w	w	w
	Printing Machine Operators:			
734	Printing machine operators, n.e.c.	w	w	w
735	Photoengravers and lithographers	w	w	w
736	Typesetters and compositors	w	w	w
	Textile, Apparel, and Furnishings Machine Operators:			
738	Winding and twisting textile/apparel operatives	w	w	w
739	Knitters, loopers, and toppers textile operatives	w	w	w
743	Textile cutting machine operators	w	w	w
744	Textile sewing machine operators	w	w	w
745	Shoemaking machine operators	w	w	w
747	Pressing machine operators (clothing)	w	w	w
748	Laundry workers	w	w	w
749	Misc. textile machine operators	w	w	w
	Machine Operators, Assorted Materials:			
753	Cementing and gluing machine operators	w	w	w
754	Packers, fillers, and wrappers	w	w	w
755	Extruding and forming machine operators	w	w	w
756	Mixing and blending machine operatives	w	w	w
757	Separating, filtering, and clarifying machine operators	w	w	w
759	Painting machine operators	w	w	w
763	Roasting and baking machine operators (food)	w	w	w
764	Washing, cleaning, and pickling machine operators	w	w	w
765	Paper folding machine operators	w	w	w
766	Furnace, kiln, and oven operators, apart from food	w	w	w
768	Crushing and grinding machine operators	w	w	w
769	Slicing and cutting machine operators	w	w	w
773	Motion picture projectionists	w	w	w

774	Photographic process workers	w	w	w
779	Machine operators, n.e.c.	w	w	w
	Fabricators, Assemblers, and Hand Working Occupations:			
783	Welders and metal cutters	w	w	w
784	Solderers	w	w	w
785	Assemblers of electrical equipment	w	w	w
789	Hand painting, coating, and decorating occupations	w	w	w
	Production Inspectors, Testers, Samplers, and Weighers:			
796	Production checkers and inspectors	w	w	w
799	Graders and sorters in manufacturing	w	w	w
	Transportation and Material Moving Occupations			
	Motor Vehicle Operators:			
803	Supervisors of motor vehicle transportation	w	w	w
804	Truck, delivery, and tractor drivers	w	w	w
808	Bus drivers	w	w	w
809	Taxi cab drivers and chauffeurs	w	w	w
813	Parking lot attendants	w	w	w
	Transportation Occupations, Except Motor Vehicles			
	Rail Transportation Occupations:			
823	Railroad conductors and yardmasters	w	w	w
824	Locomotive operators (engineers and firemen)	w	w	w
825	Railroad brake, coupler, and switch operators	w	w	w
	Water Transportation Occupations:			
829	Ship crews and marine engineers	w	w	w
834	Water transport infrastructure tenders and crossing guards	w	w	w
	Material Moving Equipment Operators:			
844	Operating engineers of construction equipment	w	w	w
848	Crane, derrick, winch, and hoist operators	w	w	w
853	Excavating and loading machine operators	w	w	w
859	Misc. material moving occupations	w	w	w
	Helpers, Construction and Extractive Occupations:			
865	Helpers, constructions	w	w	w
866	Helpers, surveyors	w	w	w
869	Construction laborers	w	w	w
874	Production helpers	w	w	w
	Freight, Stock, and Material Handlers:			
875	Garbage and recyclable material collectors	w	w	w
876	Materials movers: stevedores and longshore workers	w	w	w
877	Stock handlers	w	w	w
878	Machine feeders and offbearers	w	w	w
883	Freight, stock, and materials handlers	w	w	w
885	Garage and service station related occupations	w	w	w
887	Vehicle washers and equipment cleaners	w	w	w
888	Packers and packagers by hand	w	w	w
889	Laborers outside construction	w	w	w
	MILITARY OCCUPATIONS			
	… Individuals in Occupations coded 905-999 excluded from data set…			

905	Military			
	EXPERIENCED UNEMPLOYED NOT CLASSIFIED BY OCCUPATION			
991	Unemployed			
999	N/A and unknown			

Notes:

According to my interpretation of Cohen's categories, famers (owners and tenants) (code 473) and horticultural specialty farmers (code 474) are not included in working class. In aligning with Florida's categorization, I have also taken 'management occupations' as creative professionals and interpreted as the 'management related occupations' in the coding, and also did not include managers in working and service class occupations. Additionally, in attempting to align with Florida's definition, I interpreted 'Sales demonstrators / promoters / models' (Code 283) as service class here, and not the 'high-end sales and sales management' that Florida refers to.

IPUMS website explains that, 'The census occupation classification system changed markedly in 2000, so the correspondence of ACS occupation codes to the 1950 categories is more problematic than for earlier census years. Researchers interested in the period from 1980 to the present should consider using OCC1990. OCC1990 codes occupations into a simplified version of the 1990 occupational coding scheme. The OCC1950 and OCC1990 classifications have corresponding occupational standing measures recorded in the variables SEI, HWSEI, NPBOSS50, NPBOSS90, PRESGL, PRENT, EDSCOR50, EDSCOR90, ERSCOR50, ERSCOR90, and OCCSCORE. Our essay on 'Integrated Occupation and Industry codes and Occupational Standing Variables in the IPUMS' describes how we construct harmonized occupational variables as well as occupational standing variables.'

Table 2. Standard Occupation Categories by Three Definitions of the Working Class, employed workers in ACS 2017

Standard Occupation Categories	Metzgar		Cohen		Florida	
	WC	nonWC	WC	nonWC	Creative Proletariat	Creative Class
Managerial & Professional Specialty	0	51,569,623	0	51,569,623	1,950,578	49,619,045
Technical, sales & admin. support	42,594,096	0	34,790,588	7,803,508	32,371,501	10,222,595
Service	25,801,570	0	22,241,598	3,559,972	25,801,570	0
Farming, forestry & fishing	3,409,611	0	2,702,588	707,023	3,409,611	0
Precision production, craft & repair	13,510,699	0	11,479,225	2,031,474	13,510,699	0
Operators, fabricators & laborers	18,171,658	0	18,171,658	0	18,171,658	0
Total	**103,487,634**	**51,569,623**	**89,385,657**	**65,671,600**	**95,215,617**	**59,841,640**

Table 3. Employment in Industry Categories by Three Definitions of the Working Class, employed workers in ACS 2017

Industry	WC by Metzgar				WC by Cohen			
	Working Class	% of WC	Non-Working Class	% of non-WC	Working Class	% of WC	Non-Working Class	% of non-WC
Ag, Forestry, Fisheries	3,273,527	3.16	246,440	0.48	2,562,650	2.87	957,317	1.46
Mining	529,575	0.51	196,526	0.38	453,407	0.51	272,694	0.42
Construction	8,453,347	8.17	1,807,516	3.51	7,618,874	8.52	2,641,989	4.02
Manufacturing	11,617,789	11.23	4,403,165	8.54	10,612,877	11.87	5,408,077	8.24
Public Utilities	8,942,172	8.64	1,944,717	3.77	8,481,461	9.49	2,405,428	3.66
Wholesale Trade	2,919,302	2.82	705,740	1.37	2,697,029	3.02	1,296,528	1.97
Retail Trade	24,588,949	23.76	2,919,302	5.66	21,245,821	23.77	6,262,430	9.54
FIRE	5,645,211	5.45	4,374,203	8.48	3,325,768	3.72	6,693,646	10.19

Business and Repair Services	7,405,481	7.16	3,449,856	6.69	6,150,587	6.88	4,704,750	7.16
Personal Services	4,545,371	4.39	805,650	1.56	4,277,587	4.79	1,073,434	1.63
Entertainment and Recreation Services	1,640,670	1.59	1,077,245	2.09	1,441,186	1.61	1,276,729	1.94
Professional and Related Services	19,074,245	18.43	27,009,241	52.37	18,215,168	20.38	27,868,318	42.44
Public Administration	4,483,480	4.33	2,630,022	5.10	23,03,242	2.58	4,810,260	7.32
Total	**103,487,634**	**99.64[a]**	**51,56,9623**	**100%**	**89,385,657**	**100**	**65,671,600**	**100**

[a]Sum of %'s based on rounded figures.

Table 3 (continued). Employment in Industry Categories by Three Definitions of the Working Class, employed workers in ACS 2017

	Creative Classes					Totals	
Industry	Creative Proletariat	% of CP	Creative Class	% of CC		Total	% of Labor Force
Agriculture, Forestry, Fisheries	3,245,912	3.41	274,055	0.46		3,519,967	2.27
Mining	502,363	0.53	223,738	0.37		726,101	0.47
Construction	8,383,696	8.80	1,877,167	3.14		10,260,863	6.62
Manufacturing	10,894,639	11.44	5,126,315	8.57		16,020,954	10.33
Public Utilities	8,407,760	8.83	2,479,129	4.14		10,886,889	7.02
Wholesale Trade	2,724,004	2.86	1,269,553	2.12		3,993,557	2.58
Retail Trade	21,376,484	22.45	6,131,767	10.25		27,508,251	17.74
FIRE	3,363,683	3.53	6,655,731	11.12		10,019,414	6.46
Business and Repair Services	6,168,607	6.48	4,686,730	7.83		10,855,337	7.00
Personal Services	4,498,390	4.72	852,631	1.42		5,351,021	3.45
Entertainment and Recreation Services	1,858,411	1.95	859,504	1.44		2,717,915	1.75
Professional and Related Services	19,390,113	20.36	26,693,373	44.61		46,083,486	29.72
Public Administration	4,401,555	4.62	2,711,947	4.53		7,113,502	4.59
Total	**95,215,617**	**100**	**59,841,640**	**100**		**15,505,7257**	**100**

Table 4. Descriptive Statistics for Three Definitions of the Working Class, employed workers in ACS 2017

	Metzgar		Cohen		Florida		
	WC by Metzgar	All nonWC by Metzgar	WC by Cohen	All non-WC by Cohen	Creative Proletariat	Creative Class	Total Labor Force
N	103,487,634	51,569,623	89,385,657	65,671,600	95,215,617	59,841,640	**155,057,257**
% of Total Labor Force	66.7	33.3	57.6	42.4	61.4	38.6	**100**
Wage and Salary Income (mean)	36,169.38	73,973.88	33,130.53	69,992.12	32,871.27	73,995.80	**48,742.56**
Wage and Salary Income (median)	27,400.00	55,000.00	25,000.00	52,000.00	25,900.00	55,000.00	**35,000.00**
% at or below 200% poverty level	26.91	8.88	28.09	10.00	27.53	9.14	**20.43**
% with Bachelor's Degree	17.69	68.68	15.72	60.42	15.77	64.70	**34.65**
% NH White	58.42	71.46	56.85	70.78	57.50	71.10	**62.75**
% NH Black	12.77	8.51	13.07	9.03	13.37	8.15	**11.36**
% NH Other	7.97	10.24	8.19	9.45	7.48	10.70	**8.73**
% Hispanic	20.85	9.78	21.89	10.75	21.65	10.04	**17.17**
Mean Age	41.00	43.88	40.53	43.90	40.82	43.76	**41.96**
% Married	46.92	61.89	45.04	61.23	45.89	61.45	**51.90**
% male	55.32	46.84	53.77	50.78	54.35	49.56	**52.50**
% non-citizen	10.2	5.3	11.1	5.1	10.4	5.7	**8.6**
% rural[a]	8.2	5.5	8.1	6.1	8.4	5.5	**7.3**
% in central city[b]	10.5	12.2	10.7	11.6	10.6	11.9	**11.1**

[a]19,123,743, or 12.3% of all cases, geography not identifiable
[b]65,950,328, or 42.5% of all cases, central city status unknown

Table 5. Descriptive Statistics for Broad Definition of the Working Class, employed workers ACS 2017

	WC by Any Definition	Non-WC by Any Definition	Total Labor Force
N	122,773,708	32,283,549	**155,057,257**
% of total labor force	79.2	20.8	**100**
Wage and Salary Income (mean)	37,788.60	90,400.28	**48,742.56**
Wage and Salary Income (median)	29,000.00	69,000.00	**35,000.00**
% at or below 200% poverty level	25.80	0	**20.43**
% with Bachelor's Degree	17.47	100.00	**34.65**
% NH White	59.83	73.84	**62.75**
% NH Black	12.47	7.10	**11.36**
% NH Other	7.90	11.86	**8.73**
% Hispanic	19.79	7.20	**17.17**
Mean Age	41.35	44.24	**41.96**
% Married	47.98	66.78	**51.90**
% male	53.89	47.23	**52.50**
%non-citizen	9.4	5.3	**8.6**
% rural[a]	8.0	4.5	**7.3**
% in central city[b]	10.5	13.5	**11.1**

[a]12.3% of all cases, geography not identifiable
[b]42.5% of all cases, central city status unknown

Panacalty

Justine Sless

I'm walking over the bridge towards Monkwearmouth, the wind is buffeting around my ears, making my head throb even more. The clouds are heavy today, grey like dirty dishcloths that need a rinse. The River Wear is flowing quickly, impatient to get out to the North Sea. There are shipbuilding cranes everywhere and seagulls circling, their cry is like a pram wheel that needs oiling.

My head is woozy, and my nostrils are filled with the smell of hops coming up from Vaux brewery. I'm heading over to me mam's. I know what she'll say. But I just need five minutes out of the house to try and clear me head and to get away from all the chores. Today is washing day, shopping day, tidying day, hoovering day. I'm always more tired on my day off doing jobs around the house than I am going to work at Chalkie's. Billy calls what I earn at Chalkie's pin money, but without it there'd be just bread and dripping most nights.

Last night, me and Sharon had gone up to a *Go As You Please* talent night. People had laughed, and it was magic, absolutely magic.

As I'm walking over to my mam's, pulling my jacket round tight against the freezing wind, my mind is racing over what happened.

We'd had a reet good weekend. Saturday we'd gone to see Bobby. The sound of the laughter when Bobby is at the club is like the roar of a wave at Roker Beach, coming in fast, then rushing away, with the tinkling sounds of people cackling long after the joke has finished.

Bobby's jokes never miss a beat:

'The Dole is my shepherd, I shall not work.'

People were banging the tables, laughing and loving every word that came out of Bobby's mouth. He was wearing his tatty woolly gansey, a Woodbine hanging off his fingers, his flat cap on. He's right at home cracking jokes on that stage. Bobby was a legend and there was no one like him. I hankered after that, to tell jokes, and wanted nothing more than to give it a go. But it was a secret, between me and Sharon. If I told anyone else, they'd think I was soft in the head.

Over the years, I watched how Bobby held the crowd. He just needed to walk on the stage to have everyone in bits. He'd tell the jokes like they thought had just occurred to him and he'd just wait sometimes, pause, like he was holding off till just the right moment to drop the last line in.

I'd practice at work, watching people, and gauging the response. But I'd try and do it surreptitiously. There's no way I could say 'listen to me tell some jokes, will you?' Whilst I served up their tatties and onions.

It was like Bobby knew what we were all about and could find just the right thing to make us laugh, like when he thinks he's won the pools.

'There was a knock at oor door last Wednesday mornin'. The man says, 'Am from Littlewoods.' I says, 'God bless ya! Have I won the treble chance?' He says, 'Nah, your wife's up for shoplifting!''

We'd heard most of Bobby's material before, but we always want to hear it again. I'm watching Bobby like a hawk, wondering how he does it. The way he stops a while, the way he knows when to tell the punchline.

My heart's pumping at the thought of getting up on stage at the talent night Sunday. I was doing it partly to shut Sharon up. She was always going on about how funny she thought I was. Laughing at my Bruce Forsyth impressions, asking me to tell her again daft things that happen in the shop. But I was also doing it to prove to myself that I was more than just a lass at Chalkie's selling tatties, turnips and carrots. There had to be something else to life than just that, and if it was telling jokes up on stage then I wanted a go.

There weren't many lasses up there telling jokes at the clubs. I'd seen one or two but they sang and told a couple of jokes between songs. There was no way I could sing though.I'd think of things while I was doing the washing or the shopping, and I'd remember them. No point writing them down. I'd lose them, or Billie would want to know what I was up to other than writing a shopping list.

Bobby was a natural, and that famous in Sunderland there were rumours flying around about how much he could earn at the clubs a night. Figures so high it felt like a fairy tale.

There was no one as good as Bobby. I knew I could never be like that, but I wanted to give it a go and the talent night was the only place I could do it. I never told Billie, he would think I was radge. But to get up there and make people laugh, that was a rare thing to be able to do. When I was watching Bobby, I felt like I was studying the form guide. Watching him closely, trying to unlock the secret of how to make people laugh.

When Bobby's on at a club, it's like the whole of Sunderland is in one room, packed in like hot chips in a deep fryer. At the Percy Main Club, standing there in front of the red curtain on Saturday, Bobby looked like he was a fancy chocolate in a box.

There was no point being late to the club when Bobby was on or you'd never get in, never mind a seat. It's always a rush to get there after work. I had to bolt to the chippy to get our teas. There's never time on a Saturday to make anything, and while I've got the money in my purse it's always nice to get a fish supper.

I get home with the dinners, the paper steaming and smelling of vinegar, my mouth drooling. Come tea time I'm famished. I can never get more than five minutes to myself on a Saturday at work, it's that busy in the shop. Chalkie is always there leaning up against the counter at the back of the shop, weasel-eyed, watching us lasses rake in the cash, while he sips on a brew. He's an old bugger, always trying to cop a feel when you take the sacks of tatties off the back of the van. You have to watch him, but you can't be too cheeky back or you'll lose your job.

When I get in with the fish supper, there's ten minutes wasted trying to get our Micky inside.

He's always with little Gary from the end of the street, kicking the ball up and down. Gary's a year younger than our Micky. His head is shaved and his ear is pierced already. They both go to the Valley Road school. They kick the ball all the way there and back and, like every other lad in Sunderland, they think they're good enough to get on the team.

I'm sure Gary's got light fingers though, so I never let him in the house. He's a canny enough lad and he's always quick to have a laugh. When he laughs though, you can see that his front teeth have gone all black right down to the stump. His mam's been giving him pop in his bottle since he was little, poor bairn. I can always see how hungry Gary is, but there's hardly enough chips and scratchings for me, Micky and Billie, never mind an extra mouth.

Saturdays, Billie always takes Micky to see Uncle Darren during the day, then in the afternoon Mickey kicks the ball with Gary. They've been going up to see Darren awhile now, just to keep him company.

Darren had an accident at the pit last year. It was a bad one, down in the shaft, worst place really. Trapped his leg, stuck in there for ages before they could get him out. Probably never work again. Darren wouldn't say that to Micky though. Micky wants to work down the mines when he's older and Darren wouldn't want to put him off. Besides if Micky doesn't work down the mines, there'll not be much else he can do.

Billie's at the Monkwearmouth pit, like his dad before him. I've had five brothers down there. Keith lost his life young. He just coughed and coughed and never stopped. Then came the blood with every cough, and by the time he was twenty there was nothing left of him, and he died. I loved Keith most, maybe because he wasn't here long.

After tea and hearing how Micky's got on for the day, Billie takes Micky up to his mam's. Then he heads over to the Monkwearmouth Club to see the lads from the pit. I squeeze into me Geordie Jeans, put on a top that's probably showing more boob than necessary, a bit of lippy, and some powder on my face, then leg it up Villette Road for the bus. I needn't have bothered with the powder mind, because there's that many people in the club my face gets as shiny as a toffee apple, and probably just as red.

We have to dag around waiting for Sharon's fella to sign us into the club when we get there. The Club Rules, big as can be, are on a sign at the door: *Women must be signed in by a member.* And you can only be a member if you're a man.

I hate that bloody rule. Clubs are happy to take our money for the Housie and the beers, but we can't be a member and we can't get in without a man. Makes me gnash my teeth. But no point complaining, because nee bugger listens.

We get to the club by seven. The girls from the shop have saved me a seat and there's a pint already on the table. I never know how they all manage to get there so quickly. They must eat their dinners walking along the road. We do a couple of games of Housie, before Bobby gets on. It's just killing time though and a way for the club to earn more money from us.

The bar's ten deep, people stocking up on two or more pints to see them through the whole show. There's no moving once Bobby's on, everyone's sat still waiting for him to make us laugh.

Julie's there from work, with her fella Dave. She looks lovely, like she always does when she goes out. She's done her hair nice and she's got on one of those tops that has a little bit of sparkle on it.

'Ee Julie, yer looking that nice, pet,' I say to her. She's pullin' down her top a bit more, her tits are wobbling like jelly, but with her dimply smile she can get away with anything that one.

