

# Training for Exploitation?

P  
r  
e  
c  
a  
r  
i  
o  
u  
s

W  
o  
r  
k  
e  
r  
s  
  
B  
r  
i  
g  
a  
d  
e

F  
o  
r  
e  
w  
o  
r  
d  
b  
y

S  
i  
l  
v  
i  
a

F  
e  
d  
e  
r  
i  
c  
i

# Politicising Employability & Reclaiming Education

## Contents

**Foreword by  
Silvia Federici**  
4 – 5

**Introduction**  
6 – 21

**Influences**  
22 – 29

**Teaching Tools**  
30 – 59

**Calling  
all University  
Staff – Letter**  
60 – 61

**Work  
Placements  
at the  
University**  
62 – 71

**Some Useful  
Statistics**  
72 – 75

**Pushing Back  
Against  
Free Labour**  
76 – 77

**Alternative  
Economies**  
78 – 89

**Some  
Transparency  
from  
Evening Class**  
90 – 91

**Bibliography  
and  
Appendix**  
92 – 98



# Foreword

Silvia  
Federici

For many years the members of the Precarious Workers Brigade have been developing insightful analyses, tools and actions questioning wageless and other exploitative forms of labour in the arts and education sectors. *Training for Exploitation?* is no exception.

Their critique is especially relevant at a time in which the UK government makes student debt a financial condition for entrance into higher education and calls on 'employability' training to ensure that it and the banks are repaid. In the US, a country further along this trajectory, we have seen the disastrous consequences of this policy, as students are saddled with a burden of debt repayment that will affect their lives for decades.

This book argues that instead of accepting employability as our goal, and consolidating the meritocracy that governments are promoting through education, we organise against the very system that produces student debt and the anxiety-ridden precarity we find ourselves in. Solidarity with other workers, mutual aid and commoning practices in the field of social reproduction are offered as plausible, and even necessary alternatives to years spent chasing the false promises of 'employment'. The Precarious Workers Brigade calls for a shift from employment or employability to vocation – what do we think is our calling? How can education assist the project of radically amending a world deeply mired in social and ecologic crises?

At the same time, this guide does not shy away from the realities of students entering into a world of course placements, internships and other aspects of the employability paradigm. Instead – by including letters to employers, sample contracts, tools for self-analysis etc, it offers training exercises through which students, teachers and employability officers can think about work-based education as a context for critical consideration and intervention within the very structure of contemporary work.

As an educator I support the effort the book makes to provide the analysis and the tools needed to challenge the conversation, now predominant in the classroom, concerning 'employability'.

As a feminist I recognise many of these tools from past and contemporary practices of consciousness raising. They are effective and I encourage readers to use them.

# Introduction

'Employability' is moving ever more into the very heart of higher education. It no longer stops at the doors of career centres, but seeps into many other areas of university life. We have found that employability increasingly lands on lecturers' desks as part of their administrative and teaching duties. We believe that this employability trend is problematic on a number of levels. By teaching students how to identify what employers want and then how to *become* it, employability normalises certain subordinating attitudes towards work and the self, promoting free labour and individualistic behaviour, which discourages collective practice and solidarity.

Given the prominence of employability teaching in higher education, we see it as imperative that these spaces be used to encourage critical thinking and the development of alternatives. With this resource pack, we invite 'employability educators' to politicise their teaching and foster critical, practical approaches to learning and the world of work.

As the Precarious Workers Brigade (PWB), we have been organising around issues of free and precarious labour in the arts, education and the so-called 'creative industries' since 2010. Through our work together, including the collective authoring of our *Carrot Workers' Collective Counter-Guide to Free Labour in the Arts*, the organising of a *People's Tribunal on Precarity*<sup>1</sup> and through many workshops at universities, it has become clear to us that colleges and universities play a pivotal role in establishing and normalising life regimes bound by precarious and free labour. In response to this realisation, we have collected resources that can be used as tools by educators and / or students to intellectually address these issues and add a critical frame to the concerns of employability within the academy.

1 See Precarious Workers Brigade, 'Tools for Collective Action – Precarity: The Participatory People's Tribunal', *DisMagazine*, 2009. [www.dismagazine.com/discussion/21416/tools-for-collective-action-precarity-the-peoples-tribunal](http://www.dismagazine.com/discussion/21416/tools-for-collective-action-precarity-the-peoples-tribunal)

## WHAT IS IN THIS PACK?: TEACHING TOOLS, EXERCISES AND EMPLOYMENT STATISTICS

This pack assembles a bibliography of relevant texts, statistics, workshop exercises, projects and examples of critical work placements, as well as examples of alternative practices. The main aim of these tools is to encourage students to develop a critical approach to employment and work. There is always a danger that, when questioning and taking apart the 'system', students are left paralysed and demoralised. They often see only two choices: fight (competing) or flight (dropping out). By collectively discussing what, at first, seems to be an individual dilemma and double-bind, we provide a frame to make visible the social issue and collective practice that the working world really is. Making this framework visible creates a space to step back and think differently. This can provide the possibility for other actions beyond the impulses of competing or dropping out.

