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‘Conceptualising Work-Related Blogging’

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Abstract

Beyond a purely social activity, mode of leisure or form of escape, blogging is an increasingly important form of labour that is becoming central to many jobs, occupations, and forms of self-employment. Yet, the labour dynamics of blogging remain poorly understood and articulated. To address this gap this article draws on a review of existing literature, illustrative examples, and a ‘total social organisation of labour’ framework to develop a typology of work-related blogging. It also contributes to the sociology of work by unpacking the relationships between blogging, labour market mobility, and labour market trends such as the fragmentation of work, the heightened significance of unpaid labour, and new forms of resistance and solidarity in the digital age.

Keywords: blogging, digitised work, motivations, occupations and unpaid labour, TSOL, mobility

Introduction

Personalised online writing has been a part of the internet since 1994, and the term ‘weblog’ was coined in 1997 (webdesignerdepot, 2011). However, Web 2.0 and the shift towards connectivity facilitated the proliferation of blogs in their current form, underpinned by blogging platforms such as WordPress and Blogger (webdesignerdepot, 2011). Although the styles and aims of blogs continue to evolve, they are commonly understood as regularly updated websites featuring text, images and video content produced by individuals in an informal style (Fullwood *et al.*, 2015). As blogging develops – with an estimated 440 million blogs producing over 76 million posts per month (MediaKix, 2018) – scholars in a variety of fields, including sociology, geography, cultural and media studies, have paid increasing attention to the format and practice of blogging (Dean, 2010; Rettberg, 2014).

The literature highlights a range of motivations for blogging (Fullwood *et al.*, 2015;

Huang *et al.* 2007), which also shape blogs' style, content and interactivity (Joose and Hracs, 2015). Based on interviews with bloggers, Nardi *et al.* (2004) present motives such as self-improvement, life-documenting, commenting, expressing feelings, using blogs as a muse, and as a community forum. Subsequent studies include information seeking and sharing, self-presentation, entertaining others, and connecting with like-minded individuals (Chung and Kim, 2008; Huang *et al.*, 2007; Sepp *et al.*, 2011). Blogging has also been conceptualised as a form of escapism with immersion in online communities offering an escape from the real world, boredom, responsibilities and problems, while providing an opportunity to try out new ideas and identities (Sepp *et al.*, 2011). Although blogging is often perceived as public communication, describing environments and experiences for external audiences, many bloggers write about their feelings and thoughts as though to an internal audience (Nardon *et al.*, 2015).

This literature provides a useful foundation from which to explore the motivations behind blogging, but as Sepp *et al.* (2011) argue, more empirical studies and conceptual work are needed to better understand the structures, complexities and interconnections of blogs. This article integrates existing knowledge to develop a conceptual framework for understanding a significant subset of blogging activity: work-related blogging. In contrast to the literature conceptualising blogging as a social activity, mode of leisure or escape, work-related blogging offers a more purposeful manifestation of efforts, involving a range of skills and tasks such as writing, advertising and monetisation that are performed in physical and virtual spaces around the clock (Hracs and Leslie, 2014).

Bloggging is becoming central to many jobs, occupations and forms of self-employment within the creative industries and broader economy. Yet the 'work' associated with blogging, which might include creating content for a range of platforms while building

and maintaining an audience, remains poorly understood. This article asserts that a closer examination of the labour dynamics of blogging can make an important contribution to the sociology of work. The diversity of work-related blogging neatly illustrates some of the contested boundaries around labour categories and practices, since blogging activities cover both paid and unpaid work, and ranges from self-employment to contracted labour.

In addition to engaging with labour market trends and the challenges they present for conceptualising new work formulations, this article develops a typology of blogging labour which aims to make sense of what is going on. We collected and analysed a range of existing media and scholarly accounts of blogging practices. The typology represents our own conceptualisation of a phenomenon that has tended to be presented in ‘common-sense’ terms, but which has amorphous definitions and consequential differentiation. By extension, we propose that new working practices like blogging provide significant ways of negotiating a reconfigured labour market, enabling work-related solidarities to be formulated at the same time as autonomous labour is pursued.