Julie's boyfriend Dave's very canny. He's started managing the electricals department at the Jobling's store and got himself a new car. Julie and Dave are saving to buy a place at the new Peterlee Estate. Until they save enough money though, they're staying at Dave's mam's place. Julie says it's a bit of a strain because there are five other bairns still there, and his Nan. Julie and Dave get their own room, but that means the five bairns and Nan are all in one bedroom.

When we get paid, Julie puts twenty quid down her bra and says, 'The rest is to get me out of that mad house.'

How they're managing to buy a house and have a new car is beyond me. Me and Billie can barely put the tea on the table some nights. Billie and his love for the races doesn't help. I never say anything though, or he turns.

Sharon has blue mascara on. It makes her eyes look strange, like she's heard something surprising. She's smoking one ciggie after another, because she doesn't have time to smoke in the shop. 'I'm gasping,' she says as she lights another, 'I've hardly had time to have a tab all day.'

The bar's packed. People can hardly move from their tables to the bar and back.

There's men buying Babycham for their wives and girlfriends, and blokes buying pints for other blokes.

When Bobby finally comes on, I look round at all the faces: the gadgee on the table next to us laughing so much his face is red all over and there's tears running down his cheeks, like a bairn blubbering on his first day at school. Molly from over the road from us is laughing so hard that she's making a snorting noise, like the train pulling in from Newcastle. Those that smoke are wheezing from laughter. Those that don't smoke might as well be, because the air is thick as a pea souper.

The women have done their hair nicely. Some of them have it piled up high, a couple have got that new-look Purdey cut. It makes it look like a bowl's been popped on their heads and someone's cut around it. Some, Molly included, have still got their head scarves on, pulled over their ears. I'd never wear a scarf at the club, I'd be afraid to miss a joke. Most of the men have big guts, their nylon shirts straining to cover them (it looks like the buttons will pop). Some blokes are scrawny, with beady eyes and a mean look. The runty ones have probably been here since opening time. The more they drink, the scrawnier they seem to get.

It's like a tin of Quality Street's been opened and everyone's looking for their favourite one, faces all shiny and smiling, not crooked and nasty like things usually get in the club.

'A man come to oor door. I says 'Come in, tak a seat.' He says 'I'm coming in to tak the lot.''

The laughter thunders in and Bobby just holds on, sucking on his Woodbine, waits until it dies town, he's got all the time in the world and plenty more jokes to tell.

My back is killing me and my knees are bruised from banging the potato and onion sacks around all day at Chalkie's, but when Bobby's on stage nothing else matters. Not even Anne and her misery at closing time in the shop, passing out the pays like it was her money, like we hadn't earned it.

'Thanks Anne,' I always say, nice as pie, 'You coming out wi' us lasses tonight?' knowing she wouldn't, but just to make it seem like I was bothered about her. She says the same every time though, 'No pet, I'm too old for going out now, I'll be in front of the telly watching me shows.'

She'd be better off having a half a pint with us and a laugh, rather than sitting up there in that council flat all night with her mam. Anne wasn't married. There was talk of some lad years ago, but she never mentioned him, and we never asked. More fool her I always thought, up there in that council flat, then coming back to work miserable again on Monday. You can even forget about your own debt listening to Bobby tell us jokes about his. And when he talks about his wife, well we can all relate to that.

'She shouts from upstairs, 'Bobby can yer fix the string on wa carrier bag?' … Why? am nae engineer.'

Bobby's Woodbine is almost out, and as the ash drops to the floor he finishes:

'They came into the court and they woz givin' the papers out to the jurors. She shouts 'Bobby, there must be a Housie on before the case!''

His last joke is a cracker, everyone is banging their tables and clapping.

Bobby goes backstage and people wait for him to come out. It's almost as funny seeing him leave the stage with only his tatty gansey on and come out afterwards in a smart suit, a signet ring the size of a penny, and his hair all slicked back.

'You were topper man, reet topper, tell us another one ...' People everywhere trying to shake his hand.

Bobby's taking it in his stride. He's nodding at the lads and winking at all the lasses. Anyone would think he was a rock star or royalty, the way they're all milling around him. Nearly all the lasses are taller than him, but it doesn't seem to matter. They've all got the look of love in their eyes.

The light starts flashing LAST ORDERS over the bar, and though we all love Bobby Thompson, we love the piss even more. Like a pack of seagulls running after a stray chip at Roker Beach, everyone heads to the bar to get their last pint. When we get outside, the piss hits everyone and those shiny faces strained with smiling turn ugly in no time.

I walk home with Sharon. It's freezing, and our breath hits the air like we've smoked ten fags at once. The queue had been a mile long to get to the toilet, so me and Sharon duck behind a back alley. We're swaying on our haunches, our white arses like full moons as we piss away all the pints.

'If only Chalkie could see us now. He'd say, 'We could sell this lots at turnips' and he'd have our bums sold in no time at all. Twenty pence a pound,' I say as I try not to get piss on me new Geordie Jeans.

'They should get Bobby off and get you on,' Sharon says cackling, A bit of ash falls on the rim of her knickers as she pulls them up.

'Don't be daft man,' I say. 'No one can touch Bobby.'

'We'll just see about that tomorrow, eh? Ready for the talent night? What will yer wear? What will you say? Eeh tell them aboot that time in the shop with the carrot …'

'I'm going to. Ee Shazza, I'm fairly cacking meself.'

We get to my door and Sharon says, 'Pet you'll be grand. You've got five minutes up there. You're funny as, you are. Remember yer lines and win so that you can get on at a real club, get a manager, get away from Chalkie's and make us laugh.'

'Don't get ahead of yerself there, Sharon. We've not seen a lass on stage yet telling just jokes. I'll give it a go. But I think I'll be a long time yet at Chalkie's.'

We say goodbye, and when I get in I lean on the door a minute to think on about what the *Go As You Please* will be like. And how I wish I'd had the bottle to ask Bobby some tips.

<div align="center">*</div>

The talent night is a blur, an absolute blur.

We get there, and I can hardly think for my guts churning with nerves. I have a sip of me pint, then I get worried that I'll need the toilet halfway through getting up there.

First, Gerry who works up at Silksworth hospital gets up on the stage, holding a cigarette and a glass of whiskey, his tie all twisted and his shirt collar fraying. Gerry looked all soft and daft, not bad looking, but his voice is shocking. He warbles the words to 'Dance to me Daddy.'

Come here, maw little Jacky,
Now aw've smoked mi backy,
Let's hev a bit o' cracky,
Till the boat comes in.

He's just about to get to the chorus line when a few people up the front start booing him, and you can feel the air change.

I'm standing up next to the stage with Sharon. We've been talking to Louise who works at Greggs in Grangetown, where we get our lunches from. Louise is looking at me like I'm not quite right when I tell her I'm getting up at the talent night.

Gerry stumbles off the stage, looking a bit sheepish. As he's coming down the stairs, his marra' Barry gives him a shove and says, 'Yer a daft git. Yer not in the bathroom now man, you

sounded like a strangled cat.'

Gerry gets down the last step and swills back his whiskey. He's swaying, and he leans on Barry as he goes to sit down.

Sharon nudges me, 'Go on Elsie, you're up next. You're a crack-up you are, go on.' Sharon is shoving me up the steps to the stage. Everything goes into slow motion. I can see the compere, Joe. He has a suit on and a clipboard. I can see all the faces looking at me, the darts fixtures on the wall, the smoke billowing up in clouds. Me mouth is as dry as can be and I wish I had me pint on stage with me. Sharon is shouting:

'Go on Elsie. A joke, tell us all a joke.'

I've never held a microphone and I've never been on a stage, except as a bairn in the Christmas nativity. But that was years ago and I didn't speak, I just pointed to the sky like I had seen a star.

I try to take the microphone off the stand. My heart is thumping, I don't know what I'm doing up there. I feel daft for thinking I could make people laugh. I think of Bobby and wish he were here; just coaxing me on, giving me some tips, and telling me what to do next.

The microphone makes a big high-pitched noise. I give a cough to try and get rid of the dry feeling, and the sound is strange. Me guts are like water and I think that if I don't blurt something out then I'll disgrace myself by peeing me pants.

 I'm wearing the same as I did from the night before, it's my poshest outfit. I've tugged me top down even further, me face is plastered in powder. I've put that much mascara on that I feel like me eyes will shut down with the weight of it all.

'Nice to see you to see you nice,' I mimic the exact voice of Bruce Forsyth, and I can hear a few people sniggering. The sound of my own voice amplified makes me feel different, like I have this special power.

Sharon's looking up at me, nodding.

'Tell us a joke Elsie, go on!' she yells at me.

I hold the microphone. I don't try and take it off again, I just touch it with the tips of my fingers. The light is bright on me and the room looks different from the stage. I feel like I've gone abroad, and there's sunshine on me making me sweat. There's the sound of the glasses being washed and stacked. The compere is already looking at his watch.

'Come on,' Sharon is shouting, 'Tell us a joke!'

Louise is looking at me, arms folded like she's leaning on her back step gossiping with the neighbour.

My chest feels like I've been running for the bus. I cough again.

'Well,' I say, fascinated by the sound of my voice in the microphone. 'Well, I say to our Billie,

'the next-door neighbour's husband makes a cup of tea for his wife every morning, that would be a nice thing, wouldn't it?''

I can see people just staring up at me.

'Does he?' says our Billie, 'Well maybe I can get him to come over and make you one everyday an' all.'

Sharon is laughing. The man who just a minute ago was swilling down a pint is laughing. The man whose nose is a bit purple from too many pints is laughing. So is the compere.

My chest has a full feeling, like I've had a big surprise.

'I work at Chalkie's fruit shop. I was chewing on a bit of carrot while I'm serving a gadgee. I sneeze and this bit of carrot shoots out of my nose and lands on his hand. I look at him, and he looks at me and I say in me best Grangetoon accent: 'We'll not charge you for that bit of carrot, pet.''

Laughter, like I've switched a light on, pours in. I'm that made up.

'It would help if you could sing, flower. We're not that keen on the lasses just telling jokes,' the compere tells me when I get off stage. They might as well have said drive to the moon and back, there's no way I can sing. But I hold onto the idea that I am funny, that people laughed, that I can tell a joke.

'Come back next week and we'll see if we can get a manager in to listen to you.' I'm that excited I can hardly concentrate on anything else. Sharon is yelling at me,

'You'll be leaving Chalkie's in no time!' and I just stare at the next acts, gulping me pint down like I've never had a drink before in me life.

There are two awful singers, and a man playing spoons and talking about his pigeons. Me and Sharon fairly skip home.

I get in the door bursting to tell Billie. When I do tell him, the look on his face takes the night away like it never happened.

*

I knock at mam's door. She takes one look at me. 'Billie been having a go at you again?' There's no point in tears but I cry anyway.

'You went to the talent show? Yer a daft bugger, you. What made you think to do that?' mam is asking, shocked like I said I stole the Housie money from the club.

'I just wanted to mek people laugh. I can do it mam, I really can.'

'People be laughing at you, pet, no doubt about that. I'll put a brew on. Best thing you can do is stop being a show-off and keep on the good side of Billie.'

When I cross back over the Wear, I look down at the water a very long time. I get home and put the tea on, I'll use up all the left overs for a pan of panacalty. Billie will be home soon, and so will the bairn.

Author Bio

Justine Sless is completing an MA by research in creative writing – her research area is gender and comedy and creative work is a collection of short stories. Justine is a stand-up comedian and former creative director of Melbourne Jewish comedy festival, Justine has toured her comedy and storytelling nationally and internationally. She grew up in Sunderland UK and now resides in Melbourne Australia. *Panacalty* is based on the life of the Sunderland comedy legend Bobby Thompson, and is currently being written as a full-length novel.

Acknowledgments

Young Voices on Social Class in America: A Student Essay Pod

Edited by Sara Appel, Lewis and Clark College

Editor's Introduction

Though I need to begin this introduction by emphasizing that being an Adjunct Professor is *never* an ideal, or even adequate, situation from which to perform academic labor, I have nevertheless had an opportunity to do something rare in that capacity: I've gotten to teach a self-designed research seminar on the subject at the center of my scholarly wheelhouse, 'Social Class in America.' For three spring semesters now, my employment in the CORE freshman humanities program at Lewis and Clark—a private liberal arts college nestled in the Portland, Oregon woodlands—has allowed me to introduce *class* as a variable in conversations about race, gender, sexuality, immigration, and related intersectional concepts.

Furthermore, though the vast majority of Lewis and Clark students are what I'd describe as privileged yet politically conscious, my 'Social Class in America' sections have functioned as magnets for working-class, poor, and first-generation students. In some respects, this is unsurprising; when signing up for the required CORE class, students list their top three choices, so an element of self-selection is clearly at play. Also unsurprisingly, the more class-marginalized students in my sections tend to be marginalized, in the U.S., in other ways: they are immigrants, or queer, or Latinx, or are moving to the 'big city' from rural areas of the country. These intersections, I've found, have played out in not only the richness of the knowledge that these students bring to our classroom conversations—their own expertise about 'how class works' in America, and often abroad—but in the quality of the research and writing I've seen them produce.

This past semester, I therefore decided that in order to further incentivize my 'Social Class in America' students to do their best work, I would do my best to offer an opportunity for several of them to publish their research papers. *The Journal of Working-Class Studies* came to our rescue, graciously allowing me to feature six fine papers—all of them written by second-semester freshmen—in what I'm calling a student essay 'pod.' I used two basic criteria when selecting these essays: 1), I wanted the pod to feature work that examined the place of class within a variety of topics of real urgency in our contemporary world— in the essays that follow, you'll see class discussed as it relates to the environment, immigrant labor and education, sex work, queer history, and housing. And 2), it was important to me that at least half of the essays I chose be written by students who self-identify as from working-class, poor, or first-generation college student backgrounds. Such students are not only underrepresented at schools like Lewis and Clark, but are generally given fewer opportunities than more class privileged students to publish, especially early in their academic careers—so I wanted to do what I could to help shrink that opportunity gap. Each of the six essays featured here also ends with a brief biographical statement, so you can get to know the writers a bit better.

Finally, I want to emphasize that the essays you're about to read, while being good *student* writing, also serve as a barometer of what the youth of today—the leaders, laborers, maybe

even revolutionaries of tomorrow—are thinking about, as far as how class factors into their concern for our collective future. You'll notice some unifying threads running throughout this work. The role of borders, boundaries, and the (de)legitimating force of the law—how law and ideology have functioned to enforce who does and doesn't belong, particularly within the United States—is one such thread. We'll let you untangle the rest.

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Mexican Immigrants: The Hidden Labor Community

By Ariely Mejia

> *'How do you guys do it?*
> *Como no le entiendo oiga*
> *Ay, Comos...ustedes hacen...para venir...to the United States?*
> *Chambeandole oiga como siempre le hemos hecho en el rancho.'*
>   *–From the Mexican corrido 'Soy De Rancho'[52]*

My name is Ariely Mejia, and I grew up on the southside of Texas in a suburb famously known as Little Mexico. It's an apartment-style neighborhood with different complexes, each having its pros and lots of cons. *Paleteros*[53] go in and out of apartment blocks, place orders of *popusas* or *tamales* to the old lady on the first floor. Groups of men patiently wait in front of the local convenience store for their 'boss' to take them to work. This is a typical day scene. Immigrant workers wait in front of run-down businesses every day at five in the morning to get to *chambeando* (non-stop heavy work).

Corridos, such as the one above, are songs that express only a fraction of the reality Mexican immigrants face when crossing the border and adjusting to U.S. society. Such hardships include: leaving family and home behind, the dangerous physical crossing to the U.S., constant racial attacks from white people, and the difficult task of finding work. Seeking a job in the U.S., for a Mexican immigrant, is nearly impossible to do legally. The major barrier of not having citizenship in the U.S. causes this community to come up with non-mainstream work that can be done without legal documentation. The way immigrants look for work and help each other succeed in America has become an unofficial system. To explore how this system operates, this essay will provide a quick recap of the history of Mexican labor in the U.S.; discuss differences between work opportunities in Mexico and the U.S.; and give an overview of the diverse jobs that Mexican-American immigrants find themselves performing. While examining these topics, I will share personal stories from Mexican immigrants ranging from ages 39-50 years old. These narratives don't represent every Mexican immigrant's experience in the U.S., however; countless stories are not recorded, but should not be left unnoticed. To protect the safety of those I know, names have been changed, with the exception of narratives featured in other publications.

> *'Aquí los Americanos nomas les importa una cosa: el dinero. Es lo que siempre piensan en, no les importa a quien están lastimando, solo que no les vaya a afectar sus bolsillos.'*

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[52] '*How do you guys do it?/ What? I don't understand what you are saying. / Ah, how... do you guys... do it to come... to the United States?/ Working hard you know, how we've always done it back in the ranch.'*
[53] Ice cream vendor

> *–Christina Perez, 49 years old, Mexican immigrant in Texas*[54]

Before the word 'immigrant' was created and borders imposed on Mexico, Mexicans were already on 'American' land. From 1846-1848, Mexico lost half of its land in the Mexican-American War; however, there were still a large number of native Mexicans who resided on that stolen land. These Mexicans were labeled 'savages' by 'the Gringo[s], [who were] locked into the fiction of white superiority [and] seized political power, stripping Indians and Mexicans of their land while their feet were still rooted in it' (Anzaldúa 2012 p. 7). Furthermore, Mexicans weren't able to live peacefully on their small amount of owned land; large agribusinesses used their power and influence to steal it through countless of abusive acts, causing U.S.-based Mexicans to migrate to what is now 'real' Mexico (Anzaldúa 2012 p. 9). In *Borderlands/La Frontera*, author Gloria Anzaldúa's mother remembers an unjust event that ruthless *gabachos*[55] inflicted on Anzaldúa's grandmother. Following a long drought that hit Texas in the early 1930's, 'A smart *gabacho* lawyer took the land away *mamá* hadn't paid taxes...she didn't know how to ask for time to raise the money,' Anzaldúa paraphrases (2012 p. 8). Even after such ravages, businessmen still used Mexicans for cheap labor. In the late nineteenth century, the President of Mexico, Porfirio Díaz, established an open-door policy which allowed unrestricted foreign capital investment in Mexico. This policy ensured the U.S. cheap labor and imports of raw materials (Chaichian 2014 p. 180), benefitting Mexico's foreign investors rather than the *campesinos,* or poor residents of Mexico.

In 1942, the *Bracero* Program, an agreement to allow Mexicans to work in the U.S. for a period of time in agricultural labor, resulted in one of the largest official surges of Mexican immigration to the U.S. (Portes & Bach 1985 p. 61). The wages paid through the *Bracero* Program were much higher for the same work than in Mexico, which ultimately led to more migration to the U.S. In 1965, a similar open policy allowed powerful Mexican landowners and colonizing American companies to create factories along the Mexico-U.S. border. Under this policy, the dependency Mexico had, and still has, on the U.S. and the devaluation of the *peso* overtime caused *la crisis,* where Mexico was unable to repay its debts following large oil price shocks that occurred during the 1970s (Anzaldúa 2012 p. 10). In response, the U.S. assisted Mexico with loans, but matters only worsened in August 1982 when the Mexican Finance Minister informed the U.S. and the IMF that Mexico was unable to pay its debts (Romero & Sims 2014 p. 6). As a result, Mexico experienced a high unemployment rate, with many Mexicans turning to *El Norte* for work. 'The majority of [Mexican] immigrants [in the U.S.] came from rural, lower class backgrounds,' writes historian Mohammad Chaichian, as they were and are seeking better lives (2014 p. 181). Large migration waves surfaced due to the numerous barriers Mexicans faced while seeking a stable life in Mexico, where the effects of colonialism by the U.S. disrupted the entire economic system.

> *'La gente, con la que yo trabaje, por ser que tenían más dinero que podían pagar alguien que les limpiara, era gente muy grosera y abusaban mucho de uno. Y en cambio aquí, hay algunos que sí son muy exigentes, pero pues lo sentí mas aya en Mexico que aqui. Y que hay gente grosera, donde quiera hay gente grosera.'*
> *–Juana, 45, Mexican immigrant in Portland, OR*[56]

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[54] *'Here in this land the Americans only care about one thing: the money. It's what they are always thinking about, they do not care who they are hurting in the process, only if it doesn't affect their wallets.'*

[55] Chicano pejorative term to describe an English-speaking, non-Hispanic person

[56] 'The people that I worked for as a maid in Mexico were rude, abusive, and demanding. Here in the U.S. I also work as a maid, and have noticed that some people are very demanding, but I felt it more in Mexico than here (the U.S.). But wherever you go there will always be rude people.'