It is therefore very important when engaging with these issues, to present examples of other ways of working, other spaces, economies and practices. Students can be encouraged to devise practical modes of mutual support before and after graduation and to think about self-organised projects that might provide good alternatives to the paralysis-inducing responses of competition and abusive self and social management. This is by no means a definitive list of resources. We encourage others to supplement this pack with their own suggestions and make these publicly available for broader benefit.

## WHY WE WROTE THIS PACK

One of the things we want to do in developing this toolbox for teaching is to address the disconnections between practice, critical thinking and professional development. Students are often implicitly expected to turn off their critical and political faculties when they enter a 'professional practice' seminar dedicated to self-marketing, art/design copyright or fundraising. Students are regularly sold a shiny version of freelance work and provided with tips on 'how to make it in the industry' or 'how to be a professional/employable' based on branding, entrepreneurship and market expectations. This frequently sits at odds with the critical theory and experimental practice they may also be encountering as part of their course. At the same time, these sessions often omit realistic information about the conditions of precarity, employment rights and real work/life in professional sectors. In more academic classes, 'critical studies' that

include readings by theorists of the Frankfurt School and British cultural studies, are routinely taught as abstract theory with little correlation to professional practice, real-world conditions, and how students might go about making a living. This disconnect is experienced by many as confusing and alienating. Worse still, it replicates a general pattern in academia where politics is limited to the production of 'theoretical content' without consequence, content that ignores the structures and material conditions of its own making.

As teachers, we came together to ask ourselves whether it is possible to reunite the critical with the practical, whether there might be other means of analysing work, not just through 'critique' that intellectually abandons practice. Given the prominence of 'professional practice' and 'employability' experienced by many of us as staff in our working lives, we wonder how we would go about it. This led us to the idea of building a shared toolbox for actively intervening into 'work-related learning'.

## WHO MIGHT FIND THIS PACK USEFUL?

*Training for Exploitation?* was designed to support lecturers in charge of work placements, career development officers, educators in courses in the arts and cultural industries, gallery educators, vocational or professional development tutors, student unions and others. We envisage this guide being used within vocational education, internships, professional practice classes, preparation for work experience and placements, and other kinds of 'work-related learning' embedded and encouraged within education.

These resources speak in particular to the increasing emphasis on employability within the current UK context (where PWB is based), but readers elsewhere should also find it helpful.

We invite you to use the tools we have included, (not all of our own creation) and to contribute any thoughts, ideas, further links, or references that you are using so that we can build on the resource and share ways of intervening into existing neoliberal educational structures.

## WHY POLITICISE EMPLOYABILITY?

While we feel that there is nothing wrong with work-based education (in fact we are very drawn and indebted to progressive and radical legacies of work-based education – see *Influences* section),

the university's emphasis on employability and increased links with industry often means that certain ideals of education are subordinated to the contingencies of corporate capitalism. Employability is frequently promoted as increasing students' personal capacities and capabilities in order to make them more likely to gain employment in their chosen careers. Through the logics of 'self-enhancement' and flexibility, students are promised security against unemployment. As such, employability becomes much more than skill development. The language of empowerment is used to promote the idea that students can construct and continuously reconstruct their 'self' in order to render them attractive on the labour market.

Making sense of students' employment prospects through the lens of employability obscures at least two problems. Firstly, presented as a neutral set of skills, attributes and attitudes, the employability discourse repeatedly underplays how personal identities based on class, gender, race or ability fundamentally determine students' employment prospects. Secondly, by stressing behavioural explanations for unemployment, the wider employment structures, where the majority of graduates end up in non-graduate jobs, are completely ignored.<sup>2</sup>

Skill expectations constitute a significant transformation in the power relations between employers and workers and between the business realm and education. Training obligations are taken away from employers and shifted onto the individual, who is pressurised to continuously do more, perform better and demonstrate passion and commitment in the hope that they will be rewarded with a 'good' job. As such, the person who is asked to demonstrate employability enters a relationship with capital before even necessarily being employed.