Drawing on a ‘total social organisation of labour’ framework (Glucksmann, 1995), discussed below, the article considers the relationship between paid and unpaid work in bloggers’ occupational negotiations and how work can be mapped within a new field. It thus makes a key contribution to understanding labour market mobility and how individuals are responding to new occupational demands through an original typology which furthers our understanding of these practices.

Making sense of work-related blogging

Definitions of work – associated with culturally and historically-contingent economic relationships which are cross-cut by class differences – have long concerned sociologists

(Grint, 1998). Yet, recent trends, including technological change, together with organisational transformation, fragmented work spatialities, and globalised marketplaces, present a challenge to the value of traditional work paradigms (Strangleman and Warren, 2008). Not only have the industrial structures of Western labour markets shifted in recent decades but employment contracts have diversified, and employment flexibility become more commonplace (Halford *et al.*, 2016). This has resulted in a growth in precarious forms of work (Kalleberg, 2013), the expansion of self-employment (Hatfield, 2015), and a reduction in expectations of lifelong career trajectories within single organisations (Felstead and Jewson, 1999). Other trends have included the growth of the knowledge and service economies, and transformations in women's labour market engagement. While Beck's (2000) analysis of a casualisation of work has been widely disputed as simplifying the class differentiation that continues to define occupational experiences, the world of work in the 21st century has disturbed previously embedded expectations around lifetime mobility. In this context, the value of conceptualising work fluidly in order to track its diverse formations has become ever more evident.

Within a set of revised occupational expectations, theorists have increasingly noted that paid and unpaid work combine in complex ways around individual labour market experiences (Pettinger *et al.*, 2005). Blogging, and other forms of online discussion, offer a timely and insightful context within which to investigate some of these issues (Bancarzewski and Hardy, 2017). Encompassing a diverse range of occupational experiences, Richards (2008) has drawn attention to the value of bloggers in charting and understanding new labour processes. Indeed, the format of blogging is unique in offering a detailed subjective longitudinal account of work activity and new insights into the lived experience of individual workers and into the meaning of work more broadly. Defining blogging is challenging in part

because, as Schoneboom discusses, it is a ‘continually morphing’ field (2011: 136), shifting both with technological possibility, and expanding and contracting as bloggers dip into and out of their chosen blogging platforms. Moreover, and as this article demonstrates, work-related blogging covers a range of activities, which may sit more or less easily under traditional definitions of work. Such diversity and dynamism underscore the need for greater nuance and clarity from the conceptual frameworks used to make sense of work formations.

This article draws on Miriam Glucksmann’s Total Social Organisation of Labour (TSOL) (1995, 2005), which was developed around her analysis of changing work formations in the Lancaster textile industry. As a key resource for meaningfully mapping the labour involved in the diffuse work formation of blogging, TSOL provides a framework for the development of our typology of work-related blogging (see below), enabling us to draw attention to the interconnections between different forms of work performed by individuals, or within different fields of activity. A TSOL approach is also valuable in our analysis because we are concerned with the interplay of paid and unpaid labour, as well as the different ways in which work is organised across space, time, and within a structural context of change.

Typology of work-related blogging

The typology is split into three categories of abstraction (see Table 1): blogging for the purpose of one’s work, blogging for individual workers, and blogging in pursuit of workplace change.

Table 1: Typology of Work-Related Blogging

Category	Blogging for work		Blogging for the worker		Blogging for workplace change
Type	1. As primary focus of work	2. As additional work task	3. For career development	4. To cope with work	5. To resist (A) within a firm or (B) occupational segment,
Designation	'Primaries'	'Additional's'	'Developers'	'Copers'	'Resisters'

Five distinct types of blogging work are also conceptualised. We propose this typology not as a static model, but to explore how the labour invested in blogging changes and takes on different functions in bloggers' lives as their positioning in relation to the labour market evolves. For example, while some individuals blog to advance their careers, others blog about stagnation or a lack of career opportunities. Table 2, positioned at the end of our typology, provides a more fleshed out version of these differences, populated by some of the examples we explore. In developing this typology, we aim to offer conceptual insight into how new forms of digitised labour relate to labour market trends, including the fragmentation of work, rise of aesthetic labour, marginalisation and globalisation.