Mexican immigrants have worked a diverse range of jobs, in the U.S. as well as in Mexico. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, in 2018 'nearly half (47.7 percent) of the foreign-born labor force was Hispanic' (BLS 2018 p. 2). These occupations have typically included service work such as lawn care, plumbing, janitorial maintenance, and house cleaning. However, there are significant differences between labor in Mexico and the U.S. Two women I interviewed commented on the contrasts. Both Juana and Christina, Mexican immigrants to Oregon and Texas, have worked in Mexico as servants or *muchachas*[57]. Upon arriving to the U.S., they found work cleaning houses. They commented on the distinctions between house cleaning in the two countries. A common contrast they mentioned was that in Mexico, they had to commit themselves to working for only one household; as is customary in Mexico, they couldn't work for any other family. Not only did they clean the home, but they also cooked the meals and took care of the children. Christina expresses how she much prefers working in the U.S. 'In Mexico I did so much work for such a small price. But in the North, I am able to work more than just one house and it's less work,' she said. Juana also mentions the poor treatment she experienced in Mexico working as a *sirvienta*, treatment emphasized by the above quote. Throughout the interview, she kept referring back to how rude her bosses were and how they only acted as superior because they had money, *no eran pobres.*[58] Though, as she emphasizes, 'wherever you go, there will always be rude people' and poor treatment by rich clients, the U.S. included.

> *'Nosotros les sembramos el árbol y ellos se comen la fruta…*
> *Tenemos mas trucos que la policía secreta*
> *Metimos la casa completa en una maleta*
> *Con un pico, una pala*
> *Y un rastrillo*
> *Te construimos un castillo'*
> *–From The Hamilton Remix, 'Immigrants (We Get The Job Done)'*[59]

During the late twentieth century, as Mexicans began to hear dreamlike anecdotes of *El Norte* and saw relatives and friends come back with high-class goods and a significant amount of money, a new wave of Mexicans migrated to the U.S. Back in my neighborhood, those who are a part of this wave are now 40 and above. In 'Little Mexico' there seems to be a community within the neighborhood that helps each other in finding employment. The store where men wait for their *jefe*[60] to go to work is in this community. Individuals arriving to the U.S that already have family residing here, who are also of illegal status, can access work through these networks. Family members are able to recommend the 'newbie' to works that they know of by contacting other Mexican immigrants who are looking for *chambelanes.*[61] As writer Maria Ana Corona states, 'That's how it works; a business that's all from mouth to mouth. There's no organization at all' (1993 p. 15). An example of this can be seen with Francisco Salazar, a 45-year old Mexican immigrant who now resides in Portland, Oregon. Francisco arrived in the U.S in 1995 when he was 22. One of his aunts had already settled in the U.S., and had learned the ropes of how this unestablished labor system works. She helped Francisco find work at a restaurant through connections she had previously made with other Mexican immigrant

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[57] Girls (term used to describe these cleaning ladies, mostly used in Mexico)
[58] They were not poor
[59] *'We plant the tree and they reap the fruit / We have more tricks than the secret police …We packed our entire house in one suitcase / With a pick, a shovel / And a rake / We built you a castle'*
[60] Boss
[61] Hard workers

employees who have worked or are still working there. This act of helping each other find work is common within the Mexican immigrant community. They wish to see each other succeed, with a familiar hope and moral obligation.

Francisco worked at the restaurant for 8 years. He started off washing dishes, but was then promoted to cook, which slightly increased his pay. After this job, Francisco was able to find work as a *yardero*[62] with the help of family recommendations; for a night job, he worked as a janitor through the same method of searching. Interestingly, he worked under white American bosses in his work as a *yardero*. In Texas, most bosses of Mexican immigrants in the landscaping business are also fellow Mexicans. In fact, 'Immigrant entrepreneurs typically tend to run very small businesses, often relying on self-employment and the use of unpaid family labor' (Ramirez 2011 p. 14). The only landscaping businesses owned by white Americans are big companies with a large number of employees. These American bosses use Mexican immigrant workers as cheap labor. According to a 2008 survey, '26% of [U.S.] workers reported experiencing a minimum wage violation, but among immigrants the figure was 31%... and among those without documents the figure was 37%' (Gentsch & Massey, Scared p. 5). *Yarderos* who work for white Americans likely fall into this category of wage violation.

Mexican immigrants to the U.S. also often run self-owned businesses. As economist Kaivan Munshi points out, considering that most relationships among Mexican immigrants 'are based on kinship, friendship, and in particular, *paisanaje* (belonging to a common origin-community)... ties among *paisanos* actually appear to strengthen once they arrive in the United States, and this sociological change is reinforced by the emergence of community-based institutions' (2003 p. 551). *Paisanos* therefore rely on each other to not only find employment, but to become entrepreneurs as well. These self-made businesses operate best within a Hispanic populated *barrio,*[63] rather than in the primarily white suburbs. Business owners profit from the marketing of Mexican culture, such as the sale of clothing, food, homemade *barro artesanias,*[64] and even cooking supplies. In fact, 'between 1990 and 2012, the number of Hispanic immigrant entrepreneurs more than quadrupled, going from 321,000 to 1.4 million' (Better Business 2014 p. 2). They have used the market to establish and forge their own culture within these economic spaces.

Such entrepreneurial labor includes store-like convenient shops—in apartment complexes or also scattered around the community—*tamales/*other authentic dishes sold in these neighborhoods, and the populous mixture of small merchants in *pulgas.*[65] Ministore-like fronts are commonly seen in my neighborhood, located in the living room of an apartment. There are numerous shops in these Hispanic home districts that, as sociologist Nestor Rodriguez states in a *Houston Chronicle* article, '[are something] done informally to raise some cash... one could call it a parallel economy' (Moreno 2005 p.10). Due to the status of Mexican immigrants as non-citizens, these businesses are not legally licensed. However, that doesn't stop them, since this type of work is one of the very limited options available. Another method this community uses to earn money is through the labor of cooking authentic Mexican dishes to be sold to other Hispanics. Letty, a 40-year old Mexican immigrant to 'Little Mexico,' sells *tamales, gorditas,* and *tortas,* her specialties. She shares that throughout the years, she has slowly developed her small business; 'It took a while for people to find out I was selling food. But now that everybody knows, everybody wants to buy my food.' Her statement is a clear

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[62] Individual who works in lawn maintenance
[63] Neighborhood
[64] Clay crafts
[65] Flea markets

indicator of this community relying on each other in order to succeed; the individuals in this district are the ones who buy these cultural reminiscences of Mexico. It is a business from 'mouth-to-mouth' as Letty was not able to sell much until word began to spread.

Additionally, the local *pulgas* play a huge role in fostering the entrepreneurial attitude within Mexican immigrant society. I grew up going to these markets almost every weekend. There are a variety of *pulgas*; some are more mixed-race dynamic markets, and others are solely Hispanic. The *mercados*[66] that are primarily Mexican-immigrant populated emit that authentic Mexico vibe, with stands for homemade Mexican cuisines, regional *banda* music playing, and even just random products they decide to sell for extra cash. These *mercados* are usually DIY stands that are made out of wood with makeshift kitchens for food vendors to utilize (Fouts 2017). As they are confronted by numerous barriers in the workforce, such entrepreneurial ideas are the result of limitations that Mexican-immigrant workers must maneuver around.

> *'Y aunque me miren pa' abajo*
> *La cara levanto*
> *Empinándome un bote*
> *Como quiera soy amigo*
> *Y también mexicano*
> *Mexicano Hasta El Tope'*
> *–From 'Corrido De Juanito'*[67]

Growing up in this community, then suddenly moving to a primarily white educational institution, made me realize many things. I began to understand that my community is not considered important in U.S. society. Mexican immigrants were here long before this land was even considered 'America.' We have been discriminated against, violated, and exploited by the white Americans who use our labor for capitalist benefit. As this great population of Mexican-immigrant workers remain 'hidden,' the word 'immigrant' continues to be further associated with the Southern border in the eyes of white Americans. This only dehumanizes the community, due to the idea that we must be separated from the U.S. through the use of a border. I believe that more labor organizations should be created and operated by the Mexican-immigrant community. Through this, Mexican-immigrant workers could have a platform to fight for their rights. Whether one chooses to acknowledge our existence or not, we are here, we are working, and we're tired of being ignored.

Ariely Mejia grew up in Houston, Texas, within a working-class family. She's a first-generation college student and an undeclared major[68]. 'As I've finished my first year of college in a primarily white institution with the majority of students being from upper-class backgrounds, I have realized that I want my community to be heard loud and clear,' she shares. 'They continue to be oppressed not only through social class, but through their racial background. Although I'm still figuring out what I will be doing after college, I hope to find a career that will allow me to help my community by fighting for their rights in the U.S.'

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[66] Markets

[67] 'And even if they look down on me / I keep my head up / Drinking a bottle.../ As I am, I'm a friend / And also Mexican, / Mexican until the end.'

[68] In the US higher education system, some institutions allow students to begin their college degree without declaring their area of study (their 'major).

Putting People Out to Pasture: Social Class in the American HIV/AIDS Epidemic, 1981 – Present

By Jensen Kraus

> *'The question is what does a decent society do with people who hurt themselves because they're human; who smoke too much, who eat too much, who drive carelessly, who don't have safe sex? I think the answer is that a decent society does not put people out to pasture and let them die because they've done a human thing.'*
> *-Bob Rafsky, 1946-1993*

As of 2016, around 675,000 people have died of AIDS-related causes in the United States. This does not take into account the countless lives lost, who were undiagnosed either due to lack of information or stigma. It is estimated that around 1.2 million people in the US currently live with AIDS or HIV, with as many as 40,000 new infections each year. AIDS, previously considered to be a death sentence, is now preventable and treatable. In 1996, the introduction of the antiretroviral 'drug cocktail' went on to save countless lives. It marked the moment when an HIV diagnosis no longer signified a life cut short. However, this very real epidemic still prevails in many areas of the United States.

Social class has touched every aspect of the American AIDS epidemic, both in the pre-1996 era and in the modern struggle. The epidemic raises an important question: how does a modern country handle a medical crisis that disproportionately affects the marginalized? In addition to the social and political implications of medical epidemics, these crises carry economic ramifications as marginalized individuals are affected by the pricing of medicine, access to resources, and the complexity of activism. It is impossible to understand the impact of the HIV/AIDS epidemic without taking in account the economic standing of those involved.

1981 – 1996

During the 80s, AIDS and HIV was not marked as a disease of the lower class; instead the stigmatization was focused on gay and bisexual men. Calling the epidemic a 'gay plague', the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) furthered the stigmatization by labelling it 'Gay-Related Immune Deficiency.' In 1982, the CDC discovered that a portion of their patients were not gay or bisexual. This revelation led to the name to be changed to Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS). Later, rates of infection rose in intravenous drug users and Haitian immigrants more quickly than the rest of the population. These groups shared similarities in that they stayed within their social circles and to some extent were seen as 'dirty' by the rest of the population. In the face of a medical epidemic, those infected are burdened with even more stigma and economic suffering. The circumstances surrounding AIDS and HIV in the early years made it so that those who once had economic stability lost their wealth at alarming rates.

During the epidemic, some employers refused to hire people who tested HIV positive, or even hire anyone who presented as one of the identified at-risk groups. Other employers fired those who came out as HIV positive or moved them to an isolated work environment (Leonard 1985). Michael Callen, a prominent AIDS activist and legal secretary in the early 80's, was 'placed on medical leave of absence, without pay' (France 2016 p. 110). Callen's co-workers had learned of his condition through *New York* magazine and expressed fear over working

alongside someone with HIV. He was not even allowed to return to his desk to gather his things. By 1984, there was legal standing to object to the firing of People with AIDS (PWA's) as AIDS and HIV fell under the umbrella term 'handicap.' However, not all PWA's had the funds, resources, and time that it could take to fight employment discrimination. Due to the fast-acting nature of many opportunistic infections that attacked the weakened immune system, some PWA's, like John Chadbourne, died before their civil rights cases could be completed (Barrios 1987). In 1994, one study featured 305 patients who had been diagnosed with AIDS or HIV, 76% of whom were employed at the time of their diagnosis. They found that 23% of their employed sample left or lost their jobs in under a month. After 16 months, 53% of their sample were employed, with about one third of that number on disability leave, only 36% of their sample were still active in the workforce. Those who were white, college educated, had never used IV drugs, and had jobs that required less physical effort were more likely to stay employed for longer. The effect of a lost job on a person's income was described as 'immediate and severe,' with an income being reduced to one fourth of what it was at the time of employment (Massagli 1994 p. 6).

Lack of employment, whether voluntary or involuntary, severely impacted the lives of PWA's, as treatment costs soared to tens of thousands of dollars. With loss of employment, many also lost access to health insurance. In 1987, AZT, the only drug approved to treat AIDS at the time, was the most expensive prescription drug ever introduced. The drug cost $8,000 to $10,000 a year, while those in the early stages of HIV could take a smaller dose that cost $3,500 to $4,000 a year (Zonona 1989). These prices do not include the cost of hospital visits, routine check-ups, in-home care, and other treatments needed to combat opportunistic infections and side effects. Assuming an average life expectancy of one to two years after diagnosis, the total medical cost of treating HIV/AIDS was estimated to be around $60,000 to $90,000 dollars per person (Scitovsky 1988).

Only around 20% of PWA's had private health insurance during this period (Diaz 1994). For those on public insurance, the government usually provided either SSD (Social Security Disability Insurance) or SSI (Supplemental Security Income). SSD was geared towards those who were disabled and had been unemployed for at least five months, but whose income was too high to qualify for other social services. SSD served PWA's very poorly due to the two-year waiting period for the implementation of Medicare coverage, making it out of the question because of their short life expectancy. SSI was directed toward those who had lost their money due to unemployment or who were already low-income. This program guaranteed the right to Medicaid coverage and payed a low monthly stipend, some of which had to go to paying for home care bills or medical expenses (Niehaus 1990). For some, neither of these programs were available. David France recalls consoling a neighbor with HIV, who was kicked out of his apartment due to his HIV status, and the hospitals wouldn't take him. 'They told me to go home to Puerto Rico to die. But how?' his neighbor lamented (France 2016 p. 217). Without money or resources, there were few options for PWA's who had nowhere to turn.

These programs also often controlled the lives of PWA's. If their income changed or if they became employed, they risked losing public insurance. The bureaucratic nature of these programs also hurt struggling PWA's immensely, requiring hours of paperwork. For those who may not have been able to communicate regularly with their doctor or case worker, as is the case of many PWA's in rural low-income settings, this process could be even more challenging. Months could be the difference between life and death; many died waiting for their disability payments. Others, like Brian Gougeon, made it through the process of paying for their medication, but would receive their treatment too late; 'Delayed by shortages and high demand,

[his AZT] arrived almost two weeks late. By then he was in no condition to take it, having slipped into a coma from which he never returned' (France 2016 p. 277). While these government programs had the intention of helping PWA's with medical costs, they had multiple shortcomings, leaving PWA's economically burdened.

Rising medical prices and gaps in government aide meant that many PWA's had little option but to create their own way of treating their illness. Known as 'buyers clubs,' groups of AIDS activists took advantage of the FDA loophole that allowed patients to import drugs approved abroad, creating an underground drug market. Many of their patients were those who could not afford AZT any other way. During at least one protest, buyers clubs flaunted their ability to treat, or at least attempt to treat, PWA's by assembling makeshift drug stands in the crowd outside the FDA. They chanted, 'Get your dextran sulfate here, you can't get it inside!', selling the drug for a low price of three dollars for ten pills (How to Survive a Plague 2012). Aerosol pentamine, used to prevent PCP (an often deadly opportunistic infection), was sold on market for $125 to $175 per dose, but buyers clubs sold it for $40 dollars a dose, making it more available to those who previously could not afford it (Levin & Sanger 2000). This not only showed the desperation for useful, cheap drugs that were needed during this time, but also the ability for communities to come together to provide accessible resources when those in power weren't providing.

Buyers clubs weren't the only form of AIDS activism present during these years. Founded by playwright Larry Kramer in 1987, the most prominent of these groups, ACT UP, used direct action to attempt to change policies, legislation, and AIDS research agendas. In some regards they were very successful, managing to lower the price of AZT by about 20% after an array of protests. During one of the last, Peter Staley, a former Wall Street banker, and four other men chained themselves to the balcony of the New York Stock Exchange, blasted marine foghorns, and threw fake money onto the ground printed with the phrase: 'We die while you make money. Fuck your profiteering' (France 2016 p. 381). The drug, however, was still too expensive for most people to take. The Treatment and Data sect of ACT UP fell under the leadership of Mark Harrington, who championed the fight to lessen the divide between the scientist and the patient.

Larry Kramer, Peter Staley, Mark Harrington: all these men had something in common. They were all college-educated, white gay men with access to wealth. There was a certain level of education as well as financial security needed to invest in full-time activism, since many of these activists were communicating with scientists and government officials. In some ways their status helped their activism: both Kramer and Staley poured their own money into their organizations. Their ability to read through medical journals to join the scientific dialogue helped keep patients informed, and Staley's knowledge of Wall Street from his time working there was key to pulling off their protest. Still, their upper-class background kept them from being able to understand and represent the majority of PWA's. Many activists, torn between the economic, social, and scientific aspects of the epidemic began focusing more on the scientific aspect, channeling themselves into research and the politics of medical trials. While their activism was a key factor in the breakthrough of 1996, they failed to address the issues that plagued and would continue to plague PWA's on the economic and social level.

The difference between the prominent activists and most PWA's became even more apparent as the demographics of who became infected began to shift in the late 80's. A new risk group came into play: poor people of color. This was in part due to intravenous drug use fueled by economic and social hardships. While this demographic shared the same stigma as gay and bisexual men because HIV seemed to emerge from what was seen at the time as 'deviant'

behavior (Worth 1990), the difference was that for people of color, this behavior was perceived as linked to poverty. With white gay men, HIV/AIDS generally caused financial hardships; with this new demographic, HIV/AIDS was usually preceded by financial hardships.

1996 - Present

In 1996, Highly Active Antiretroviral Therapy drug combinations, often known as HAART, came onto the market. These drugs meant that AIDS no longer necessarily signified a death sentence; instead, it could become a chronic but manageable disease. Of course, the reality of the post-HAART era was not that simple. Even Spencer Cox, the young activist and actor who had drafted the trial proposal that helped these drugs become available, fell into financial hardship and mental illness. He died of AIDS-related causes in 2012 (France 2016 p. 3). Poor communities of color have seen few of the benefits of the post-HAART era.

While AIDS-related deaths decreased post-HAART, the difference in mortality between affluent PWA's and poor PWA's dramatically increased. Black and poor PWA's were now considerably more likely to die of AIDS-related causes than their wealthier, white counterparts. The theory of fundamental causes, first proposed in 1995 by Jo C. Phelan and Bruce G. Link, hypothesizes that once a cure or effective treatment is found for a disease, the disease is not eradicated but instead becomes a disease of the poor. In the pre-HAART era, PWA's from low-socioeconomic status (SES) counties were 1.41 times more likely to die from AIDS-related causes than PWA's in high SES-counties. Post-HAART, this disparity rose to 2.72. Black PWA's were also 3.66 more likely to die than their white counterparts during the pre-HAART era, but 7.92 times more likely in the post-HAART era (Rubin, Colen & Link 2010). A strong correlation has also been found to exist between rates of HIV infection and household income, those with lower incomes having higher rates of HIV. Households with an income of under $10,000 a year have around 2.8% infection rate, while households with an income over $50,000 a year have around a 0.2% infection rate. (Denning & DiNenno 2010). These disparities do not just indicate a struggle to obtain resources and treatment, but also demonstrate that the disparity begins at the onset of the illness.

This new inequality among death rates demonstrates what had already been hinted at with AZT pricing and other medical costs: that money is a key factor in treatment. Without money, health insurance, or other resources, HAART does very little for economically marginalized populations. It is estimated that HAART costs around $10,000 a year (Gebo 2010), and hospitalization, treatment for opportunistic infections, and medical tests continue to add to costs. Patients now have different treatment combinations and brands to try, but all range into the thousands if not tens of thousands of dollars per year in costs (aidsinfo 2017). In 2012, Truvada, the brand name for pre-exposure prophylaxis (PREP), was introduced onto the market. If taken daily, PREP prevents HIV infection from being transmitted, but Truvada has followed the pricing trend, setting itself at $13,000 a year. Truvada has to be prescribed before an HIV infection is present, something some doctors are unsure of or unwilling to do. Doctors may be especially unwilling if the patient is an intravenous drug user, who are often stereotyped as not being able to follow the consistent schedule needed for taking PREP (Maude 2017). Furhermore, since Truvada is a preventative measure, there is a certain amount of education that must happen on both the side of the patient and provider before it can be prescribed, a factor than can limit access in more low-income or isolated areas of the country.

