

# Labour market dynamics

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## Theoretical rationale

- Garnham 2005:
  - Culture is ideological
  - It is mediated through the ways in which the intentions of producers, and the desires and needs of consumers, are moulded by the wider capitalist social formation
  - Intentions of producers and desires and needs of consumers are determined at a deeper human level and move to much longer historical rhythms than can be captured by the capitalist mode of production
  - This **requires a detailed analysis of the production process and a focus on cultural producers as a status or class group, on the labour process, and on the relationship between producers and consumers**

## Precarious media work

- Parameters and requirements
  - See below
- Secure/insecure careers
  - Roei Davidson and Oren Meyers (2016)
    - Career pluralism
      - May be more socially consequential (beneficial) than career stability
        - Shape individual working lives but also range and diversity of media practices
        - Encourage wider range/types of content
        - Wider demographics involved in content production
        - More opportunities
        - E.g. May shift away from entrenched news values
      - Fluidity
        - ◆ Career path not a one-way track
    - Conceptualise journalistic careers as occupational paths or trajectories that may combine different types of employment practices, resources and identities across any individual working life
    - Five types of journalism careers:
      - Professional
        - ◆ In bureaucratic
      - Bureaucratic
        - ◆ Only exist in companies with large newsrooms and public service news
        - ◆ Provide institutional backing, resources
          - ◇ E.g. Defamation protection
        - ◆ Associated with hierarchical decision making, managerialism and conformity
      - Entrepreneurial
        - ◆ Professionalism can develop here
          - ◇ Self-employment
          - ◇ Career portfolios
      - Unwillingly entrepreneurial
        - ◆ Always job-hunting
        - ◆ Common with older-workers
          - ◇ Need to constantly upskill
          - ◇ Viewed as de-valuing the core skills of journalism
      - Unemployed
        - ◆ Those with full-time work have to engage with this part of the market
        - ◆ E.g. Citizen journalists, social media content co-creators

- Deuze 2014
  - People engage with media in an increasingly immersive, always-on, almost instantaneous and interconnected ways
  - Professionals depend on delivering content and experiences are at a loss
    - Business models
    - Effectively regulatory practices
      - E.g. Re copyrights and universal access provisions
    - Need entrepreneurial working conditions that would support and sustain the creative process needed to meet the demands of a global market saturated with media
  - "Environment tends to consider them as only as good as the last project they completed"
  - Individualisation of work in creative work
    - Media industries are unique in the powerful link between work and self-realisation
      - Evident in motivations to pursue creative careers
    - Across the manufacturing, service, and creative industries, a new world of work is taking shape that seems to be premised on individual rather than industry-level responsibility, requires a high degree of skillset flexibility, and implicitly expects portfolio careerism
    - Less likely to engage in collective action and bargaining
    - Managing a temporary network of fragmented individuals can be costly and complicated
  - Celebratory accounts of labour context
    - Value of:
      - Entrepreneurships
      - Self-actualisation
      - Creativity
      - Freedom
  - Critical perspectives
    - Self-exploitative
    - Impermanent
    - Insecure
  - Media professionals can collectively organise to reduce precarity intrinsic to their careers
    - Beyond individual agency, creative autonomy and self-realisation
    - With active, critical and supportive peer communities
    - Semi-permanent work groups (SPWG)
      - Self-organised teams that move from project to project together
      - Benefit employers as they outsource the hiring and firing of team members to (sometimes informal) team leaders
      - Employees can secure future employment through their largely informal personal networks
      - Creative talent of leaders can be essential element in the production process, allowing them to make certain demands
      - Include:
        - Local or global networks of firms and companies
        - Line-ups of the interests of consumers and producers in specific user-producer communities or contexts
          - ◆ E.g. Citizen journalism projects
          - ◆ E.g. Discussion forums related to TV or games
        - Start-ups
      - Broodfongs / "bread funds"
        - Dutch organisation that helps independent entrepreneurs provide sick leave
      - Trade-unions
      - Professional associations of particular subgroups in media work
      - Social groups through which media workers gather to exchange information
  - Foundation for Young Australians 2018

- Other requirements that determine your capacity to achieve full time work
- Total employment in communications is strong
  - Takes longer than 4 months after graduation to get a full-time job
    - 60% comms, 90% medicine
- Have to be more flexible
- Gender differences
  - <https://www.meaa.org/download/mates-over-merit-full-report/>

#### Surviving the new normal

- Media work attractive to younger people because it appears more creative, interesting and durable
- Many media career options
  - E.g. Influencers, YouTubers
- Job tenure is elusive across all types of employment
- Teens should prepare for as many as 17 changes in employer across 5 different occupations
- Employers
  - Spend an average of 6 seconds reading a resume
  - Expect a lot from new recruits
  - Rarely offer stability
- Up-skilling as technology advances
- Ongoing employment in the industry requires labour market savviness
- Managing this
  - Elefante & Deuze 2012:
    - The key to managing one's career in the media is not to work alone and to build networks as social support structures rather than opportunities for finding work

#### Tutorial

- Mark Deuze
  - Brainstorm definitions of precarity
    - Precarious existing; lacking predictability, job security
  - Why precarity in media work does not scare off young people seeking media careers
    - Not informed/educated about working conditions
    - Creative, dynamic industry is appealing
    - Omnipresent industry
  - Explain why insecure work is the new normal in Australia
    - Increasing insecurity of the media and digital industries
    - Saturated job market?
- FYA
  - Drawing on the FYA report, brainstorm definitions of the new work reality
  - Consider if digital platforms influence the nature and precarity of this new work reality
  - Make a list of some factors that limit or accelerate younger people's access to stable, full-time employment
- Gig economy and portfolio careers video
  - Parameters
    - Constrain or limit work
    - E.g. Advertising trends
      - How much revenue is available to employ
  - Requirements
    - Meet employer expectations
    - Flexibility
      - Flexploitation
        - So flexible that you have a poor work-life balance or work more than you're paid for
    - E.g. Skill-sets
  - Career portfolio

- Relies on individual media professional having a following
- Follow the individual to their new positions and associated companies
- Stay with media companies for a short term
- Gig economy
  - High-demand
  - People are expected to have a variety of diverse skills which they are expected to apply in multiple positions throughout their careers
  - Turns workers with legislated employment rights to individual contractors who must fend for themselves
  - Piece-work economy
    - How much content you produce in a day
    - Paid based off output
- New work patterns
  - See above
- Cultures of work
  - E.g. BuzzFeed values flexibility but provides time off in lieu
- Networking
- Self-promotion
- Creative labour
- Immaterial labour
  - It's not about what you do but who you are and your ability to communicate
- Paid internships are important
  - Invest in young people to maintain standard
  - Have a clear idea of what you want to learn and produce
  - MEAA ethical internship guidelines
    - Reasonable hours and days of work that don't interfere with studies
    - Clear goals and expectations
    - Genuine hands on working experience
- Benjamin Law
  - Pitch work wide and far as a freelance journalist
  - Pitching
    - Write a pitch and send it in (cold-calling)
      - Confidence
    - Reading the landscape and understanding where you might have an audience
      - Savvy
  - Non-stop hustle becomes your rhythm for the rest of your life
  - Other people championing his work
  - Mentorships