Blogging for work

The first two types of blogging in our typology are characterised by their explicit organisation *for work*, that is blogging as connected directly or indirectly to paid labour.

1: Blogging as a primary occupation

The first type of blogging provides the closest alignment to traditional forms of labour organisation, while simultaneously marking a departure from the conceptualisation of blogging as leisure, or 'playbor' (Scholz, 2012). The labour of digitised writing has, for

individuals who blog as their main occupation ('Primaries'), been appropriated for financial and professional gain. Some of these bloggers negotiate self-employment around a monetarised product: their blog (Dean, 2010; Rettberg, 2014) and provide perhaps the most visible blogging format. However, TSOL is an important distinction within the grouping, and Primaries are distinguishable in terms of entrepreneurs who are more in control of their labour and bloggers within firms, such as those working within marketing teams, whose work is more clearly prescribed for them.

Blogging as a self-employed occupation incorporates labours beyond writing, including designing and maintaining a website, building audience, and transferring information. Although Primary blogging does not necessarily involve a blog revolving around a named individual, in a crowded marketplace individuality can provide its hook (Duffy and Hund, 2015). This kind of blogging is comparable to the 'entrepreneurial blogging' identified by Pihl and Sandström (2013), and is most evident in the literature, although it represents a minority of regular blogs (bloggingthing.com). Primaries often established their blogs around a niche, albeit one which may be eroded as competitors move to develop new and original content around a popular area.

Examples of Primary blogs include Jack Monroe's *A Girl Called Jack's* budget food blog, and Fritha Quinn's *Tigerlilly Quinn*, a vintage lifestyle blog. These Primary bloggers represent a development of the format, their blogs having gone through stages of being unpaid or differently structured and becoming more monetarised and professionalised as industry knowledge was amassed. For bloggers who have 'made it' in the sense of readership, there is occupational satisfaction from having formulated a career around one's interests, at the same time as there may be tensions around corporate pressures and creative freedom (Brydges and Sjöholm, 2018). Tensions between these competing forces can culminate in a

blog's end, and the reconfiguration of the blogger's labour into new, often collaborative blogs, or by diversification into alternative forms of digitised work.

Routes into Primary blogging are multiple. Perhaps the blogger started off blogging while employed in another role and became sufficiently successful to focus full-time on self-employed blogging; or alternatively, the blog provided a route out of unemployment or economic inactivity. This self-defined labour of blogging potentially provides flexibility to combine with other aspects of one's TSOL, such as caring commitments (Ekinsmyth 2011), but also illustrates the extensification of digitised work – the pressure to maintain presence and brand identity across multi-media platforms, engage with analytics, maintain technological currency, and provide aesthetic value (Hracs and Leslie 2014; Jarvis and Pratt 2006). This kind of labour is unbounded and results on what Gregg (2011) termed the 'presence bleed' of ICT work. The pressures of remaining unique and providing readers with current content adds to the pressure to be constantly available (Brydges and Sjöholm, 2018), the labour of blogging potentially increasing in proportion to its commodifiable success.

Blogging is connected to the contractual, spatial and temporal fragmentation of work. Whether paid or unpaid, blog posts comprise chunks of labour performed alongside a range of other tasks. As these posts can be composed and transmitted on mobile devices, blogging may be performed at any time. Spatially, the work is distributed across physical sites, including offices, third spaces and the home, and on a range of virtual platforms. For some bloggers, such flexibility is attractive, but it may also exacerbate the extensification of work (Jarvis and Pratt 2006; Gregg, 2011).

2: Blogging as additional task

A second formulation of blogging for work is distinguished when blogging forms a part, but not the entirety, of one's paid position. This 'Additional' blogging may take a range of formats, from an activity incorporated into one's workload, such as a researcher working in a policy organisation also tasked to run a think piece blog, to creative professionals who run a blog in order to promote their products and brands. Again, this type of blogging ranges across different occupational forms, from employee, to self-employment, and portfolio working, and reflecting this, the blogging can be both paid or unpaid.