Because there is no cure for HIV/AIDS, treatment must be consistent and ongoing. Being low-income, having less than a high school education, experiencing recent homelessness, being

substance dependent, and having depressive symptoms are all associated with low retention rates for HIV/AIDS medication (Holtzman 2015). Homelessness and other housing issues make it more difficult for patients to keep and store medication, since many regimens require several pills to be taken daily. Due to the stigma around HIV/AIDS, homeless PWA's often feel ashamed to take their medication if they do not have a safe and private area to do so. One person living with HIV reported, 'I'm going through a situation right now with my living conditions. I haven't [taken] my medications in about three weeks now...I'm living right now in a warehouse with my cousin...' (Holtzman 2015). Appointments and prescription fillings are also more likely to be skipped if the PWA does not have health insurance or has health insurance with higher copayments. Moreover, '[what] makes it hard sometimes [is] if you don't have money to get here' (Holtzman 2015). Some clinics have adapted by creating a transportation service for those who could not otherwise make their appointments, but many clinics do not have the resources to implement such a program.

Buyers Clubs that rose up in the 80's and 90's diminished post-1996, but the underground market for medications persisted. According to one recent study of high-risk gay and bisexual men and ARV (Antiretroviral) medication use, of 189 men who were prescribed ARV medication, 27% reported having sold or traded their medication (Kurtz, Buttram & Surratt 2014). Low-income PWA's also often sell their prescribed medication for a profit. One PWA who bought and sold medication on the underground said that they 'needed the money for a bill or for something for [their] child' (Tsuyuki 2015). For others, the process of purchasing medication off the street is more feasible than going to a doctor. One patient said, 'I had ran out (of ARVs) and dude was giving away cheap, and I didn't wanna go down there, go see the case worker and wait in them long waits' (Tsuyuki 2015). While the networks for purchasing and distributing medications are not organized the same way as they were in the pre-HAART era, the high demand for cheap and easy treatment has not diminished over the years.

The post-HAART era saw an immense demographic shift in where new AIDS diagnoses appeared in the U.S. As of 2016, 45% of all new HIV diagnoses are made in the South, particularly in black communities and urban areas (CDC, 2017). Twenty-one of the twenty-five metropolitan areas with the highest rates of HIV are located in the South (Villarosa 2017). Although New York and San Francisco still have high populations of PWA's, they are not seeing the same levels of new diagnosis. When AIDS/HIV first appeared, clinical trials to test medication often failed to recruit people of color; many had none enrolled at all (How to Survive a Plague 2012). Community efforts to combat AIDS and raise awareness also failed to reach out to people of color, leaving a gap in levels of knowledge on how to deal with the crisis. In the case of impoverished areas, HIV testing is not readily available. Planned Parenthood, one of the well-known clinics that provides low-cost or free HIV tests, has very few locations in the South, leaving poor communities of color with a deep disadvantage when HIV infections began to hit.

Black and Latino gay men are no more likely to engage in risky sexual behavior than white gay men, yet it is estimated that half of black gay men and one quarter of Latino gay men are expected to receive an HIV diagnosis during their lifetime (CDC 2016). Due to housing discrimination, Americans of color, particularly black Americans, were kept from moving into suburban sprawls. Five of the most segregated cities in America champion some of the highest rates of HIV; and once HIV is prevalent in a population, that population becomes more vulnerable to new infections. Moreover, due to the intimate nature of how HIV is spread, it is unlikely to be spread outside of the population in which it is already present, among people who share the same race and class background (Villarosa 2017). Housing segregation based on

race has left communities of color more vulnerable to HIV infection even if they take the same measures of protection as those from white upper/middle class neighborhoods.

While it is no longer categorized as an epidemic, the belief that HIV/AIDS is no longer a crisis that devastates communities within the United States is false. Much of that devastation is due to the way it not only targets a person's health, but their finances as well. Separating a medical epidemic from its financial aspects is impossible when assessing its impact. Whether directly or indirectly, the AIDS crisis brought and continues to bring economic adversity to largely marginalized communities. Putting people out to pasture is not a light term; it carries heavy implications regarding the value of human life. A medical crisis like AIDS puts people out to pasture through the economic pressures placed on them, expecting the dying to pay for the right to live. If life is seen as a commodity to be bought and sold, then those who are economically disadvantaged will always be the ones predisposed to disease, hit the hardest when a medical epidemic emerges.

From San Jose, California, **Jensen Kraus** is an incoming junior who is majoring in Psychology and Hispanic Studies. He is currently working at a summer internship, researching how children learn through tangible technology. After college he hopes to go to grad school, and after that he either wants to pursue teaching in bilingual immersion education or research in developmental psychology. Jensen's essay also won the 2018 James J. Kopp First-Year Research Award, given annually to the best research paper written by a first-year Lewis and Clark student.

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Wealth, Poverty, & Wildfires: An Overview

By Emily Clark

As the earth's climate continues to shift and the temperatures rise, wildfires are becoming consistent. Almost every summer, typically beginning in late July, devastating fires roll through communities in the United States, displacing families and wildlife. Federally-subsidized cleanups and federal money cater to the rich, leaving low-income households in poverty almost indefinitely after wildfires occur. Moreover, the process of preparation and recovery favors the wealthy, while poorer, rural communities are often more susceptible to fires in the first place. When wildfires occur, all of these factors combined cause class stratification to grow across and within communities, creating a larger gap between the wealthy and poor.

Being able to afford insurance in the U.S. these days is a luxury. Homeowners' insurance often covers fire damage, while renter's insurance does not. Depending on the geographic location of one's house, the idea of paying for fire insurance is not ideal, especially since the likelihood and extent of potential fire damage is unknown. As Davies et al point out, 'While fire-prone places in the U.S. are more likely to be populated by higher-income groups, this fact threatens to overshadow the thousands of low-income individuals who also live in fire-prone places but lack the resources to prepare or recover from fire' (2018).

California presents a unique situation for wildfires. The state's urban sprawl has moved towards the countryside, and these spaces have become 'high risk corridors' (Barron and Gajanan, 2018). Fires are devastating more communities than ever before because of the

density of houses in these areas, which the Forest Service calls 'the wildland-urban interface (WUI)' (Barron and Gajanan 2018). As Jason Roberts emphasizes, 'Federal wildland fire literature defines the wildland urban interface as 'the line, area, or zone where structures and other human development meet or intermingle with undeveloped wildland or vegetative fuels'' (2015, p. 61). A study conducted by Villanova University also found that in California, there has been a more than 1,000 percent increase in the number of homes and developed land in areas prone to wildfires since 1940 (Barron and Gajanan, 2018).

In 2018, the Camp Fire swept through Butte County, California, devastating poor communities that are outside some of the most wealthy and affluent areas in the U.S., such as San Francisco. A study that assessed the vulnerability of communities to wildfires across the U.S. found that 'affluent exurban regions east of the San Francisco Bay and rural areas of the eastern Sierra Nevada Mountains in California have similar wildfire potential, but relatively poorer socioeconomic conditions in the Sierra Nevada Mountains make those communities far more vulnerable to fire disaster than their exurban counterparts' (Davies et al. 2018). 17.5 percent of Shasta County's citizens are living beneath the poverty line, and to the south, in Mendocino, it's 20 percent ('Low-Income Communities Struggle to Recover After a Wildfire' 2018). Since 2011, these counties have been struggling with drought on and off, and it has been difficult for them to recover.

When it comes to managing natural disasters, differences in access to insurance truly show what a significant factor class can be. For those without insurance, there are services to assist with rebuilding and recovering after wildfires, but these services are never enough. When the Camp Fire struck in 2018, many people lost not only their homes and possessions but their means to support themselves. One couple—without renter's insurance and who lost everything in the fire—were given food and clothing by 'the Red Cross, the Buddhist Tzu Chi Foundation and the Lion's Club' ('Low-income Communities Struggle to Recover After a Wildfire' 2018). FEMA then supported them with a few months of rent for a house that they shared with five other people. According to NPR, others received a trailer to live in, but only for eighteen months ('Low-income Communities Struggle to Recover After a Wildfire' 2018). After that, they have to find a place of their own, or they're homeless.

Class also impacts how people prepare for wildfires. Hazards surrounding homes can cause problems if one does not have the means or the time to remove them. Middle and upper-class homeowners frequently allocate time and resources to clean up brush or dead trees surrounding their property. These services are often offered as a part of their insurance plan and if not, they have the means to hire someone else to remove fire hazards, thereby decreasing the risk of property damage. Not only are those with limited resources generally without adequate insurance and the means to effectively prepare themselves, they are also much more susceptible to the ravaging after-effects of the disaster. The 2018 California fires affected people from all socioeconomic classes. Air quality, for example, affected everyone, but only those with sufficient means were able to escape the smoke. Moreover, those without access to healthcare will disproportionately suffer the longer-term health effects of hazardous air quality.

Having a sense of security prior to, and in the midst of, a disaster is a clear distinction between the rich and the poor. During the peak of the fires, many wealthy people in San Francisco escaped to their weekend homes in Tahoe, Monterey, Reno, etc. Gabriel Thompson, writing for *The Nation*, describes the situation well; 'The people who will bear the brunt of climate change will be the poor,' he says. 'The low-wage workers who keep the Bay Area humming aren't usually afforded the luxury of working from home, or of taking days off, or of having

the disposable income needed to drive hundreds of miles away and pay for a motel when the air becomes hazardous' (2018). Those who don't have places to go are 'huddled in Best Westerns or on gymnasium floors and are often locked in insurance-claim limbo' (Smiley 2018). The wealthy, on the other hand, are often found sitting in fancy hotels that will be paid for by their insurance companies, not worrying about their properties because they have hired someone else to keep watch.

Offering a significant contrast from the rural and low-income areas discussed above, Malibu and Calabasas—both home to many celebrities—were also affected by the recent California fires. Before a fire, insurance crews employed by the wealthy may assess homes for potential fire hazards, clean up debris, install sprinklers, and spray fire retardant around the property. Some clients even get texts about fire paths and evacuation routes. Amy Bach, the director of the insurance education nonprofit Unity Policyholders, points out that '[insurance] is a capitalist system, by and large, with for-profit companies' (Smiley 2018). Kim Kardashian and Kanye West, both infamously wealthy celebrities, hired private firefighters to protect their multi-million-dollar home in Calabasas from the fires. Some insurance companies, such as theirs, have their own 'Wildfire Protection Units' that include pre-fire and even dispatch for-hire firefighters when the fire strikes.

Counter to this privatization of firefighting, there are many who have invested in firefighting as a public service. Volunteer fire departments, very popular until recently, have been historically important social institutions, 'often commingling middle-class and working-class men of many ethnicities in the virtuous activity of defending their city from conflagration' (Madrigal 2018). The privatization of firefighting provides another unfortunate example of how the wealthy will be much more prepared for future natural disasters than those from lower classes. Even without private firefighters, the response from public firefighting departments varies according to their funding and location. A poor rural area will be hit harder by a wildfire than a wealthy community since poorer communities are generally underfunded, with access to fewer public services. It is difficult not to interpret these phenomena as evidence that we value wealthy people and their property much more than we value poor people's lives and livelihoods.

On the surface, it may seem like the goal of firefighting and battling other types of natural disasters is simply to protect resources and save lives. However, there are larger, underlying institutions and values that influence the industries that manage the land, its people, and its resources. The United States has been and will continue to be a capitalist society for the foreseeable future. This system is mainly driven by wealth, and as Roberts mentions, 'The social side cannot be evaded as somehow radically different from its ecological integument… The circulation of money and capital have to be construed as ecological variables every bit as important as the circulation of air and water' (2015 p. 62). Since those with money often claim the lion's share of political power, the poorer among us are virtually disenfranchised when it comes to creating policies related to the land and natural resources. Wildfires, like other natural disasters, have become a part of our political economy and an extension of capitalism, which favors wealthier classes.

Forest fires are a natural process, but when they are mismanaged, they can turn into disasters. I would argue that if the forests were managed properly, fires would be less of a risk and less intense for communities. Effective prevention plays a role in this discussion of class and wildfires because the wealthy have the ability to influence politics and, therefore, forest management. Fire management has historically been focused on suppression, or reducing heat

output and spread from fires, because it 'protects the economic interests of the United States' (Roberts 2015 p. 63). It serves upper-class interests, such as real estate developers who seek to take advantage of scenic and recreational opportunities that appeal to the wealthy. Viewing forest fires as a threat to resource revenues, rather than as a threat to communities and people first, is a serious problem. A focus on protecting the interests of insurance companies and developers veers away from finding more sustainable solutions to stem the threat of wildfires, and only further increases class stratification.

In recent years, the popularity of land within the wildland-urban interface (WUI) has dramatically impacted fire management in California, with more people that ever wanting to move to 'wild places.' But who can afford to do that while still having the security of a protected home? In 2001, the revised National Fire Plan had a goal 'to slow or stop wildland fires from threatening *high-value areas'* (Roberts 2015 p. 67). The definition of 'high value areas' is ambiguous but somewhat sinister. Many fire mitigation crews only work on pricey vacation homes that can range from $200,000-$4 million, which line the edges of woodland areas in order to achieve increased privacy. Millions of dollars are spent managing overgrown forests that encroach on property lines, but shouldn't the money be going to the recovery process?

The U.S. government provides a budget and grants each year to states for natural disaster management. In 2018, out of the 284 disasters declared by the state of California, 210 of them were wildfires, according to FEMA (2019). FEMA provides millions of dollars in fire grants to the state every year, and since 2005 they have provided $548 million. Although this may seem like a generous amount, the amount of *individual assistance* is extremely low, totaling only $11 million since 2005 (FEMA 2019). The role of FEMA in the California wildfires is to support the state, which then uses its discretion to dole out funds to organizations. Oftentimes, this assistance does not go to those who are most in need, because 'it's allocated according to cost-benefit calculations meant to minimize taxpayer risk' (Benincasa & Hersher 2019). Those who rent 'are ineligible for much of the federal assistance available to homeowners for rebuilding after a fire event' (Davies et al. 2018). Those with homeowners' insurance benefit not only from their insurance policy, but also from federal aid. Lower-class groups in the U.S. struggle doubly because they are receiving little to no federal recovery aid, which pushes them further into poverty. A few months of subsidized rent is not going to allow displaced poor people to find an affordable, stable home under such dire conditions. Especially in places that are still recovering from fires, a few months is also not enough time to rebuild lost houses or adequate new homes. According to the *LA Times*, 'Altogether, an unprecedented 21,000 homes across Northern California have been lost in the last 14 months to fire' (Parvini & Simani 2018). This is a tremendous amount of loss, and the government does not provide *nearly* enough funding to rebuild these communities.

In order to access federally-granted funds, a governor must request that the president declare a state of emergency to invoke the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (Nixon 2018). When Trump declared the California fires a state of emergency in November 2018, the government approved and set aside $12.7 million for survivors affected in three counties: Butte, Ventura, and Los Angeles. Although this may seem like an ample amount, it only 'includes grants for temporary housing and home repairs and low-cost loans to cover uninsured property losses' (Nixon 2018). Residents could also *apply* for grants for food and shelter at disaster recovery centers set up by FEMA and the state (Nixon 2018). It is absurd that people have to *apply* in order to get help with food following a disaster. Communities who

face the initial devastation from fires face a secondary trauma from the inadequacy of recovery assistance.

The states are essentially on their own when it comes to handling wildfires and other environmental disasters. Although FEMA does support them throughout the process, they aren't the main agency in control. In California, the governor's office manages the state and its ability to fight wildfires, while FEMA coordinates other agencies to support the state. Many states do not have the budget to help everyone recover, and that is what leads to the large class stratification seen after wildfires. Since the fiscal year for the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection starts July 1, the budget for fires in 2018 was drained quickly. In July alone, the department spent $115 million of its designated $443 million (Shoot 2018). The state needed another $234 million in order to keep fighting the fires, which explains why so many communities are still struggling to recover, even with the minimal support they would have received. From past disasters, FEMA has received legitimate criticism, because it is often underprepared, disorganized, and underestimates the extent of damage. This happened in with Hurricane Katrina, where there were not enough supplies in the designated shelters (Nixon 2018). FEMA's disarray could at least partially explain why lower-income communities struggle to survive after these fires.

There is good reason to believe that, as the earth warms, we will see more natural disasters that will increase in their intensity. Research indicates that some segments of humanity will suffer significantly more than others and that, in the United States, socioeconomic status will directly influence one's degree of suffering and ability to recover. There is also evidence that those with less class privilege run a significant risk of falling deeper into poverty after a natural disaster strikes. Disparities in access to insurance protection and the services provided to the insured before, during, and after a wildfire are vast. The privatization of firefighting and concomitant decline of volunteer fire departments, in addition to the politicization of forest management in favor of the rich, puts added pressure on poor communities during wildfires, allowing the wealthy to not only maintain their survival but also their economic status. FEMA's unequal distribution of aid to wealthier communities, in order to minimize 'taxpayer risk,' further isolates the lower classes in their recovery attempts. In the case of California, some may never recover from the fires, which continue to rage. Researchers are predicting that there will be even more fires this summer (Predictive Services/National Interagency Fire Center, 2019). The class demographics of urban and rural areas can change practically overnight in fire-prone areas of states like California. In order to plan future solutions for wildfires, diverse populations must be prioritized in order to promote stability for members of all classes.

Emily Clark is a rising sophomore at Lewis and Clark who plans to major in Environmental Studies. Being from the resort town of Whitefish, Montana, has shaped her interests and goals. She has worked with many Whitefish-area nonprofits that focus on conservation, public land, and water rights/quality. 'Class is something that I am definitely aware of,' she says. 'The class makeup of my town is certainly upper-middle class. It is interesting to compare the makeup of my town to the towns surrounding it, because it is quite a contrast.'

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All Walled In: How Gated Communities Are Dividing America

By Jenna Timmerman

Growing up in Phoenix, my family moved often, but I was able to spend a lot of time at my best friend's house. She was an only child with two parents, and they lived in a big five-bedroom house with an enormous backyard and pool. With my three siblings and I always living in two or three-bedroom places, I never understood what prompted such a small family to live in such a big space. Stepping out of my home, I could turn right to the main road and see the grocery store, freeway just behind. However, to get to my best friend's house it was a twenty-minute drive to the next town over, a stop with some security guards at a gatehouse, and then twist after turn until we got to the very back of a *country club*. Her family would occasionally take me to their country club pool, and I would get super excited about the free shampoo and mouthwash in the bathroom, because it was crazy to me that they would just give those items away! I suppose this is where my fascination with gates and gated communities comes from. Why couldn't I live in this country club? The houses were nice—maybe my siblings and I could have our own rooms and a big backyard! My parents always told me we could not go there. I knew we were different from most of the people at my school, so I stopped asking. I soon grew to learn about social classes. I quickly caught on to the fact that I was low-class and most of the people at my school were upper-middle class.

For some historical background, Phoenix is one of the fastest growing cities in America right now. According to Gallen (2018), Arizona was ranked No.4 on the U.S. Census for 'fastest-growing states,' and 'Arizona continues to prove itself as an unbeatable place to live, raise a family and retire.' Gated communities have contributed a lot to the 'raising a family and retiring' part. From Figure 1, we see that there was a spark in the development of gated communities in the U.S. in the 1960s. This trend was middle-class dominated and stemmed from planned retirement communities, a 'walling off' phenomenon that eventually led to resorts, country clubs, and finally the modern suburbs most common today. Growing up in Phoenix for 18 years, I watched these gated communities physically be built from the ground up, and there was a dramatic increase in their development starting in 2000, the year I was born.[69] Also, according to 2009 U.S. Census Bureau data, '10 million housing units are in gated communities... [and] roughly 10 percent of the occupied homes in this country are in gated communities' (Benjamin 2012). Of all these homes, the growth of gated communities is most prominent in the 'sunbelt of the southwest and southeast'— Arizona, California, Texas, and Florida (Blakey & Synder 1997).