Additional blogging tends to exist for the marketing or supporting of the blogger's main occupation. For example, beyond 'making music', independent musicians promote their recorded songs, live performances, merchandise and personal brands through blogging and other social media platforms (Hracs and Leslie, 2014). Through the practices of 'friending' and 'following' across these platforms, blogs allow self-employed creatives, including musicians, fashion designers and designers to engage directly with a wide range of consumers. As Hracs and Jakob (2015) demonstrate, creating 'conversations' and 'meaningful emotional connections' is vital to building a client base and surviving in a volatile marketplace.

Additional bloggers often create and communicate deliberately embellished and managed personas, marketing their blogs as unique and compelling to secure a loyal audience. This connects to the growing need for workers involved in customer interaction to perform aesthetic labour. Building on Hochschild's (1983) work on emotional labour, and how service work involves managing one's deepest feelings, aesthetic labour seeks to incorporate the embodied nature of service work, and the corporeal labour that goes into the production of particular dispositions (Witz *et al.*, 2003). Although some bloggers may act

under the direction of their corporate employers, self-employed bloggers are required to become entrepreneurs of the self, taking responsibility for managing their own bodies, emotions and image to create a covetable self (Entwistle and Wissinger, 2006). For fashion style bloggers, who frequently publish ‘outfit of the day’ posts which include images and commentary, aesthetic labour entails an on-going commitment to body maintenance through diet and exercise (Brydges and Sjöholm, 2018; Pihl and Sandström 2013). As Entwistle and Wissinger (2006: 791) argue, the “freelance aesthetic labourer cannot walk away from the product which is their entire embodied self.”

For the Primaries described above, writing and creating are central features of their blogs, yet for Additional, blogging has a more functional purpose – marketing – and forms just one element of their occupation. Additional blogging is an end that is achieved of and in itself, although the skills developed in the role might subsequently prompt Additional to start their own blogs (as Primaries).

Blogging for the worker

While the blogging formulations discussed above are linked to solidifying bloggers’ position within the labour market, a second set of blogging labour is more *about work* and how bloggers make sense of their relationship to paid labour.

3: Blogging to develop work pathways

The third form of blogging distinguished here, that of ‘Developers’, encompasses blogging with the purpose of moving closer to the paid labour that the blogger desires. It is about strategically enhancing one’s labour market positioning, although the blog may not have been initiated for this reason. This type of blogging is about finding work or improving labour

market prospects. This might be achieved through building networks within blogging communities or providing unpaid labour to amass occupational skills. Development blogging often takes place outside the formalised labour market, providing a different manifestation of TSOL than for Primaries or Additionals, with Developers' connections or skills providing an important route into belonging and well-being at a time of low economic capital.

For example, the new mother bloggers studied by McDaniel et al. (2012) derived social support through their writing, which they would otherwise have lacked in the unpaid work of parenting. At first this was more about coping with a new situation, but their blogging became developmental as they acquired an audience and gained confidence in their abilities. This kind of blogging can be powerful if taken on autonomously, providing authenticity in the labour market and ultimately mobility; however, it might also be experienced negatively if the labour takes on a compulsory tone or becomes monotonous rather than purposeful. In another vein, younger and less established academics, may blog to accumulate social and cultural capital in the form of building social networks, reputation or peer validation outside of the more time-contingent peer-review system (Gregg, 2009; Mewburn and Thomson, 2013).

Developers are a transitional grouping solidifying labour market links between hobby blogging and the professional bloggers described earlier. It is productive labour that might also include developing a personal brand, reputation-building, positioning oneself in the labour market, and letting potential clients or consumers know about the blogger. For example, Developers may be accumulating technical skills, capital which individuals can subsequently invest in labour market transitions. These might aid post-maternity leave returns to work or movements into new occupations or self-employment (Ekinsmyth, 2011).

Development blogging can thus be valuable in helping some marginalised or isolated groups effect desired or alternative occupational trajectories. In more formalised settings, there is complementarity of purpose with the proliferation of unpaid internships (Lawton and Potter, 2010). In an ever-evolving labour market, this intensification of labour, while arguably enhancing one's employability, provides a potentially exploitative form of unpaid labour in that individuals are expected to make these kinds of continual investments of labour in order to remain competitive workers, and will not necessarily receive occupational mobility in return for their efforts (Gregg 2011).

An important aspect of Developers' success is the labour which bloggers must devote to self-presentation or impression-management (Bortree, 2005). Blogging offers a unique project for the self (McCullagh, 2008), providing a vehicle for self-expression and social interaction to be mobilised together in careful orchestration around a blog narrative. In order for their blog to achieve desired outcomes, be that audience, reputation or career, bloggers must manage this balance and present themselves in a favourable way, and this is especially so for Developers when success is more obscure (Brydges and Sjöholm, 2018; Dunne *et al.*, 2010; Hsu and Lin, 2008). For example, in Mewburn and Thomson's (2017) recent analysis of survey data from PhD bloggers, they found that postgraduates were deploying a range of practices to present themselves as emergent and competent scholars. Some of the strategies which Developers adopt to create desired audience impressions include showing competence, exemplification, supplication, social association, and disclosure of personal information (Bortree, 2005; Sepp *et al.*, 2011).

4: Blogging to cope with work

A fourth type of blogging labour concerns individual workers making sense of their positioning but is more concerned with *coping with* work rather than effecting mobility. Like the Resisters described below, ‘Copers’ write about their work, and might highlight injustices and shortcomings witnessed within their workplaces. Their writing is blogging for its own sake rather than deployed for strategic action and it is unpaid.

Copers’ blogging covers a range of activities. For some Copers, their blog provides a digitised journal in which they can escape from paid work and reflect upon their working day, or the loneliness of starting a new job. While venting may be a sufficient outcome in itself, the blog may also provide a valued source of social support, in the networks of shared interests built up around a blog’s related social media platforms. Gregg (2009) has found that this kind of mutual support or peer validation is particularly valued by doctoral researchers, a group low in occupational capital but high in intellectual resources, for whom HE institutions may lack alternative daily support structures

Copers may also share information to provide support to imagined communities, such as providing specialised but unspoken information in the academic labour market, including junior academics providing advice to PhD students around pursuing publications, or managing relationships with supervisors (Gregg, 2009). The well-established *Thesis Whisperer* was built upon and developed its audience around precisely this kind of investment of blogging labour. Blogs offering specialised job search advice to candidates within a particular occupation (Ratliff, 2007) potentially provide a challenge to the reproduction of privilege.

This kind of blogging also ties into the unpaid labour of a ‘gift culture’ which is seeing some diverse manifestations in the digital economy. Voluntary or unpaid work’s

motivations have long stretched beyond altruism (Taylor, 2005). The digital economy, with a TSOL in which unpaid work is fundamentally interwoven, provides abundant evidence of the complex drivers of free labour, and of the socially productive work more typically associated with unpaid work. Moreover, supportive blogging might result in collaborative blogging, an increasingly visible part of the blog market which can provide a representative and trusted platform for specific communities (Nardi *et al.*, 2004), and which fits in neatly with Richard's (2008) proposition that blogging is providing a forum for forging occupational solidarity.

Blogging for workplace change

A third set of categories are blogs that are oppositional to the labour process or wider structures and invest considerable blogging labour on a paid or unpaid basis. We have classified these as 'Resisters', blogging for workplace change from within specific firms or institutions, or a profession or sector of the labour market.

5A: Resistance blogging within a firm

Bloggers who are located within firms, and who are blogging about their working lives have been conceptualised within the literature as Workbloggers (Richards, 2008; Pederson *et al.*, 2014). These Workbloggers, who make up the first part of our Resisters category, provide opposition to the labour process from within an organisational or occupational setting (Schoneboom, 2011a), which provides structure to their narrative. However, since their authenticity is reliant upon anonymity, perhaps to whistleblow, or more commonly to resist in a low-key way, this can be a risky strategy if they are not to jeopardise their future employment. Indeed Dooce, whose story subsequently inspired the verb 'dooiced' (Coté,

2007), satirised her paid work in a dot.com company, and was fired as a result of her representation of the organisation in her blog.