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[69] *Editor's Note:* During Jenna's in-class presentation on her essay, we discussed the likelihood that this post-2000 surge in gated communities was related to fear of the 'other' generated after the 9/11 terrorist attacks.
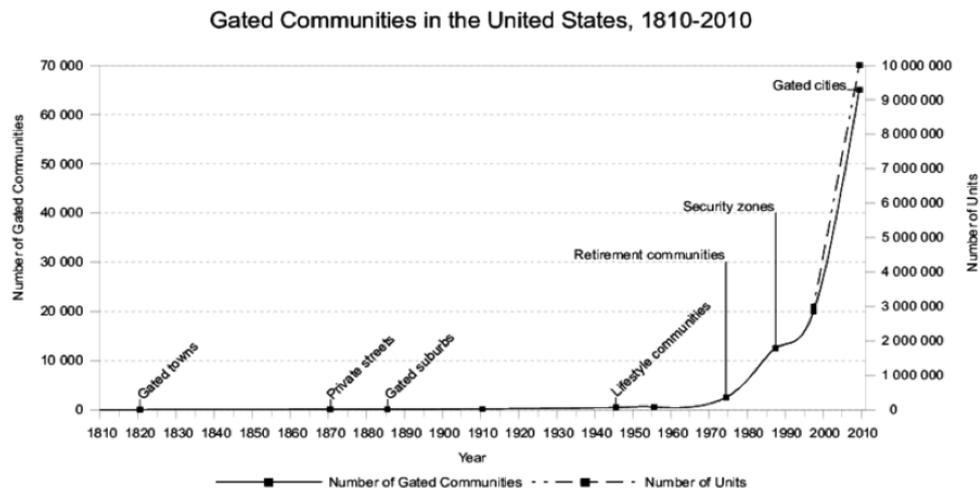
Figure 1: Graph showing the growing phenomenon of gated communities in the United States. Source Info: Paulouro Neves, Joao. The Eradication of Public Space: Dissolving Liminal States (ResearchGate 2012).

Not only am I interested in why gated communities are growing in number at such a rapid pace, but I also want to know more about the social and political impacts of the phenomenon. I believe that gated communities are working as a form of discrimination, which will only lead to further separation of people from different backgrounds, increasing class and race divides. Before diving into how gated communities discriminate, however, it is important to determine what counts as a 'gated community.' There are many factors to consider in this definition, including whether the community is surrounded by gates or fences, does there need to be a security guard, are there cameras and monitors, etc. For the sake of clarity, Atkinson and Blandy (2005) state:

> [Gated] communities may therefore be defined as walled or fenced housing developments, to which public access is restricted, characterized by legal agreements which tie the residents to a common code of conduct and (usually) collective responsibility for management (p. 178).

Gated communities must include some sort of barrier, like a gate or wall. Public access is limited, but it's not impossible to get in. Not being impossible to enter means that any person with a code for a call box can get in, or anyone with a connection to another person within can access the inside. 'public' refers to any persons not a resident of the establishment. Finally, the residents are bound to act a certain way, and maintain their properties a certain way, to uphold the community appearance. This includes the outside of homes needing to be up to a standard, i.e. lawns being well cleaned and trimmed.

One type of 'gate' that everyone know about is the fencing on the border between Mexico and the United States. You might be wondering what this has to do with the gated communities of the upper-middle class—it has everything to do with this. The border fence is a gate, and the U.S. government is using a tactic called *prevention through deterrence* to enforce its boundaries. Prevention through deterrence is described by Jason de Leon: 'The terrible things that this mass of migrating people experience en route are neither random nor senseless, but rather part of a strategic federal plan that has rarely been publicly illuminated and exposed for what it is: a killing machine that simultaneously uses and hides behind the viciousness of the

Sonoran Desert' (2015). The government uses the desert terrain as a type of 'gate' to keep certain people in the U.S. and certain people out. In this case, U.S. citizens are inside and non-citizens, most commonly people from Mexico, El Salvador, and Honduras, are outside the border. The 'outside' people who try to cross this brutal landscape often do not make it to the inside. As a result of prevention through deterrence, the U.S. government places the blame for hazards faced by those who try to cross on the environment, instead of taking responsibility for lives lost. Comparing this analysis to the use of barriers in gated communities, it can be said that the people inside are using gates around their homes as a mechanism to drive unwanted people out. They are intentionally separating themselves. Looking more closely at this separation, *who* exactly is inside the gates and who exactly is outside? This question will help in our understanding of the motives and reasoning behind this separation.

Gated communities do have positive features, or else people would not be moving to them. Pros include having more privacy, a sense of safety, lack of solicitors, no commuter traffic, and quieter streets. However, this all comes at a cost. One homebuyer commented on a post in a realty column, saying, 'I opted for a home in a gated community when we moved to a new city… just didn't know it well and figured it was a smart move. Could be a waste of money but I think my family feels a little safer' (Dean 2016). People who move to gated communities are paying a lot more money in the long term, but the only real reward is *feeling* safer. While conducting research in a gated community, Setha Low (2003) noted that the 'desire for safety, security, community, and 'niceness,' as well as wanting to live near people like themselves because of the fear of 'others' and of crime, is not unique to this family, but expressed by most residents living in gated communities.' However, gated communities do not provide more *actual* safety than non-gated communities of a similar socioeconomic status (Atkinson and Blandy 2005, p. 181). The gates are acting as a placebo.

People move to these communities in order to feel safer and provide a so-called better environment for their children. It is documented that 'gated communities can be seen as a response to the fear of crime' (Atkinson and Blandy 2005 p. 178). There is this idea that by placing oneself inside of a gate, you will be safe, from crime, from outsiders, and from economic uncertainty. However, as Sarah Goodyear argued in a 2013 *Atlantic* article, 'By fostering suspicion and societal divisions… gated communities can paradoxically compromise safety rather than increasing it.' On 26 February 2012, Trayvon Martin was fatally shot and killed by George Zimmerman inside a gated community in Florida. Trayvon was with his father, visiting his father's fiancée when he left their home to get a snack at a 7-11. Zimmerman was on duty for neighborhood watch and was known for frequently calling police about 'suspicious individuals,' all of whom were black males (Goodyear 2013). It is no accident that a 17-year-old black male was the target of his paranoia. Robert Steuteville points out that a factor in Trayvon's death was a 'poorly planned, exclusionary environment' (Goodyear 2013). Gates are supposed to provide safe environments, but it does not always work like that—unless you are an upper-middle class, white individual. Gated communities are raising Americans to become more exclusionary, and fearful, than ever.

Rich Benjamin writes, 'Gated communities churn a vicious cycle by attracting like-minded residents who seek shelter from outsiders and whose physical seclusion then worsens paranoid groupthink against outsiders' (2012). Who are these 'outsiders'? Since people tend to move to these communities to be around 'like-minded and similar people' (Goodyear 2013), there tends to be little diversity. As with the Trayvon Martin tragedy, it is clear that 'like-minded' refers to people of the same skin color, this typically being majority white. Further, things such as a gate, cameras, guard officer, etc. all entail an extra cost of living—something that only those

of a certain class background can afford. Setha Low, an anthropologist who grew up in west Los Angeles, remembers not being able to visit her best friend, Dolly, who lived inside a gated community. Dolly's mother told her that Low could not come over anymore. Low recalls, 'At school the next day, I ask Dolly what happened… All that she can tell me is that I am 'low class'' (Low 2003). Low was young, and there was nothing she could do, once outside those gates. This story demonstrates how wanting to be around 'like-minded' people also refers to one's socioeconomic status. The gated community majority will be made up of upper-middle class white Americans, while the people outside the gates include anyone of a lower class as well as people of color.

Low's young niece is also being raised inside a gated community. One day, Low and her niece left the community to get some food. Low recalls, 'We were driving next to a truck with some day laborers and equipment in the back, and we were stopped beside them at the light. She wanted to move because she was afraid those people were going to come and get her. They looked scary to her' (2003). In her ethnography, Low describes her niece as '[feeling] threatened when she sees poor people' (2003). The word choices of *threatened* and *poor* are interesting; these day-laborers were also Latino, and simply doing their jobs. A young person being raised in seclusion shows fear toward those who do not look like her, which takes us back to the 'like-minded' people idea. The 'gating' of a child's life, within this white upper-middle class community, directly impacts how she views others, which as a result makes her a more fearful person when she ventures outside the gates (Atkinson and Blandy 2005 p. 181). This early-life seclusion will result in misunderstanding people different from her, and further contribute to separation between socio-economic classes and races. As young people behind these gates grow up with that kind of mindset, they will develop a divided view of the United States, and this will continue to strain our larger, national and international community.

Not only do housing developers notice how this divide is growing, but they are using the rise of gated communities to their advantage. Writing in *Le Journal Internacional*, Laura Wojcik discusses the American phenomenon of gates from an outsider's perspective:

> The more social and racial inequalities increase, the more housing developers will sell gated neighborhoods easily. Wealthy people will always have money to spend in fences that would set them apart from the poor. But, by living socially isolated in their homes, it is quite likely that the rich will become even more paranoid towards people who do not look like their neighbors. As a result, coexistence between various social classes will be increasingly challenging (2013).

The rise in paranoia of the wealthy is respective to the rise in gated communities; paranoia is produced through fear of what we do not know. The rise in fear of *others* and the unknown that wealthier people hold is exactly why barriers are being built. We see this on the southern border of The United States and, now, within our cities too. People are trying to separate themselves from diversity in a country like America *known for its diversity*. Those most affected are children. From a young age, children begin building their own beliefs, but gates are giving the future of this country an unnecessarily fearful mindset. Gated communities are acting as a form of discrimination, which is dividing the United States in how we see and work with one another.

Jenna Timmerman grew up in Phoenix, Arizona, and is studying Rhetoric and Media Studies/ Economics. She is from a working-class background. 'I have lived in about 15 different homes and have never had a stable home environment—just trying to find somewhere to sleep when I can,' she shares. 'However, through unstable homes, I have always had sports. I hope to one

day open and run my own volleyball club. As for right now, I am just a first-generation college student with big dreams of helping kids in situations like mine through the power of sports.'

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Sex Workers, Power, and Stigma

By Emma Bryan

The job title 'sex worker' contains one word that is far more interesting than the other. As such, American discourse on the subject matter has been relatively focused on the 'sex' aspect of sex work. 'Sex workers,' as historian and sex worker advocate Melinda Chateauvert explains, 'are laborers who earn money to perform sexual services or who provide erotic entertainment to clients, individually and collectively' (2015 p. 2). But, as sex workers are workers it is relevant to ask: where do they belong in the American class system? Class is difficult to define. To economist Michael Zweig, 'Class is about the power some people have over the lives of others, and the powerlessness most people experience as a result' (Zweig 2012 p. 8). For the sake of deepening an understanding of the class of sex workers and the complexities that come with comprehending any working-class job, Zweig's theories about class will be taken as assumptions. But, power is complicated. Where one may have power in their job in some ways, in others they may be lacking. There is no simple way to compare and contrast drastically different forms of power; stigmatization and criminalization have stunted the sex worker community's attempts to obtain power. Generally speaking, sex workers have little autonomy in their work lives, but they have sexuality as a potential form of power. However, the sex worker community has unique difficulties validating their own work *as* work, which separates them from the rest of the working world. This complication lessens the power that sex workers have over their jobs. Finding empowerment through eroticism, moreover, is its own form of extra labor, and isn't exactly equal in social value to labor performed by other members of the working class, who receive the respect of a job that is more 'morally acceptable.' This power is legitimacy. In the United States, sex workers are generally seen as criminals rather than legitimate members of society. The different forms of power that sex workers experience and don't experience all come together to define and complicate their class standing.

The debate around sex work focuses on whether or not sex work is good work. In public discussions about any other job, the conversation may center around wages or safety, but the sex work conversation finds itself centered around whether it should exist at all. This stigma takes away from the conversation that should be occurring: the need to hold sex work clients, business owners, and greater society accountable for harming sex workers. Sex work's longevity can be seen through the way that the 'demand for sexual entertainment seems almost recession proof,' (Chateauvert 2015 p. 128). Chateauvert also emphasizes, again, that sex work is 'a job; it pays the bills. Some people like the work, some don't, and many have mixed feelings' (122). Yet if people remain focused on the *sex* part of sex work rather than creating safety standards for sex workers, this reinforces cultural taboos against a form of work that has always existed, and will continue to exist.

For sex work, one step further than stigmatization is criminalization, which makes acquiring any sort of labor standards impossible. Through making the work illegal, the U.S. government ensures that it will be less safe than other forms of work; little is done to take care of sex workers' health or protect them from violence. Moreover, in the public's discussion of sex work, sex workers themselves aren't the prioritized voice. As sex worker advocates Lacey

Sloan and Stephanie Wahab remind us, 'Prior to 1973, it was rarely acknowledged that sex workers were capable of speaking for themselves' (2000 p. 466). It's hard for these workers to speak out as they risk outing themselves as criminals—or in the case of legal sex work, they put themselves at risk of violence. Police haven't acknowledged that sex workers are an especially at-risk population for sexual assault, and that they deserve protection like any other citizens (Sloan and Wahab 2000 p. 473). 'Denial of treatment following physical assault or rape and general hostility from public-sector providers was also found to be common [among sex workers],' adds Ine Vanwesenbeeck (2017 p. 1635). When a part of the conversation, sex workers are against criminalization. Sex worker Lori Adorable, in an interview with Ruth Jacobs, said that 'how workers feel about [their] jobs is irrelevant to the basic human right to safe working conditions, and it's been proven that partial criminalization is anathema to safety' (Jacobs 2014). The combination of stigma with this culture of criminalization has left sex workers with little power over their labor or working environment.

Legal sex work is heavily restricted by regulations like the Stop Enabling Sex Trafficking Act (SESTA) and the Allow States and Victims to Fight Online Sex Trafficking Act (FOSTA), laws passed in early 2018. Advocates say these laws are intended to fight sex trafficking, but in reality they effect sex workers' safety. When the phrase 'sex trafficking' is used, two people collaborating typically isn't the first image that comes to mind. But legally, trafficking could be two prostitutes working together. If it's not isolated, it's 'sex trafficking.' As Vanwesenbeeck notes, 'Trafficking may be legally defined in such a way that sex workers' regular practices of sharing space, sharing information, and dictating the manner in which they conduct their business are considered trafficking' (2017 p. 1633). Today's sex workers regularly use online resources to keep themselves safe and find work. It is mostly free and low-cost websites affected by SESTA/FOSTA, primarily hurting those of a lower class or those who cannot 'class pass' by making their own websites or being able to afford the more professional ones (McCombs 2018). In a recent *Huffington Post* interview, a sex worker named Arabelle noted that technology is being targeted as a tool for trafficking when in reality it takes away what keeps her work safe: online platforms (McCombs 2018).

In addition to heavy legal restrictions put on sex workers, there are few social services available to them, and the ones that exist focus on 'rehabilitation.' Rehabilitation programs don't recognize sex work as real work, and frame the workers as victims. Such programs focus on abolishing sex work instead of creating better labor standards within the field (Vanwesenbeeck 2017 p. 1634). Rehabilitation programs also work off of the assumption that rape is to be expected from the illegal forms of sex work. Sex workers' voices are only used to extend the narrative that these programs promote rather than providing a platform for the workers, no matter how their stories fit into the rehabilitative picture. 'For those working in the antiprostitution rescue industry, sex workers are limited to performing as stock characters in a story they are not otherwise a part of, in the pity porn which the 'expert' journalists, filmmakers, and NGO staff will produce, profit from, and build their power on,' argues Melissa Gira Grant in *Playing the Whore* (2014 p. 104). This 'rescue industry,' by not recognizing sex work as legitimate work, greatly compromises sex workers' agency and ability to empower themselves.

Through the 'sex part' of sex work, sex workers—when given the opportunity—can reclaim some power taken from them due to systemic stigmatization and social opposition to their work. Sex workers aren't viewed as real workers, but on a micro-level, they utilize their position of sexual power to attempt to combat some of the stigma they face and get the things they need. The micro-level distinction is important to make, as in general, sex workers have

little to no tangible power over their work lives, in Zweig's sense. Many, however, do *feel* empowered. They can make a living for themselves, and find a sense of purpose through their work. For most sex workers, 'their sense of power doesn't come from money, beauty, fame or giving society the middle finger. It comes from feeling that their work has meaning, that the sacrifices were worth it and that if they had it to do over again, they wouldn't change a thing' (Noelle 2015). Thus, on this smaller level, sex workers may find empowerment as individuals; as a group, however, they still make no real material gains, as their status in society hasn't changed.

But could this kind of micro-level sexual power, under the right circumstances, be a pathway to social power? As illustrated by the example of Mistress Velvet, a black sex worker advocate and dominatrix, sex work has the potential to help some clients work through their ignorance and prejudice. Mistress Velvet uses her position of sexual power to advocate for real social change. While working as a dominatrix, she teaches her (typically) cisgender white male 'slaves' black feminist theory. Assigning her slaves texts by Audre Lorde and Patricia Hill Collins, she uses the medium of BDSM (Bondage, Dominance & Submission, Sadism & Masochism) to gain what she refers to as a kind of 'reparations' for the racist treatment of black people in America, and feels empowered in her job. 'I kind of have this weird, dual relationship with my fetishization [as a black woman] where I use it to get clients, but then I really wanna process through it with them as well,' Mistress Velvet has said (*Buzzfeed News* 2018, 2:43-3:11). Without her sexual 'allure,' such exchanges wouldn't be possible. Though Mistress Velvet is powerful inside her dungeon, unfortunately as she leaves she again becomes a stigmatized black woman and sex worker. But through her impact on her clients, Mistress Velvet turns the simulated power of a BDSM scene into actualized power, where her clients view her less as a sexual object and more as a person with a voice.

As a collective, the only real way for sex workers to empower themselves is through organizing. Call Off Your Old Tired Ethics (COYOTE), a sex worker rights advocacy group that has existed since 1973, clarifies that prostitutes are not selling their bodies but are rather being paid for their time and skills. They work to combat the close association between sex work and sex trafficking, and also argue that the criminalization of prostitutes takes away from a focus on real crime, wasting taxpayer money (Jenness 1990 p. 406). Being organized and run by sex workers themselves, organizations like COYOTE give sex workers ways to pool their power and fight to get into the public conversation surrounding their work. From 2005 to 2011, $pread magazine, 'essentially a community bulletin and lifestyle guide for sex workers in New York and beyond' (Cafolla 2015), also gave sex workers an anonymous platform to express and consume things meaningful to them in an accessible medium. The topics range from what it's like to be a person-of-color (POC) stripper to tips on marketing yourself online. Though it looked similar to the white and cisgender 'women's magazine' model at the beginning, $pread eventually broadened its sense of who sex workers are, showing people of color, men, and transgender sex workers (Aimee et al. 2015 p. 19). It made their opinions and stories known to the public, in addition to fostering a sense of community between workers that was badly needed. $pread closed its doors due to a lack of financial support and staffing, a problem sex worker advocacy has faced throughout history.

The policy-making establishment has discovered that sex workers want to collaborate, and has responded with division. Laws like SESTA/FOSTA are intended to keep sex workers from speaking to each other, and police target online ads and set sex workers up for stings (Grant 2014 p. 63). Additionally, government-regulated sex work isn't designed to be profitable or secure for workers. As Chateauvert observes, 'By design, job security for dancers and related

jobs is nil and the benefits nonexistent. The constantly replenishing supply of women applying for these 'low-skill' job keeps wages at the most minimum level, when workers are paid at all. Workers mention arbitrarily enforced rules, fines, and demerits that reduce their earnings' (2015 p. 137). Any attempts by sex workers to gain autonomy over their work are fought with backlash from supervisors, frequently in the form of losing a job. In *Strip Club: Gender, Power, and Sex Work* (2010), Kim Price-Glynn shares the following account:

> Erin, a stripper in her mid-twenties, described developing a red rash on her knees while working in one such club. The rash, she later learned, was ringworm that she and other dancers contracted from the club's carpet. Disgusted, a group of dancers got together and collectively demanded the owner clean or pull up the carpet. In response, the club asked the entire group of dancers to leave. The club's position, Erin explained, was that it could hire new strippers at a moment's notice (p. 101).

These workers are treated as disposable. As dancers often start working at a relatively young age, this could be one of their only forms of work experience, trapping them in a cycle of such poor working conditions. And management makes certain that workers don't have power.

Organization, in theory, provides opportunities for regulations on the side of the workers. Though uncommon, when places like strip clubs do organize, sex workers can voice concerns about their wages and working conditions. In 2012, strippers working for the Spearmint Rhino chain won a $13 million civil lawsuit settlement, an unprecedented amount of money at the time (Grant 2012). Sadly, these lawsuits do very little in setting any sort of precedent due to lack of public notice and the massive control companies have over strippers (unless, of course, they are allowed to set the terms for the public conversation about themselves). Moreover, as Montana dancer Bubbles Burbujas has commented, regulations put in place ostensibly to help sex workers often only makes things worse. 'Before the move to the paycheck system, dancers paid a $25 stage fee per shift, as well as tips to bouncers and the DJ, 'but we kept the rest of our dance money,' she explains. 'Now you hand over $70 of the first $100 you make, and you get a minimum wage paycheck, where you get back 30 percent or 40 percent of that'' (Grant 2012). With little support from the public, sex workers can easily be stripped of the 'benefits' of regulated sex work by profit-hungry management.

While using Zweig's model of class as defined by power, it is important to mention the way race comes into play. Racism is integrated into all aspects of American society, and sex work is no exception; in many cases, it amplifies it. Indian stripper Mona Salim notes that the intimacy and fantasies the strip club fosters create an 'anything goes' type environment (Salim 2015 p. 40). The commercialization of intimacy can make customers feel as if they are in a space where they can mold sex workers of color into extreme versions of stereotypes. These workers often find themselves playing into such stereotypes, as they need to please the customer to make a living, intensifying the day-to-day racism that they already face. Furthermore, as Mireille Miller-Young notes, 'Women of color are consistently discriminated against in the pornography industry. On average they are paid half to three-quarters of what white actresses are offered' (2015 p. 86). Sex workers of color have fewer opportunities than white workers to choose which gigs they take. If a black actress wants to be in a film, she will most likely have to play a role she's uncomfortable with. 'One of the most common roles for black and Latina [pornography] actresses has been the maid' (Miller-Young 2015 p. 86). Not only does this capitalize on racist stereotypes for profit and pleasure, but it constricts how sex workers of color are portrayed to audiences, perpetuating the fetishization of people of color in a cyclical manner.

Capitalism's power is contingent on isolation. The separation of sex workers, by government, law, and business-management, only adds to the stigma they face. American discourse around sex work needs to shift from qualifying the work as good or bad to a conversation about workplace safety and other labor concerns. Sex workers' class is complicated, but ultimately they are members of an oppressed group, not victims. Every sex worker is different, and has their own opinion about the work that they do—but the personal is not applicable to the need to create a general climate of safety and fair labor conditions for these workers. Standards should be set for sex work *as* work, not for the public.

Originally from Missoula, Montana, **Emma Bryan** is a rising sophomore pursuing a major in Psychology. After college she hopes to earn a master's in social work. She is from an upper-middle class background and is hoping to use her privileged position to help those facing more class adversity. Being an ally is what inspired Emma to pursue social work and advocate heavily for and encourage class mobility for sex workers.

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An Alien Right to Education: Challenges on the Path to Higher Education for Undocumented Immigrants in the U.S.

By Maya Khavary

Introduction

Researchers have used the theory of social capital to understand the rate of low-income students accessing higher education in the United States, which has also brought many challenges faced by college-bound undocumented students to light. Social capital can be defined as 'the framework for accomplishing a particular goal through a set of available resources based on trust and cooperation among people' (Garcia and Tierney 2011 p. 111). While social capital fails to directly provide individuals with economic capital, it can encourage the development of necessary skills and networking that lead to an increase in economic capital. Understanding the concept of social capital allows us to have a deeper understanding of undocumented students' ability to pursue their goals in the face of the unique inequalities they face.

The U.S. Census Bureau reported 2.5 million undocumented immigrants under the age of 18 living in U.S in the year 2000 (The U.S. Census Bureau Website). 40% of these immigrants simultaneously fall into the student category; every year, 6,000-8,000 of these students graduate from American high schools. Most of these students have lived in the U.S. for 5 years and hold the academic skills necessary to attend college; however, their legal status raises challenges, restricting their access to higher education. Undocumented immigrant students are a minority on American college campuses, and many colleges fail to accommodate or assist these students with specific legal, financial and academic challenges they face. In this essay, I will discuss the three categories of challenges that undocumented immigrant students face in their higher educational experience: legal, financial, and academic. By discussing these challenges and their specific roots, I hope to spread increased awareness of their struggles to inspire a change in academic policies.

Legal Challenges

Undocumented immigrant students' legal status simultaneously restricts their access to higher education and their means of basic survival. When a student is undocumented, it is difficult to gain access to healthcare, legal employment and permanent residency, let alone maintain good academic standing in colleges and universities. An undocumented immigrant is defined as 'a foreign-born person who: (a) doesn't have a legal right to be or (b) remain in the United States' (U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services Website). Undocumented students are generally foreign nationals who have entered the U.S. without inspection or with fraudulent documents, or more simply, who have entered legally as nonimmigrants but then violated the terms of their status, remaining in the U.S. without authorization. Most undocumented immigrants arrive on U.S. soil after escaping existing conflicts in their home countries. Most have left behind all of their valuable possessions and assets.

The United States Citizenship and Immigration Service (formerly known as the INS) requires these immigrants to undergo a costly and lengthy process in order to apply for permanent residency (US Citizenship and Immigration Services Website), and yet there is no indication of the approval of their cases; there is no reassurance that these students and their families will be granted legal residency regardless of their reasons behind immigrating. This makes it nearly impossible for immigrants to pursue legal residency within the United States in good faith. Extensive restrictions force immigrants to pursue a life in constant hiding, forcing them to give up their basic human right to 'pursuit of happiness.'

Undocumented immigrant students don't hold work permits, but must still find work. Being illegally employed means these students are also subject to labor exploitation while committing a crime that can result in imprisonment and deportation. The fact that their employment is considered illegal is often overlooked both by society and academic institutions. The legal status of undocumented students also disqualifies them from obtaining health insurance or simple the access to health care, both of which are often necessary to pursue a higher education.

Considering all the disadvantages, undocumented immigrants manage to survive and send their children to school. However, these students' access to higher education, specifically postsecondary education, is strongly restricted by policies and laws designed to discourage them from even thinking about school. For instance, the Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act of 1996 (IIRIRA) states:

> *'[An] alien who is not lawfully present in the United States shall not be eligible on the basis of residence within a State… for any postsecondary education benefit'* (Title 8, Chapter 14, Sec. 1623).

Although the act does not specifically prohibit undocumented immigrants' access to higher education, it eliminates financial aid for these students. In simpler words, these policies eradicate undocumented immigrant students' right to education by refusing financial assistance, with the knowledge that almost all undocumented immigrant families do not have the financial means to support and fund a college degree in U.S.

Over the years the number of undocumented immigrant students who are eligible to attend college has increased drastically. In a number of states, this has resulted in positive in-state

policy reform with regards to financial assistance. In New York, the in-state tuition policy was changed in 2012:

> *'Nonresidents of New York State and out-of-status (undocumented) students who attended a New York State high school for at least two years and graduated, or obtained a New York State GED diploma, may apply for in-state tuition if they apply to CUNY within five years of receiving their diploma'* (New York In-State Tuition Policy).

Currently 18 U.S. states have revised their policies in regard to undocumented immigrant students since the year 2000. However, this process has not been easy; there have been series of proposed legislation in order to repeal these policies. For example, a lawsuit filed in California suggests that these sorts of policies violate federal law, mainly by out-of-state residents attending public institutions (Paz Maya Olivérez 2015 p. 120).

Unfortunately, federal policies remain the same. The only recent attempt to challenge undocumented immigrant students' access to higher education at the federal level is the *D.R.E.A.M.* Act (Development, Relief, and Education for Alien Minors): proposed legislation with a multi-phased process aiming to provide undocumented students with an easier path towards higher education as well as legalization. The *D.R.E.A.M.* Act would also repeal some of the provisions of the IIRIRA that specifically prevent states from offering financial assistance to undocumented immigrant students. This bill has been sidelined by renewed debate over the Sensenbrenner Bill. Originally introduced by judiciary chairman James Sensenbrenner in 2005, this bill aims to criminalize undocumented immigrants and any person or entity that assists them. The Trump administration, unsurprisingly, has put a greater emphasis on this bill in recent years (Paz Maya Olivérez 2015 p. 120).

The U.S. government creates endless barriers to prevent undocumented students from academic achievement, which violates their human rights. It can be difficult to navigate these legalities, as being undocumented puts you in a vulnerable state, especially when your access to finances is limited. It is unjust to implement such policies when these students simply intend to practice their basic human right to education.

Financial Challenges

Federal policies like the IIRIRA of 1996 discourage states from providing financial assistance to undocumented immigrant students. Subsequently, undocumented immigrant students are not eligible for federal loans regardless of their income. It is impossible for undocumented immigrant students to able afford higher education when tuition rates are steadily increasing with not much change in income rates, especially for low-income students. Moreover, most undocumented families assume their children are simply not eligible for any financial aid. These families have been denied almost everything, from health care to driver's licenses. Since they generally lack access to information about college because of their low social capital, undocumented immigrant students might not even think about pursuing higher education.

Scholarships are another source of financial aid for many low-income students. Like state and federal loans, most of these scholarships require citizenship/residency; however, there are a select few available for undocumented immigrant students, such as The Dream U.S. Opportunity Scholarship. Unfortunately, there are so many undocumented students and too few available scholarships. This hyper-competitive situation is yet another reason for an undocumented immigrant student not to even consider college as an option. Furthermore, most

undocumented immigrant students cannot attend college even after receiving financial aid. The need to contribute to their families' income is another major barrier to college, as well as the fact that in addition to tuition they still have to pay for housing, books and transportation.

Many of the above circumstances apply to native-born low-income students as well, and they do tread a similar path. The difference is, again, legal status. U.S.-born students can legally work; they get paid minimum wage, have more available employment opportunities, and can access work-study or funded internships. Undocumented immigrant students are not eligible for work-study or internships. When they are able to find employment, undocumented students and families can expect to earn less due to increased exploitation by employers. They will make half of what low-income US citizens will make.

Academic Challenges

Undocumented immigrant students face yet another disadvantage. Like other low-income students, they have to compete with better informed and prepared students for a chance at an undergraduate degree. The inability to academically prepare for college is due to many factors, such as attending a low-performing K-12 school, being a first-generation student, and having a low family income.

Because of their generally low-income status, most undocumented immigrant children attend public schools in poor neighborhoods. The education standards at these schools are greatly affected by low budgets, lack of well-trained teachers, and overloaded class sizes. While the circumstances are the same for U.S.-born low-income students, a lack of college preparation has a drastic effect on undocumented immigrants with higher education ambitions. Almost all scholarships available to undocumented students hold a very high academic performance standard, so these students' chances of getting into college are reduced due to poor academic training. There is huge intersectionality between social class and undocumented students' scholarly performance. They work long hours prior to and post college admission, experiencing sleep deprivation and constant stress due to their financial needs. They have impossibly overbooked schedules, often juggling multiple jobs while attending school.

Being a first-generation student comes with many challenges, such as lack of access to quality mentoring, knowledge of how to approach the college application process, and familiarity with college environments. When these barriers are added to all other barriers that undocumented immigrant students face, these students usually withdraw completely from the idea of attending college—or, if they manage to make it to college, they soon drop out due to the lack of meaningful support available to them on most college campuses.

What Can Be Done

To greatly lessen the challenges faced by undocumented immigrant students striving to both access higher education and successfully attain a college degree, there should be a fundamental change at both the policy level and social level. The implementation of policies such as the *D.R.E.A.M.* Act could not only help undocumented immigrants access higher education, but could also have a positive impact on U.S. poverty rates. The United States is not the only or the first country to admit immigrants. Nor is it the only country that faces illegal immigration challenges—but it is probably the country with the most restrictive immigration policies, and displays an especially inhuman attitude towards immigrants.

Other countries, such as Germany, have realized the moral importance and economic advantages of providing education to undocumented immigrants. This has resulted in reformed policies that benefit everyone. Germany's Free Guest Students Program is an example of such a policy. Since 2015, undocumented immigrants and asylum seekers in Germany have had the opportunity to attend college under this program. An asylum seeker is permitted to take courses and attend lectures at universities while their asylum application is being processed. Once the application is completed and, under the circumstantial acceptance of legal residency, they can continue as degree-seeking students. In most countries, the asylum-seeking process can take up to 5 years; this policy enables immigrants to learn the German language more quickly, as well as preparing them for a potential degree. Courses taken as asylum-seekers provide students with a set of skills and knowledge that can affect their lives forever, even without an official degree. German Universities are both advocating for and exercising one of the basic human rights: the right to access education regardless of your legal status (The International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights, Article 13). By the time these immigrants are German citizens, they have already been equipped with language and professional skills, which enhances the German economy by reducing illiteracy and increasing the number of skilled professionals.

The Free Guest Students program would not have been possible without the efforts of ordinary people; 'College directors, professors, students and volunteers' effort led to creation of this program' (German Newspaper 2016). No policy change is possible without change at the social level. The challenges faced by undocumented immigrant students can be reduced, even eliminated, by small changes in our communities through educating school/college counselors, professors, teachers, and administrators about their needs. Trainings should be provided to enable these professionals and their skill sets, skills that are necessary to aid the success of undocumented immigrants' students. It is important that other groups of students on college campuses be educated as well in order to increase their personal understanding and combat anti-immigrant assumptions, for human fear the unknown. By increasing awareness of the struggles undocumented immigrant students face, hopefully more people will be encouraged to support policy reforms that allow these students to access college, and thrive once there.

Maya Khavary is a non-traditional student majoring in International Affairs. She grew up in Afghanistan, experiencing war, violence, conflict, discrimination and genocide. Maya is very passionate about social justice. 'I immigrated to the United States in 2016, hoping to start a new life in a country I didn't know much about,' she recalls. 'I have worked and volunteered with organizations focused on issues such as sex trafficking, war and immigration, in Afghanistan, India and the U.S.' Maya speaks five languages, and hopes to work with people from all walks of life in different parts of the world who struggle with social justice challenges.

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Smarsh, Sarah (2018) *Heartland: A Memoir of Working Hard and Being Broke in the Richest Country on Earth*, Scribner, New York, NY.

Review by Christie Launius

Having been a fan of her journalistic writing about class inequality, working-class politics, people, and culture, it was with great anticipation that I approached Sarah Smarsh's memoir *Heartland*. Researched, written and revised over the course of fifteen years (starting when she was an undergraduate student), Smarsh offers up the story of her own life, woven together with the stories of multiple generations of her working-class family in Kansas.

The broad contours of this moving and powerful memoir will be familiar to those of us in working-class studies who are ourselves from working-class backgrounds and/or have spent time reading narratives about the experience of obtaining upward class mobility via education. I will confess at the outset that I am far from a neutral reviewer; many of the details of her early life resonate deeply with mine, and her fiercely loving renderings of the people and places of her rural, working-class childhood brought a lump to my throat that persisted long after I finished the book.

Smarsh is, to use Al Lubrano's term, a class straddler, and like many who tell the story of their upward class mobility, she grapples with what that means and strives to articulate the complexity and ambiguity that having such an identity entails. She is grateful to live a life materially different than the generations of women before her, even as she is proud to and insistent upon claiming her place in that lineage. She devotes her youth to escaping poverty even as she recognizes 'a loss in success' at achieving her goal (286).

Though steeped in it as a child, Smarsh consistently and persistently rejects the bootstraps myth, both when discussing her family members and herself: 'How can you talk about the poor child without addressing the country that let her be so? It's a relatively new way of thinking for me. I was raised to put all responsibility on the individual, on the bootstraps with which she ought to pull herself up. But it's the way of things that environment changes outcomes' (3). Or as she translates into her 'first language:' 'The crop depends on the weather, dudnit? A good seed'll do'er job and sprout, but come hail 'n' yer plumb outta luck regardless' (3).

But class is not the only analytical lens that holds explanatory power in the telling of Smarsh's life story. Gender is always there, too, as can be seen clearly in many of her chapter titles: 'The body of a poor girl', 'A working-class woman;' and 'A penny in a purse,' which is a reference to her mother's pregnancy with her ('I was in a poor girl's lining like a penny in a purse—not worth much, according to the economy, but kept in production').

Most fundamentally, though less overtly in its title, her opening chapter, 'Dear August,' reveals this dual focus on class and gender as defining features of her life. On her maternal side, Smarsh comes from a long line of teen mothers, and Smarsh is determined from a young age to break that cycle. In telling the story of that quest and its eventual success, Smarsh joins a

long line of working-class young women who, when seeking upward mobility via education, see sex, marriage, and motherhood with working-class men as an impediment to their desire for a different life, a life of education and movement out of poverty.

The August of the chapter title is a name, and refers to 'a baby that I either would or wouldn't have' (1). Smarsh addresses her words to this child not only in her opening chapter, but throughout the memoir. In the closing chapter, she describes their painful parting, occasioned by her realization that 'You were the poor child I would never have—not because I would never have a child, but because I was no longer poor' (285). Throughout her childhood and early adulthood, she is guided by the presence of this unborn child, charting a course away from rural poverty by repeatedly asking and answering the question 'what would I tell my daughter to do?' By the book's end, addressing August, she reflects, 'You weren't my daughter, of course, but my highest self—less a guardian angel than my own power emanating, necessarily disembodied from a body and mind I had been told by society had little worth' (286).

Smarsh entrusts her readers with her warts-and-all family history, but perhaps in exchange for revealing so much and making herself (and her family members) so vulnerable, she provides the reader with a lot of guidance in how to think about and understand it. This guidance comes in two, related forms. First, from the beginning and throughout her memoir, Smarsh tells her family story against a broader historical and political backdrop: 'We would be able to map our lives against the destruction of the working class: the demise of the family farm, the dismantling of public health care, the defunding of public schools, wages so stagnant that full-time workers could no longer pay the bills' (39). Second, this contextual information is combined with her present-day commentary on both the past and our current societal situation. So, for example, Smarsh matter-of-factly states that 'Every adult I knew was addicted to something—mostly cigarettes or booze. Also pills, both prescribed and gotten by other means' (50). She follows that statement with an empathetic framework for understanding that addiction, as well as information about changes in the U.S. health care system and changes to the economy that have resulted in poorer health outcomes for people of her family's social class.

Put differently, Smarsh notes the deficits of her upbringing that were wrought by poverty, even as she refuses to characterize it as a deficit culture. She also balances the cataloging of those deficits with a keen appreciation for the 'riches that shaped me—the wildness of a childhood untended, freedom from expectation, a robust, learned understanding of my own capabilities' (281). I would add to that list a deeply-engrained work ethic and ingenuity in creating and producing consumer products that most Americans take for granted, food and shelter first and foremost.

Narratives like Smarsh's are sorely needed in this hyper-partisan political climate. She is not just from but is more fundamentally *of* so-called red-state flyover country even as she now is also a member of what she refers to as the 'chattering classes.' She stands as a bridge between those two worlds, fully aware of the divide between them because she has crossed it. Through her writing, both in *Heartland* and elsewhere, she strives to lessen that divide.

Reviewer Bio

Christie Launius is Associate Professor and Head of the Gender, Women, and Sexuality Studies Department at Kansas State University. With Michele Fazio and Tim Strangleman, she is co-editing the forthcoming *Routledge International Handbook of Working-Class Studies.*

Wilkerson, Jessica (2019) *To Live Here, You Have to Fight: How Women Led Appalachian Movements for Social Justice,* University of Illinois, Urbana, IL.

Review by Lane Windham

When a delegation of German labor ministers recently toured the U.S. to better understand Trump's ascendance, they asked my colleagues and me about only one book: J.D. Vance's *Hillbilly Elegy*. To these left-wing Europeans, Vance seemed to offer a clear window into the anger of Trump's white, working-class 'forgotten America.' Yet Vance gets neither the working class nor Appalachia right, as Jessica Wilkerson makes perfectly clear in *To Live Here, You Have to Fight*. Wilkerson's is a well-researched and expansive narrative about working-class women's roles in Appalachian social justice movements in the 1960s and 1970s. She especially focuses on how their caretaking roles defined and motivated their political action. She complicates popular tropes about a disaffected white, male working class, and instead spotlights 'the grave problems poor and working-class people faced in Appalachia: environmental destruction, a punitive welfare system, a lack of democratic spaces, and political elites who demanded working-class people's quiescence.' (43)

Women's stories spill forth from Wilkerson's narrative, rich with complications, aspiration and anger. We get a full introduction to Florence Reese, for example, who penned *Which Side Are You On?* on the back of a wall calendar while caretaking for seven children; her coal miner husband was out organizing a union. We learn that Reese continued her activism well beyond the mine wars of the 1930s, and wrote more ballads for antipoverty activists in the 1960s and striking miners in the 1970s.