Richards and Kosmala's (2013) qualitative research found that Workblogs provide a context in which discontent and cynicism about workplace practices can be expressed, without this resistance being escalated into more active or traditional formats, and in environments where there might be a dearth of alternative forms of protest (Pedersen *et al.*, 2014). This is a level of resistance that may formerly have gone undocumented, and blogging provides a new level of labour market analysis or historical record. Ellis and Richards (2009) assert that workblogging offers an alternative voice for employees to the trade union route, which has been disrupted by industrial transformation, and they point to the meaningful and supportive connections forged between Workbloggers. Richards (2008) builds on this, proposing that occupational solidarity is forged through workblogging, indicating a potential overlap of these kinds of Resisters with the Copers who blog to build support within occupational communities.

Blogging within a workplace for change can develop into a more explicit engagement with labour market contradictions which strike a chord with a broader audience, such as around the work challenges posed by austerity, a search for more meaningful work as occupational categories shift or engaging with the challenges of occupational and professional shifts (such as academic bloggers).

Industry changes have particular relevance for shifts between paid and unpaid work. Fricker (2015) has noted that with the decline in print journalism there has been a proliferation of commercialised blogs with different expectations regarding payment. Relevant here is the case of the Huffington Post unpaid bloggers, who put together a lawsuit (subsequently rejected) against the company when it was sold for \$315 million. An estimated

9,000 people were writing for the Huffington Post at the time on an unpaid basis; however, the sale represented a change in the rules of their engagement that was made without consultation, and a discourse of ‘modern day slavery’ was used to describe this exploitation (Sabbagh, 2011). The case provides an interesting perspective on the value assigned to unpaid labour within the digital economy. Firm-based Resisters’ critical narrative and growing evidence in the literature (Richards 2008), provides some indication of a broader dissatisfaction with the labour process, and lack of an alternative redress, which drives their unpaid investment in blogging.

5B: Resistance blogging within an occupational segment

Similar to firm-based Resisters in their critical narrative around labour, another subcategory within our typology is less tied to a particular workplace and focuses upon the TSOL of an occupational segment. These kinds of occupational bloggers are also unpaid and oppositional, and in this are distinctive from the Primaries (although they may experience direct mobility into that grouping, for example, in securing publishing deals around popular blogs). Since these kinds of Resisters are not tied to any specific institutional structure, but are blogging about their profession more broadly, they are able to achieve relative autonomy, although this can raise a different set of issues around anonymity.

This type of blogging is not motivated by labour market mobility, and consequently Resisters enjoy relative freedom to create blog content interpreting their occupational positioning in relation to labour market trends. They do not have to consider how this analysis might affect their blog success, since they are not dependent on it for income. These bloggers are blogging for change, truth, and as resisters, rather than engaging with blogging as a way of securing occupational recognition.

Blogging from a portfolio position within the labour market, combining undisclosed paid positions with blogging labour, which moved from unpaid to highly-lucrative, the now-famous bloggers Belle de Jour and Fleet Street Fox, were able to interrogate popular misconceptions about the often-maligned occupations of prostitution and journalism. The anonymised blogging format enabled them to pursue labour market issues of marginalisation that they otherwise lacked the voice to confront, and which proved highly popular with audiences. Brooke Magnanti, who simultaneously worked as a research scientist, blogged as Belle de Jour between 2003-2009 in a commercially successful blog that was both framed as entertainment and which challenged popular stereotypes around sex work. Similarly, the journalist Susie Boniface blogged as Fleet Street Fox between 2009-2013, providing an insider's perspective on journalism, against the backdrop of the Leveson Inquiry. A different kind of resistance blogger was Joe Gordon, the fired Waterstones blogger (Schoneboom, 2011b). Joe started blogging as a firm-based Resister, and his critical opposition to his workplace conditions was central to his dismissal; however, as an ex-employee he became a Resister unbounded by institutional constraints.