We meet Edith Easterling, born in Poor Bottom, Kentucky, who led local fights against strip mining and for greater government benefits, and wound up red-baited and hauled before the Kentucky Un-American Activities Committee (KUAC) in 1968. Her daughter, Sue Ella, got fed up with liberal do-gooderism and instead bunked in the Appalachian Tent of Resurrection City in the Poor People's Campaign, and then formed the Appalachian Free University in 1969.

Eula Hall, the daughter of tenant farmers, worked as a domestic servant and then had the misfortune of marrying a violent alcoholic when she was only seventeen years old. Hall learned to navigate scant social services, and became active in the local Kentucky version of the War on Poverty, the Highway 979 Community Action Council. Her world expanded when she hosted a VISTA volunteer at her house while her husband was drying out in the local Veterans Administration hospital. She dipped her toe into community organizing by agitating for city water service as an alternative to contaminated well water, and helped found the Eastern Kentucky Welfare Rights Organization (EKWRO). Far from serving as an engine to the backlash against welfare, Hall led other white women like herself to join forces with the African-American-led welfare rights movement of the late 1960s. Their alliance prompted a Louisville *Courier & Journal* headline touting, 'Mountain Women Join Negro Mothers to Push for Welfare.' (111)

We follow these Appalachian women as they engaged in civil disobedience to stop strip mining in 1972, and then learned to do breast and pelvic self-exams through the Mud Creek Health Clinic in 1973. Appalachia is far from a conservative back water in Wilkerson's tale; her protagonists take a deep dive into the heart of their era's social and political fomentation.

Wilkerson illuminates contrasting versions of Southern feminism in the early 1970s, spotlighting a working-class version that was more focused on gender violence and economic hardship than on equal access to credit and salaries. The Appalachian women's feminism grows out of their understanding of their role as 'citizen caregivers' who 'infused social and political movements with those experiences of taking care of parents, husbands, children, and neighbors in the hostile environment created by coalfield capitalism.' (6) Wilkerson argues that a 'breadwinner liberalism' ultimately defined the women's rights movement, and so focused on shoe-horning women and their reproductive labor into an economy built on a male worker model. The women activists of Appalachia instead saw their roles as caretakers as valued and rewarded, alongside waged labor.

This broader vision was embraced by women who began to get hired in the coal mines, following the gains of the civil and women's rights movements. We learn that by 1980, women made up about two percent of the coal industry jobs. (191) These women organized within the Coal Employment Project and as members of the United Mine Workers to argue for protection for pregnant miners and a better family leave policy. They brought their capacity for reproductive labor along with them into the mines, and demanded a more expansive understanding of who a worker was and what she needed on the job.

Yet beyond these women coal miners, little of *To Live Here, You Have to Fight* covers the years beyond 1973. This was a pivotal year that, with the oil crisis and stagflation, marked the weakening of the New Deal order. If Wilkerson had extended more of her story later into the 1970s, she would have had to wrestle more squarely with how her Appalachian women dealt with the beginnings of a shift away from an industrial capitalism, and its ancillary that Wilkerson calls 'coalfield capitalism.' That's when the nation began barreling toward the globalized and financialized capitalism of today.   This shift barely registers in *To Live Here, You Have to Fight*.   We do learn, for instance, that activists protested when the United Mine Worker Welfare & Retirement Fund began to pull back from cradle-to-grave coverage, but we do not learn that the fund did so in the face of downsizing in coal mining and union membership.

In choosing to anchor the bulk of her story before that shift, Wilkerson takes a pass on exploring how the Appalachian women's activism and hope weathered these larger changes. Did these women fight and lose in the late 1970s and early 1980s? Did their community organizations and clinics endure the incipient neo-liberalism of the Carter years, or did Reagan do them in? Perhaps their organizations live on in some form?

Most likely, the women found themselves caught up in what Nancy Fraser has labelled 'Capitalism's Crisis of Care,' in which corporations monetize and profit from the previously unpaid labor that women performed in their caretaking roles. Fraser argues that under neoliberalism and the new two-earner family norm, capitalism commodifies social reproduction and profits from the crisis that financial capitalism creates in people's lives. There's little doubt that Wilkerson's Appalachian women, including those who performed unpaid care labor, were impacted by this shift, and that it weakened the region's social bonds.

In fact, an exploration of how Appalachian women and families fared under financial capitalism could go a long way to explaining Trump's success in the region.

The great strength of Wilkerson's story, however, is in expanding our current historical narrative about mid-twentieth century industrial capitalism by writing Appalachian women's activism into it. It especially breaks new ground in displaying how these women created a 'grassroots war on poverty.' Building on the foundation offered by Johnson's War on Poverty in the mid to late 1960s, they demanded a greater investment in their region and their families. With this book, Southern womanhood takes on a whole new layer of complexity, in a region where it has been seen as one-dimensional for far too long.

Reviewer Bio

Lane Windham is author of *Knocking on Labor's Door: Union Organizing in the 1970s and the Roots of a New Economic Divide*. She is the Associate Director of Georgetown University's Kalmanovitz Initiative for Labor and the Working Poor, and co-director of WILL Empower (Women Innovating Labor Leadership.)

Balay, Anne (2018) *Semi Queer: Inside the World of Gay, Trans, and Black Truck Drivers*, The University of North Carolina Press, Chapel Hill, NC.

Review by Sara Smith-Silverman

Sisyphus,[70] one of the narrators in Anne Balay's 2018 book, *Semi Queer: Inside the World of Gay, Trans, and Black Truck Drivers*, explains why she and other transwomen choose to work in long-haul trucking:

> I think a lot of transwomen choose this career because it's a place where we can work—we're by ourselves, no one's going to harass us while we're in the truck. When I worked in the printing plant, I was being harassed … I had my tires sliced, I had nails put under my tires, I had hate messages put up. One day I walked into work and saw a sign: 'All fags must die.' That was in my face every single day. When I'm in the truck I don't have to deal with that. The fact that people hate me 'cause I'm trans, well then they'll hate me, but say hello to my truck. (Balay 8)

This quote by Sisyphus about her experiences as a transgender truck driver encapsulates the major themes explored in *Semi Queer*, particularly the seemingly contradictory fact that transgender women have, in recent years, been increasingly attracted to the masculine career of trucking typically associated with cisgender straight white men. Balay explains that this has only been possible because, as trucking has become more exploitative since the 1980s, it has become more available to workers from marginalized backgrounds who have few other options: transgender people, particularly transwomen, intersex, gay and lesbian workers, black and immigrant workers, and Muslims and Sikhs. As her title makes clear, Balay's focus is on queer truckers, some of them black but many of them white and a handful Latinx, rather than the full range of marginalized truck drivers. In the process of learning how trucking has become much queerer than it once was, we gain an understanding of how the conditions of trucking have worsened.

Like her previous book, *Steel Closets: Voices of Gay, Lesbian, and Transgender Steelworkers,* out in 2016, Balay's research is largely based on interviews. In this case, she interviewed 66 truckers, which helps the reader gain a better sense of what it's like to be a queer truck driver. Through the use of quotes by queer truckers on almost every page, Balay allows the subjects of her study to speak for themselves, illuminating both the pain and power that comes with being a queer trucker.

Balay's *Semi Queer* is a major contribution to the fairly small field of Queer Labor Studies, particularly for its focus on the experiences of transgender workers, a necessary intervention

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[70] Balay uses pseudonyms for her interviewees throughout the book protect to protect them from unwanted, and potentially harmful, attention.

into a discipline so far largely focused on gay and lesbian workers.[71] As Balay explains, many queer truckers experience trucking as simultaneously empowering and oppressive. They might choose trucking because they can work in isolation, feeling mostly free of constant harassment by co-workers, bosses, and customers. Alone in their trucks, transwomen and men feel empowered to simply be themselves and still make a living. Like other truckers, they also experience the power of driving, single-handedly controlling a large machine as they sit above traffic: as Sisyphus emphasizes, people can hate her because she's trans, 'but say hello to my truck.' Understanding the empowerment felt by trans truckers goes a long way in explaining how it is that trucking has become a queerer kind of labor in recent years, as more trans workers have chosen to make their living in long-haul truck driving.

But because trucking is still dominated by cisgender straight white men who tend to be socially conservative, this isolation can cut queer truckers off from a sense of community with their co-workers. At truck stops many queer drivers stay in their trucks for fear of being insulted, or fear of being propositioned for sex, sexually assaulted, or subject to other forms of violence. Patrick, a black gay man, for instance, told Balay: 'Everybody just kind of assumed that I would blow them—like they were doing me a favor' (126). Gwyneth, a black woman, described how she was once mistaken for a prostitute at a truck stop (66). Liam, a transman—one of the few Balay interviewed—related that he felt safer than trans women truckers because he had an easier time being stealth: 'Oh man, there is no way I'm going to be an out-and-proud trans person out here … I just feel safe because nobody knows' (16). And Hanna, a white transwoman, told Balay, 'I first knew other truckers read me as female when I got propositioned and then harassed. It's been an everyday part of my job since' (67). Trans truckers also told Balay about frequently being mis-gendered and the difficulty of accessing bathrooms that align with their gender identity.

Though Balay's focus is on queer truckers, in order to show why trucking companies were willing to hire workers from marginalized identities, *Semi Queer* also exposes the rapidly deteriorating conditions of trucking, what one scholar refers to as 'sweatshops on wheels.'[72] Forty years ago, when trucking was more highly unionized and less regulated, truckers were better off. But now, with only 8% of trucking unionized, truckers work long work days (11-14 hours) for little pay ($30-$40,000 per year), and are overburdened by regulations that treat them like small children. As one trucker, Bridget, complained, 'I find it the most restrictive, the most unfree thing I have ever done' (5).

Balay's discussion of the ways technology is used to control truck drivers' every movement is particularly enlightening. Electronic logging devices, for instance, transmit data about when trucks are moving, and speed limiters prevent trucks from going over a certain speed. Technology is being used, argues Balay, not for the purpose of ensuring safety on the road or protecting workers' rights, but rather to maximize corporate profits. Balay convincingly argues that the decline in truckers' working conditions stems from over-regulation of individual truckers; however, her argument would have been strengthened by a more in-depth discussion

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[71] For further reading on Queer Labor Studies, see, for example, Anne Balay, *Steel Closets: Voices of Gay, Lesbian, and Transgender Steelworkers* (The University of North Carolina Press, 2014); Allan Bérubé, *My Desire for History: Essays in Gay, Community, and Labor History* (The University of North Carolina Press, 2011); Miriam Frank, *Out in the Union: A Labor History of Queer America* (Temple University Press, 2014); and Phil Tiemeyer, *Plane Queer: Labor, Sexuality, and AIDS in the History of Male Flight Attendants* (University of California Press, 2013). Also look for Margot Canaday's forthcoming book project, *Queer Career: Precarious Labor, Law, and Sexuality in Postwar America.*

[72] See Michael H. Belzer, *Sweatshops on Wheels: Winners and Losers in Trucking Deregulation* (Oxford University Press, 2002).

of the role of unions in the industry, particularly the de-unionization of trucking starting in the late 1970s. This would have helped to clarify the complex set of factors that have led to the deterioration of trucking conditions, and the subsequent opening up of trucking to transgender, queer and other marginalized workers.

Throughout the book, Balay's careful treatment of race and racism in trucking is noteworthy. In her thought-provoking chapter analyzing the racist attitudes of mostly white—but also some who are black—trans and other queer truck drivers, Balay aims to reveal where these attitudes come from 'and what they mean to the people who profess them' (60), arguing that racism is fundamentally about truckers' anxieties about gender and sexuality. Queer white truckers, and some black queer truckers, reveal their racial resentments when they blame Muslim, Sikh, and Mexican immigrants for undercutting their wages by accepting low pay and by making trucking less safe than it supposedly once was. One white queer trucker, for example, complained that when a truck was pulled over on a shoulder—which was assumed to be unnecessarily dangerous—it was likely 'a hadji doing required prayer,' a racist reference to Muslims (72). Interestingly, contends Balay, queer truckers make arguments about the amplified presence of Muslim, Sikh, and Mexican truckers disrupting normative gender and sexual relations that are similar to those of a socially conservative straight cisgender white male trucker. For example, Maci says that immigrants started 'undercutting us' and now she and other truckers like her can't afford to maintain their own homes and are forced to move back in with their families. These are fairly familiar ideas driving the racial resentments of downwardly mobile working-class people; what's unique to Balay's argument is, as she writes, 'the extra layers of visibility and vulnerability' experienced by 'gay, trans, and black truckers' that add to their frustrations and, for some, bolster their racial resentments (83).

However, there is some room for improvement in Balay's treatment of race. The title of the book indicates Balay's intention to focus on the experiences of black truck drivers, but this aspect of her study is less developed. The revealing handful of anecdotes about anti-black racism, such as mentions of racist hiring and firing practices, and the ways in which black truckers feel unsafe among white truckers, feel too infrequent. Additionally, she mentions that there are increasing numbers of Somali immigrant drivers, as well as Middle-Eastern and South Asian truckers, but she didn't interview them. Balay explains their absences in two ways. First, none of the Somali drivers she talked to identified as queer, and thus were not a part of her study. And, second, she didn't have the cultural capital necessary as a queer white woman to start conversations with Sikh and Muslim truckers. I couldn't help but wonder, though, if Balay had looked a little harder, or asked for help from somebody who was Sikh or Muslim, if she would have been able to write a book more inclusive of this rapidly expanding population of truckers.

Overall, Anne Balay's *Semi Queer* is not only a much-needed contribution to Queer Labor Studies, but also a compellingly written book worth reading for anyone with an interest in working-class studies. It tracks shifting labor conditions in an important sector of the economy, as they deteriorate and attract workers from marginalized backgrounds. The study is at its strongest in Balay's discussion of trans truckers; her research clearly demonstrates that what defines an occupation as queer (or queer-ish) is evolving as more scholars explore the world of queer labor.

Reviewer Bio

Sara Smith-Silverman is an Assistant Professor of History at American River College. Her scholarship focuses on social movement and labor history of the U.S., with a particular emphasis on queer labor history.

Strangleman, Tim (2019) *Voices of Guinness: An Oral History of the Park Royal Brewery*, Oxford University Press, New York, NY.

Review by Steven High

> *'At a time of growing class polarization, Voices of Guinness demands our attention. Tim Strangleman invites us into the working lives and shopfloor memories of former industrial workers, confirming his place as a leading light in the study of work and its loss. This is oral history at its very best!'*   *- Steven High, endorsement for Voices of Guinness*

I was happy to provide an endorsement of *Voices of Guinness*, when invited to by the publisher, as I've been an admirer of Tim Strangleman's scholarship ever since I read his 2004 book, *Work Identity at the End of the Line? Privatization and Culture Change in the UK Rail Industry*. That first book was an unusually sensitive examination of workplace culture, management and the social cost of privatization, as revealed by his interviews with railway workers. It was a brilliant book, beautifully grounded in the working lives of his narrators, but I was also impressed by the fact that Strangleman worked for a time for London Transport and knew this work culture first-hand. Some of the best scholarship, in my opinion, comes from researchers with one foot in the life-worlds that they are studying. Tim Strangleman's many articles on work sociology and deindustrialization have been required reading for my students ever since. *Voices of Guinness* will now be on that list.

Throughout his university career, Strangleman's major preoccupation has been workplace culture and the changes brought about by neo-liberalism. He is interested in what is lost but also in the persistence of occupational and industrial identities. Nobody does workplace culture better. And *Voices of Guinness* is a case in point, offering us a sustained look at a single workplace over its entire 70-year lifespan. Strangleman takes the iconic Guinness brand and invites readers into the lives of those who brewed it at the company's massive Royal Park (London) facility.

Published as part of Oxford's prestigious Oral History Series, *Voices of Guinness* is, geographically speaking, a tightly focused study, but the temporal reach allows us to consider change over the longue-durée. As Strangleman writes, he is 'fascinated by the idea of the sedimentation of value in the past, in what is often hard, sometimes dangerous, often boring work.' We hear about the brewery's construction in the 1930s, the first brew (which loomed large in local lore), the early paternalism of management and its postwar compromise with unions during the 'long boom' – a period Jefferson Cowie calls the 'great exception' in the US context. We then hear about the years of insecurity and the slash & burn tactics of a new generation of managers, which culminated in Royal Park's 2005 closure. The last two chapters record the process of 'disembedding, how a workplace culture is disrupted and uprooted.' Strangleman rightly sees in Park Royal a microcosm for the history of work in the 20th century.

The book's journey originates in 2004 when Strangleman got permission to conduct interviews with workers *on site* in the months before Royal Park closed. Most companies are allergic to researchers at the best of times, but particularly so around plant closures. There is no public relations upside to the story. I would therefore love to hear what Strangleman said to the company that convinced them that this was a good idea.

Strangleman also convinced them to let him bring photographer David McCairley to 'capture visually the spirit of the people.' Interestingly, McCairley found it next to impossible to capture the 'spirit' of the worker as the plant was nearly deserted in those final months and those still at work were mainly machine operators. The photos included are therefore more static than the work photography we are used to seeing of an earlier era. This, too, is part of the story that the book tells.

Not surprisingly, given the timing, the interviews capture the heightened anxiety and uncertainty of the moment of rupture. There is an 'overwhelming sense of fatalism and acceptance about the closure,' but very little anger. Where was the fighting spirit? I wanted to know more. In my own interviews for *One Job Town* with displaced industrial workers in Northern Ontario, my home region, conducted in the moment of plant closure, there was raw anger and a pervasive sense of betrayal. Why the different political reactions? What explains the 'passive acceptance' of job loss at Royal Park?

Perhaps it is the oral historian in me, but I also wanted to hear a bit more about the interview context itself and how these conversations unfolded. I suspect that a more explicit methodological discussion was sacrificed by the publisher in order to ensure the book reached a wide public audience. The book is engagingly written, with short crisp chapters.

Another choice that Tim Strangleman makes is to singularly focus on workers and their bosses. We therefore hear nothing about workers' lives outside of the plant or about their families. His core interest is workplace culture and everything else falls decidedly outside the frame. I understand the choice but wonder about the ways that these two halves of workers' lives influenced each other. The exclusive focus on male workers is less understandable. There were certainly women working inside the plant, if only in the plant's offices. I also expected to hear more about the lived experience of trade unionism, but workers facing job loss were probably disinclined to talk union. This was certainly the case in my own study. Instead, Strangleman speaks of a tacit moral economy – a set of local norms and customs – that once prevailed on the shop floor forged in the face-to-face relationships between management and workers.

At various points in the book, Tim Strangleman asks the reader 'what of the charge of nostalgia?' You might say that 'smokestack nostalgia' has haunted deindustrialization studies since Jefferson Cowie and Joseph Heathcott coined the term in *Beyond the Ruins* in 2003. Here, Strangleman returns to it repeatedly. On page 80, for example, he writes: 'Are the workers interviewed here, and myself in recording them, complicit in a 'retrospective idealization' of the past, the 'heyday' of industrial work? Were we jointly engaging in bouts of 'smokestack nostalgia,' a romanticized, rose-tinted remembering and recording?' Then, on page 127, he asks 'So is this simple nostalgia? Are these interviews an uncritical reflection on times past, a celebration of 'back in the day', of warmly remembered youth?' He says no, as would I. He notes that interviews were highly reflexive spaces where workers meditated on change in the past and the present. Indeed, 'They were mulling over profound questions about the nature of work and the quality of it.' I wonder, though, why we feel we have to justify listening to workers' voices?

These points of criticism are only small quibbles next to what is achieved, as the book is all that I said it is in my opening endorsement. *Voices of Guinness* represents a major contribution to working-class studies and to the study of deindustrialization. Its release comes just in time for the Working-Class Studies Association conference in the UK, which will be held at Tim Strangleman's university. I expect Guinness will be served.

Reviewer Bio

Steven High is a professor of history at Concordia University's Centre for Oral History and Digital Storytelling. He is the author of many books and articles on deindustrialization including *Industrial Sunset* (2003), *Corporate Wasteland* (2007), *The Deindustrialized World* (2017, with Lachlan MacKinnon and Andrew Perchard), and *One Job Town* (2018).

Loomis, Erik (2018) *A History of America in Ten Strikes*, The New Press, New York, NY.

Review by Gary Jones

In this ambitious book Erik Loomis aims to rewrite American history by putting class struggle at the center of the nation's story. The result is an accessible, lively, and incisive history of America based on recent scholarship that will be of great interest to those engaged in the inter-disciplinary field of working-class studies.

Loomis is an associate professor of history at the University of Rhode Island and the author of *Out of Sight: The Long and Disturbing Story of Corporations Outsourcing Catastrophe* (2015), and *Empire of Timber: Labor Unions and the Pacific Northwest Forests* (2015). His work has frequently appeared in print media such as the *New York Times, Washington Post*, *Dissent,* and *The New Republic*; he also blogs at *Lawyers, Guns, and Money* and is active on Twitter.

His latest book, as the title suggests, is a history of America in ten strikes and a concise 229 pages of text: Lowell Mill Girls and the Development of American Capitalism; Slaves on Strike; The Eight-Hour Day Strikes; The Anthracite Strike and the Progressive State; The Bread and Roses Strike; The Flint Sit-Down Strike and the New Deal; The Oakland General Strike and the Cold War; Lordstown Workers in a Rebellious Age; Air Traffic Controllers and the New Assault on Unions; and Justice for Janitors and Immigrant Unionism. Each chapter centers on one strike and – as the chapter titles almost all imply – places the strike in the context of the broader issues affecting Americans at that time. Additionally, the book comes with 'Notes', an appendix, '150 Major Events in U.S. Labor History,' and an index.

Overall, Loomis persuasively argues that as the U.S. has been a capitalist democracy since the early 1800s, the best weapons the working class possesses are the strike and the ballot. Accordingly, when strikers demonstrate solidarity and workers elect friendly politicians to office, they have often experienced victories and progress that extends beyond the terms and conditions of work toward greater freedom, equality, justice, and democracy. However, when strikers demonstrate a lack of solidarity and workers fail to elect friendly politicians to office they have often experienced defeat and reaction. Indeed, Loomis views the current era as so reactionary that he terms it a 'New Gilded Age' during which, not coincidentally, the number of strikes has declined to historically low levels and the number of unfriendly politicians elected to office has risen to historically high levels.

In response to the New Gilded Age, Loomis argues that workers – among whom he includes himself - should 'combine organizing and solidarity with electing politicians who will fight for us instead of employers.' 'We cannot rely on others to fight for us,' he continues, 'We have to do it for ourselves in the streets and in our workplaces, at the ballot box and in our homes. The strike is the best weapon we have as everyday people to win our rights.' (10) Only through 'our combined struggle to demand the fruits of our labor can we regain our lost freedoms and expand those freedoms into a better life for all Americans.' His hope is that his book 'helps us understand the paths taken and the paths ahead.' (227)

Loomis's book will certainly help us – readers – to do so. Nevertheless, readers will find much to debate about the book. Some will debate his selection of certain strikes such as Du Bois's

'general strike' by slaves during the Civil War or the Lordstown Auto Strike of 1972. No doubt others will debate Loomis's arguments about racism and white workers or whether or not the working class should work within the existing two-party system or promote a third party. Valid though such debates are, hopefully they will not prevent recognition of Loomis's audacious achievement; namely, that he has published a compelling book that rewrites American history by placing class struggle, in the form of strikes, at the center, rather than the margins, of America's past, present, and quite possibly, future too.

Intriguingly, although perhaps not altogether surprisingly, since *A History of America in Ten Strikes* went to press in early 2018 there has been a significant increase in the number of strikes in both the private and public sectors of the economy in both red and blue states across the country. Whether such recent increases signal the 'revival' or 'return' of the strike is uncertain, but as the late Joe Strummer once wrote, 'the future is unwritten.'

Reviewer Bio

Gary Jones is Associate Professor of History at American International College, Springfield, Massachusetts. Most recently he participated in 'Conflict in the Coalfields: A Roundtable on Strikes and Mine Wars in Early 20th Century Pennsylvania and West Virginia,' *38th Annual North American Labor History Conference*, October 20-22, 2016, Wayne State University, Detroit, MI.

Martin, Christopher R. (2019) *No Longer Newsworthy: How the Mainstream Media Abandoned the Working Class*, Cornell UP, Ithaca, NY.

Review by Timothy Francisco

The old journalism adage, 'Follow the Money,' is the organizing principle for Christopher R. Martin's study of the decades-long media abandonment of working-class readers in favor of upscale consumers, as the book deftly maps not only the effects of this shift on the shaping of perceptions of labor and class, but on the fracturing of the American public along lines of class, race, and political affiliation.

The first half of Martin's book chronicles primarily print journalism's movement toward a business model that increasingly targeted wealthier demographics for greater advertiser returns. Drawing from marketing materials aimed at media advertisers, Martin provides the reader convincing evidence of the industry's amplified emphasis on its role as a revenue generator for business. From, as early as the 1950s, but most plainly from the late 1960s onward, these marketing materials appealed to corporate clients envisioning a consumerist class to be coveted and courted for its disposable income. As newspapers no longer strived to appeal to mass audiences, content increasingly came to reflect the interests, tastes, desires and aspirations of an upscale readership, not only leaving behind working-class readers, but ultimately framing the perception of the working class in national consciousness. Tracing coverage of worker strikes during this shift, Martin shows how striking workers became increasingly framed as burdens to upwardly mobile consumers.

For example, in studying coverage of transit strikes beginning with a 1952 bus strike in Cleveland, Martin notes a startling difference from the coverage to which we've grown accustomed (at least until very recently) in that the news story focuses on the details of the grievances of the striking workers, and the union's role in trying to address these grievances—rather than the strike's inconvenience for consumers. It's an important difference and Martin makes good uses of it as a through line for his subsequent chapters that show the ways in which the aforementioned shift away from a mass and working-class readership toward an upscale clientele not only contributes to the fracturing of the public but also to a view of workers as objects rather than subjects. Martin's argument is convincing and his analysis of both advertiser pitch packets and news 'frames' compelling.

Progressing through this analysis of the abandonment of the working class in news narratives, Martin reads the disappearance of the labor beat as an alignment of the content of the news with the preferences and habits of upscale readers and corporate and business interests. While others have documented the disappearance of the labor beat in mainstream media in favor of the business beat, Martin adds nuance to this argument by specifically examining the ubiquity of 'workplace' and 'personal finance' reporting which provides readers, or news 'consumers,' with narratives of individuals navigating the workplace (a reader-friendly substitution for corporation, according to Martin) to get ahead, rather than stories of classes of workers with

shared economic futures. Similarly, personal finance reporting assumes as its centric norm individual responsibility in managing one's current and future financial health, thereby privileging an investor/consumer class and downplaying if not ignoring pensions, social safety nets, and bargained benefits of a collective, unionized, working class.

Laying this important groundwork allows Martin to buttress the larger claims of the book, one of these being that the alignment of media with corporate interests contributed to the splintering of working-class politics. He finds that, at the same time mainstream media embraced an upscale demographic, conservatives worked to establish media channels to convey messaging aligned with conservative politics and economic policies, perhaps most visibly with Rupert Murdoch's purchase of *The New York Post* in 1976 and Pat Robertson's Christian Broadcasting Network (CBN) in 1977. As mainstream media followed the money away from the working class, populist and right-wing media began siphoning it away, not by actually championing its economic interests, but by pitting the working class against an out of touch elite on cultural issues, and fostering the narrative of abandonment that is a staple of the multiple conservative news outlets existing today.

The Trump presidency offers the most glaring example of this thesis, and Martin does attend to Trump throughout, but as importantly, he establishes a progressive conflation of the language of the 'workplace' with the language of political campaigns from the same time frame (1970s-present), drawing on Louis Althusser's theories of interpellation and 'hailing' to chart how both the news and presidential campaigns create subject and object relationships. This is a fascinating portion of the book, as Martin argues that citizens become progressively 'hailed' as passive objects of the economy, rather than participating subjects. Central to this transformation is the transformation of the 'corporation' in news and political discourse into first the 'workplace' and then into 'job creators' while the same discourses separate workers from 'labor' or the working class, into 'working families' and 'families,' thereby perpetuating individualism over collectivism. Opposing 'job creators' are 'job killers': namely, environmental and workplace regulations, unions, and of course Democrats and Progressives.

In concluding, Martin suggests that media can better serve readers and our democracy by reconsidering the mass audience appeal. This, is, of course, a difficult proposition in an age of tribalism and 'niche' and custom markets, and Martin knows this, citing Michael Massing's recommendation of establishing more beats covering more 'communities' under a broader vision of labor. And, while Martin does not attend to this in his fine book, I'd argue that we should also consider the demographics of the journalism profession. Media careers still very often require one or more low-paying or unpaid internships as a prerequisite for entry into the profession. This places a powerful class-based barrier in front of low-income, working-class, and non-traditional students who often lack the means—or the mobility— to work for low to no pay in major media markets. Further, as pay has continued to decline in the industry, and the work has become scarcer and more precarious, working-class students are often drawn to 'safer' career choices. As media remains predominately upper-middle class, and increasingly corporate and consolidated, unintended class blindness can proliferate as journalists themselves are very often steeped in the individualist corporate ethos. And, while the Trump ascendency has sparked a 'discovery' of the working class by mainstream media, one ironically sparked by a privileged millionaire, this working class is still too often framed as white, male, industrial, and passively victimized, when what is needed are more nuanced portrayals that image the diversity, complexities, expertise and agency of workers. Perhaps the 'solutions journalism' model offers one possibility in this respect.

In sum, Christopher Martin's *No Longer Newsworthy* is a smart, much-needed discussion of parallel forces that have led to the difficult class politics of today. His combination of quantitative and qualitative analyses mesh together extremely well, and the book reveals the ways in which the business practices of mainstream media have historically been internalized in reportage and disseminated as 'truths' in the public sphere. Understanding this connection is invaluable in any attempt to reconstitute a working-class politics of equity and inclusion.

Reviewer Bio

Timothy Francisco is a former journalist, and Director of The Center for Working Class Studies at Youngstown State University. His latest work is a co-edited (with Sharon O'Dair) volume, *Shakespeare and the 99%: Literary Studies, The Profession, and The Production of Inequity* (Palgrave 2019).

Gaffney, Karen (2018). *Dismantling the Racism Machine: A Manual and Toolbox*, Routledge, New York, NY.

Review by Michele Fazio

'Engaging in racial justice is important and challenging,' cautions Karen Gaffney in the opening pages of her new book, *Dismantling the Racism Machine: A Manual and Toolbox.* Given the rise of white nationalism in contemporary American society and the backlash against the Black Lives Matter movement, these words couldn't be truer and more timely. Taking action against systemic racism, individually and/or within a community, is hard work and not without risk. Gaffney's introduction, aptly titled 'Read This First,' outlines the key concepts that reinforce oppression and why we need to understand the history of its power as it impacts nearly every facet of our lives. To frame her discussion, Gaffney draws upon the metaphor of the 'Racism Machine'—which she describes as being 'very complex, with wheels, cogs, chains, and pulleys connecting systems of education, media, law, criminal justice, housing, finance, healthcare, politics, pop culture, and more' (7)—to provide a set of instructions guiding readers to understand the construction of race as an ideological category that divides and conquers the nation culturally, socially, economically, and politically.

Gaffney, a community college English professor and a long-time anti-racist activist, manages the website *Divided No Longer*, which documents her journey from the classroom into the community. In providing an historical overview of the invention of whiteness and its ideological power from the 1700s to the present, the book's five chapters, what Gaffney refers to as 'steps,' lay the groundwork to unpack fundamental terminology such as 'internalized oppression,' 'intersectionality,' 'implicit bias,' 'heteronormativity,' 'social construct,' and 'racial hierarchy' as it relates to the subject of white supremacy. One such discussion, focusing on the use of the word 'Caucasian'—a scientific term that imposes racial hierarchy—is particularly illuminating given the word's continued use in the present, especially by younger people. Only by questioning the historical origins of racial categories and how they remain 'embedded in our institutions and structures of power' (13) can we, as Gaffney argues in Step 1, recognize how individuals have been taught to view race as biological and start to 'chip away at the false ideology' that separates rather than unites.

The long-standing impact of the Racism Machine is richly detailed in each of the book's sections, which contain discussion and reflection questions as well as substantial lists of recommended sources to foster dialogue and begin the process of interrogating the origins of one's own viewpoints. Drawing upon the work of Kimberlé Crenshaw, David Roediger, and other well-known scholars, Gaffney revisits the myths created by colonial elites as part of Step 2 to recognize the relationship between race and labor. Step 3 illustrates further how the Racism Machine became 'a source of economic power' (79) through slavery, strengthening white solidarity despite class differences. Her discussion of political history and legal policy throughout the book is thoughtful and clear, inviting readers to bridge the past with the present as she does in Step 4, where she outlines how the victories of the Civil Rights Movement did not eradicate racial inequality altogether. Gaffney then tackles the stereotypes of Asian Americans as the 'model minority' and of Black people as criminals and 'welfare queens'— notions that still resonate in contemporary society today.

While many struggle over what can be done to eliminate racial inequality, Gaffney offers encouraging and pertinent advice. Step 5, the book's final section, is a call to action—an itemized list of concrete suggestions to enact resistance and effect change. Overall, the actions described invite rather than overwhelm. Some are easier to begin with, like starting a small reading group or participating in social justice theatre; others are more wide-ranging and demanding in scope, such as supporting indigenous activism and ending mass incarceration. But Gaffney's point is clear: we—despite ethnic, racial, and class differences—all can *and* should take part in dismantling the racism machine. As she reminds us, 'The work is never over' (190).

Dismantling the Racism Machine: A Manual and Toolbox is a meticulously-researched study of the history of American racism that encourages activists, K-12 teachers, college professors, community center leaders, families, and individuals alike to work towards ending systemic racism. Practitioners in the field of working-class studies whose work explores race and class will find this book indispensable. As the gap between the haves and the have nots continues to widen, we must recognize the relationship among communities of color, low wages, and inequity. It's time to implement Gaffney's suggestions to make a real change in achieving economic and social justice for all.

Reviewer Bio

Michele Fazio is Associate Professor of English and Coordinator of Gender Studies at the University of North Carolina at Pembroke where she teaches courses on American literature, contemporary U.S. ethnic literature, and working-class studies. She is co-producer of the award-winning film, *Voices of the Lumbee*, former president of the WCSA, and co-editor of the forthcoming *Routledge International Handbook of Working-Class Studies.* Her current research project explores the intersection of gender and ethnicity in the cultural legacy of Sacco and Vanzetti.

Italian-American History Exhibit Concerns Intersections of Class and Ethnicity

Review by Marc Di Paolo

In an effort to remind contemporary Italians – and those outside of the community – of the ethnic community's historic ties to labor activism and progressive politics, Dr. Michele Fazio has assembled and annotated an exhibit of official government propaganda photographs designed to present a sanitized, 'patriotic' portrait of her own, *actually-quite-radical* family.

The exhibit, 'A Neglected Legacy: Reclaiming a Radical Past,' is on display in the American Labor Museum/Botto House National Landmark, in Haledon, New Jersey, from May 1st through August 24th, 2019. It will then open at the Lawrence Heritage State Park & Visitor Center, Lawrence, MA from Oct. 1 - Oct. 31, 2019 to celebrate Italian American History month. A public lecture is scheduled for Oct. 6.

'A Neglected Legacy: Reclaiming a Radical Past' features photographs from 1943 that tell the story of the integration of first-generation Italian immigrants into becoming fully-fledged Americans. The exhibit also tells the hidden history of two brothers, Raimondo and Vincenzo Fazio, who were engaged in the Italian American Left's fight for social justice during the early 20th century U.S. labor movement. According to Michele Fazio, 'This family story challenges the dominant narratives that have come to define U.S. history and encourages a reconsideration of the past, calling into question not only how we understand immigration and activism today but, ultimately what is both gained and lost in the process of becoming American.'

Taken in January 1943, this photograph, one of thousands produced by the Farm Security Administration and the Office of War Information for publication in various media outlets nationwide and overseas to portray "real" Americans and their everyday lives, features members of the Fazio family eating dinner. A recreation of this photograph serves as the exhibit's focal point and is accompanied by other images from the Library of Congress' FSA-OWI digital collection.

Fazio unveiled the exhibit at the American Labor Museum as a part of its annual May Day Festival. During the exhibit-opening

presentation, Fazio revealed connections between her family history and archival records leading up to the Triangle Shirtwaist Factory Fire and the Lawrence Strike of 1912. One attendee remarked upon their own families' legacy of workers' rights activism, while another expressed regret over not recording their family history before elders had passed.

Fazio, Associate Professor of English and Coordinator of Gender Studies Minor at the University of North Carolina at Pembroke and former president of the Working-Class Studies Association, created the exhibit to ask the critical question: What is the price of enculturation? As Jennifer Guglielmo and Thomas A. Guglielmo have written[73], the Italian-American community writ large has sacrificed much of its historic solidarity with marginalized groups – both working-class and immigrant communities – in its pursuit of middle-class respectability and a claim to American 'whiteness.' To help facilitate this transformation, and move from the political left to the right, contemporary Italian-Americans have arguably embraced selective amnesia about the history of their own community in the United States. Fazio hopes that this slice of her personal history, placed within a broader social and political context and explicated in this exhibit, will help those who view it to consider the nature of this transformation and contemplate its ramifications.

'A Neglected Legacy' was previously on display at the Old Colony History Museum in Taunton, MA, from July 2018 through March 2019.

Reviewer Bio

Marc Di Paolo is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Language & Literature at Southwestern Oklahoma State University. He is the author of *War, Politics and Superheroes: Ethics and Propaganda in Comics and Film*, McFarland & Company, 2011, *Fire and Snow: Climate Fiction from the Inklings to Game of Thrones*, State University of New York Press, 2018 and the editor of *Working-Class Comic Book Heroes: Class Conflict and Populist Politics in Comics*, University Press of Mississippi, 2018

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[73] See their chapters in Guglielmo, J., Salerno, S. 2012, (eds), *Are Italians White?: How Race is Made in America*, Routledge, New York.

O'Neill, Deirdre (2018) *Film as a Radical Pedagogical Tool*, Routledge, New York, NY.

Review by Sarah Attfield

Deirdre O'Neill's book adopts a Marxist approach to research based on a series of practice-led filmmaking workshops in UK prisons run by O'Neill called *Inside Film*. O'Neill outlines her interest in 'collective filmmaking practice' (1) and attempt to answer 'questions of subjectivity and representation as they relate to the issue of (working) class in theory and practice' (1). This theory practice nexus is an important aspect for O'Neill as she introduces students to radical film theory but uses a working-class perspective garnered from her own working-class background and experience.

The book is structured around seven chapters, which present theoretical aspects of filmmaking with examples from O'Neill's practice and the workshops. She argues that film can be a form of 'critical pedagogy' (5) and the films she introduces to workshop participants and the filmmaking practice they learn equips them with tools to counter bad representations of working-class people and to articulate a working-class politics.

Marxist writers such as Gramsci are utilised in making the argument which includes criticism of capitalist structures, neoliberalism, and the ways in which the media and educational institutions operate to reinforce and reproduce the class system. Ultimately, O'Neill aims to develop 'a theoretical and practical, politically committed radical pedagogy of film in the service of the working classes' (29) and she lists seven ways that film can operate as a radical pedagogical tool. The list includes a call for film and its context of production to be analysed dialectically 'through the lens of the wider social and political spectrum of capitalist relations particularly as they relate to class' (33).

While generally quite theory heavy, the book does also contain some descriptions of the films made by students taking part in the *Inside Film* program, and demonstrates that the students have been influenced by film concepts and movements such as Third Cinema, and Imperfect Cinema[74] (introduced to them as part of the workshop program). O'Neill argues that the students become 'organic intellectuals' (90) as a result of their taking up critical positions in relation to class and capitalism through film practice.

The book's central argument, that film can be a radical pedagogical tool, is sound and is presented clearly and the questions that O'Neill raises about representation and the value of self-representation are important. O'Neill also provides historical context of radical filmmaking practice which helps to situate the work she does both in terms of analysis and her

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[74] Third Cinema is a term coined in the 1960s by Argentine filmmakers Fernando Solanas and Octavio Getino to relate to anti-colonial cinema that sits outside of Hollywood and European auteur cinema. Imperfect cinema relates to concepts of film articulated by Cuban filmmaker Julio García Espinosa in the 1960s which is focused on struggle and hardship of ordinary people.

own filmmaking practice (the final chapter of the book describes an *Inside Film* project that was centred on a foodbank in South London).

I would have liked more though on the films made by the students in the prison system – more on their experience of the project and more detail of the content and production process of their films. Their voices are somewhat missing from the book. However, overall, this is a well-written analysis that would be very useful for film scholars and film studies educators interested in the radical pedagogical potential of film.

Reviewer Bio

Sarah Attfield is a lecture in communication in the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences at the University of Technology Sydney, Australia. She is currently working on a book that examines the representation of the global working class in contemporary cinema. She is the co-editor of the *Journal of Working-Class Studie*s.