The literature has also drawn attention to bloggers writing around their profession at a time of structural change. For example, Gregg observed academics blogging about the increased casualisation and squeezed agency of university employment, their blogs providing “short-term ideological resolution to the contradictions of the contemporary university workplace,” (2009: 471), and a place to build solidarity among virtual colleagues in a context where trade-unions have become less powerful (Bancarzewski and Hardy, 2017).

Discussion: Blogging in relation to labour market trends

The world of work has undergone unprecedented change in recent decades, encompassing

structural transformation, the emergence of new forms and ways of working, the growth of worklessness and unpaid work in the new economy, and new organisational structures (Halford *et al.*, 2016). Blogging is strongly tied to these trends and offers conceptual insight for the new sociology of work (Pettinger *et al.*, 2005), explored here in terms of the TSOL. This section picks up this analysis by further unpacking our typology (Table 2) in terms of some indicative examples: transitions and mobility within restructured labour markets, marginalisation, and globalisation.

Table 2: Typology of Work-Related Blogging in Relation to TSOL

Category	Type	Designation	Examples	Purpose	Remuneration	Organization
Blogging for work	1. As primary focus of work	'Primaries'	Fashion style blogger Blogger in marketing team	For marketing, analysis knowledge transfer, entertainment	Paid	Firm-based employee Entrepreneur
	2. As additional work task	'Additional's'	indie musicians	To promote products and brands	Paid or unpaid	Firm-based employee Portfolio worker Entrepreneur
Blogging for the worker	3. For career development	'Developers'	PhD blogger	To build or enhance reputations, networks or skills	Paid or unpaid	Informal Firm-based employee Portfolio worker Entrepreneur
	4. To cope with work	'Copers'	Mummy blogger	To reflect on experiences of work, or to seek or share information and support	Unpaid	Students Firm-based employee Portfolio worker Entrepreneur
Blogging for workplace change	5(A). To resist within a firm	'Resisters'	Waterstons blogger	To expose, critique or resist labour market conditions	Unpaid	Firm-based employee
	5(B). To resist within an occupational segment		Journalism blogger		Paid or unpaid	Firm-based employee Entrepreneur

An aspect which we have highlighted through our typology is bloggers' dynamic relationship with the labour market. Bloggers can affect occupational mobility through their labour; for example, a mummy blogger who starts blogging as a way of recording or making

sense of her parenting life, and to build networks with other mothers (Developers), but who accumulates skills through this process and is able to build a niche around her blog, to the extent that she can become a full time or even ‘superstar’ blogger. For example, Gill Sims’s satirical Facebook-embedded blog *Peter and Jane* amassed more than 300,000 followers in the space of a year and led to the commissioning of a book, *Why Mummy Drinks* (a movement into Primary blogging).

However, blogging can also be a way of managing standing still in the labour market, as it is for the firm-based Resisters who document the more frustrating aspects of their day-to-day lives and build supportive communities among their blog followers: solidarities that may be difficult to achieve in dispersed workplaces. Or blogging may reflect downward movement in the labour market, as with some of the mummy bloggers who have relinquished or become marginalised in professional positions, and who are evaluating their position from within their blogging space (occupational Resisters).

The way that blogging has been adopted in response to labour market transformation challenges Beck’s (2000) proposition that the growth of nonstandard work has led to a new precariousness of working life, in which individuals are expected to take greater responsibility for their employability. Although this article highlights that blogging also provides potential for formulating new occupational solidarities and alliances. So too the inspiration for blogging might arise out of digitised solidarities forged around unpaid labour, such as parenting or community work: blogging provides individuals with ways of helping each other in the labour market, in contrast to a simplified interpretation of bloggers as antagonistic and engaged in competition. Thus, blogging conceptualised as work rather than exclusively leisure provides considerable explanatory power in documenting new labour market pathways, and negotiations around these. It is also illustrative of the interplay between

paid work and unpaid work in contemporary labour markets and underlines the utility of adopting a TSOL framework to shed light upon the significance of these in structural positioning.

Our typology illustrates the importance of labour market trends in the development of blogging labour. In a labour market in which industrial restructuring has transformed occupational expectations, individuals have found new ways of negotiating careers, and new pathways in and out of work are becoming evident. Jobs for life have become scarce, new organisational forms and working practices have emerged (Halford *et al.*, 2016), and there is pressure for an entrepreneurial or flexible approach to work to be adopted in order to adapt. Blogging speaks to these trends.

In combination with ongoing labour market change, austerity has exposed new marginalisations around work and employment. Our typology provides for an examination of how, within a single profession, alienation, mobility and precariousness have variable and complex effects, as labour market shifts produce uneven patterns of marginalisation, not unlike the different aspects of alienation which Blauner observed for different work groups (1964).

For example, within academia, mid-career academics might use their blogs to document day-to-day frustrations and work intensification (firm-based Resisters), or to decry occupational losses around creative freedom and tenure security (occupational Resisters). Post-doctoral researchers finding themselves at the bottom of the academic food chain and lacking occupational knowledge, might counter this marginalisation by blogging about their experiences (Copers), while building networks with researchers with allied interests who they do not have the economic capital to access via conferences. And PhD students, with the least social capital of all, may blog experimentally to explore their place within the field, build

resilience, and establish solidarities with geographically scattered occupational communities (Developers). Thus, while a Foucauldian interpretation of work blogging might position it as providing space for powerless, marginalised workers (Richards, 2008), our typology draws attention to the myriad forms of work-related blogging, and the resources which it can accumulate, in addition to its role in resistance and occupational reconfiguration.

In a globalised economy, professional boundaries and individual working environments have been transformed; digitised work brings this into relief. At its essence, blogging has the potential for international work, providing a product accessed virtually by a dispersed set of social relations. At the same time, audiences can be localised, for example firm-based Resisters blogging around specific workplace circumstances to a contained audience, or very broad, such as Belle de Jour, who found a global audience with her blog around the universally-recognisable subject of sex work. Our typology illustrates bloggers' willingness to invest unpaid work at various points in their labour market pathways, and in many ways the globalised marketplace for blogging, in which niches rapidly become overpopulated, intensifies the pressure upon bloggers to provide cheap or free labour to maintain market positioning. One of the most interesting aspects of blogging labour within this framework is how often it is autonomously-driven, which makes its working conditions complex and difficult to position within traditional relations of capital; debates around the intensification of work offer insight, *in combination* with globalisation.

Conclusion

In order to understand the diversity of experiences around blogging labour and their implications for labour market mobility, this article presented a typology of work-related blogging. These categories are discussed in terms of Glucksmann's TSOL, to illustrate the

meaningfulness of the institutional bonds and paid and unpaid work in which bloggers are engaged.

By documenting blogging labour across time, space and industrial dimensions, this article highlighted the negotiation of labour market transformations, drawing attention to new solidarities developed in interplay with autonomous work activity. Our typology spans not a spectrum running from high to low recompense or type of institutional framework, but illustrates movement, stasis and change in relation to diverse structural circumstances, resources and workplace relations. The labour of blogging, far from pure leisure, offers a new fabric of responsibilities to sometimes displaced, sometimes emergent workers in the new world of work, and we have highlighted consequential forms of resistance in these environments. Bloggers have confronted labour market marginalisation by pursuing creative responses to changing work expectations, and a TSOL framework offers conceptual clarity in mapping the mobility enacted towards these ends.

Productive avenues for future empirical research lie in some of the less visible forms of blogging flagged in this article, and in how bloggers' mobility and investment in digitised labour changes over time. While not explored here, in order to provide greater clarity of focus around work-related blogging, gender and mobility are also consequential aspects of blogging, and intersectionality an important area for interrogation. Parry (2003), for example, showed that women are particularly likely to strategically engage in unpaid work in order to invest in their future labour market mobility. Moreover, while women are more likely to produce and consume blogs, male bloggers achieve higher readerships (Pederson and Macafee, 2007). This suggests critical gender differences in how and why blogs are produced and consumed.

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