Employability education thus leaves students reproducing and reinforcing themselves as neoliberal subjects. Neoliberal subjects can be exemplified as rational self-interested beings (*homo economicus*), for whom every choice comes down to a cost-benefit analysis, one that might maximise their potential as both consumer and producer.<sup>3</sup> Education and particularly employability can be instrumentalised in this way too, as investment in particular 'personal attributes' that may increase future profitability. This ethos is made to permeate even how we hold ourselves physically. Kingston University, for example, offers workshops in which students learn to modify their

2 See Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development, 'Over-Qualification and Skills Mismatch in the Graduate Labour Market, 2015'. [www.cipd.co.uk/knowledge/work/trends/graduate-labour-market-report](http://www.cipd.co.uk/knowledge/work/trends/graduate-labour-market-report)

3 See Libby Rittenberg and Timothy Tregarthen, *Principles of Microeconomics Version 2.0* (Washington DC, Flat World Knowledge, 2002).

'body language to not only appeal more to an employer, but to increase [their] confidence too!' Sessions on networking promise to teach students 'how to break into conversations (and leave them)'.<sup>4</sup> This employability-habitus privileges, we argue, the stereotypical masculine gender norms of the confident alpha-male who has learned to dominate conversations by interrupting and departing from them in accordance with his interests. Neoliberal subjectivity is further encouraged by the many universities who offer prizes to students demonstrating work-readiness: the University of Wolverhampton's Enterprise and Employability Award, the Gold Award at Goldsmiths College, and the Bristol PLUS Award at University of Bristol are just some examples of these. In addition, there are national Undergraduate of the Year Awards where a global business panel judges entrants and the winners rewarded with internships.<sup>5</sup> If the self and the 'well-managed life' become products or commodities, the economic and emotional risks and burdens that this also places on the individual cannot be underestimated – particularly in a world of precarious work and uncertainty.<sup>6</sup>

Risk is internalised within the emotional and fiscal life of the student or worker, rather than the employer. This process of hedging against the material and perceived risk of failure creates a burden that affects people psychologically and physically. We recognise these affects in our increasingly anxious and overwhelmed students. We observe that the pressure of having to always become better and work on their 'selves' leads to increased mental health issues – we see students performing until complete exhaustion or burn-out. Of course this is not limited to students, it continues throughout our working lives. We all recognise how our own stress levels have increased as we ourselves re-create our employability, constantly. It was precisely to address these conditions that we came together as the Precarious Workers Brigade. We don't want to reproduce a culture that generates neoliberal subjects, but rather we aim to encourage students to become selves who can also act, resist and create alternatives.

For this, an understanding of employability's place within the neoliberal university is crucial. Employability challenges how many of us conceive of the social value of universities as an environment invigorating the critical thinking so vital for a functioning democracy.

4 Kingston University London, 'KU Talent: Developing Career Potential'. [www.kingston.ac.uk/careers/students/support](http://www.kingston.ac.uk/careers/students/support)  
5 Target Jobs, 'Undergraduate of the Year'. [www.undergraduateoftheyear.com](http://www.undergraduateoftheyear.com)

6 For a fuller discussion of these ideas, see Maurizio Lazzarato, *The Making of the Indebted Man: Essay on the Neoliberal Condition* (Los Angeles: Semiotext(e)/Intervention Series, 2012).

Such notions are increasingly displaced by the branding of universities as places where future workers invest in their own human capital, contributing through their labour and fees to a thriving knowledge economy.

With fees now essential to their economic viability, universities become highly dependent on attracting students, or, as some university management now refers to them, 'fee-paying customers'. Universities therefore increasingly feel the need to reassure and prove to prospective students, and often their parents, that students will be employable upon graduation. 'Will the investment I am making pay off?' the highly indebted neoliberal subject (formerly student) asks of the neoliberal institution (formerly publicly funded university).<sup>7</sup> The university has come up with various different ways of addressing this concern. Work placements, industry projects, recruitment fairs, as well as career advice sessions and workshops, not only provide the student with skills and experience believed to make her more readily employable, but also train her body and mind, as we've seen, so she becomes a more attractive neoliberal subject on the labour market. In return, universities in the United Kingdom hope to receive healthy enrolment and high ratings in the National Student Survey. One indication for this is that Bath University scored highest in terms of student satisfaction in *The Guardian* league table of universities due, according to its Vice-Chancellor, Dame Glynis Breakwell, to its focus on employability.<sup>8</sup>

This is not to say that students have entirely internalised the neoliberal logic. Many critique, fight and attempt to reclaim their education.<sup>9</sup>

While we are not suggesting that students forgo work experience, we want to draw attention to the pressures placed upon them by academic institutions to undertake unpaid work as a requirement of academic accreditation and as an initial step into paid employment. This critique remains ever more pertinent in a climate of recession with uncertain employment for young graduates, and as unpaid internships replace paid entry-level positions, in turn increasing job

7 Universities have themselves undergone transformation along neoliberal lines: marketising knowledge, restructuring and introducing managerial layers and agendas.  
8 Rebecca Ratcliffe, 'Guardian University League Table 2015: Cambridge Underscores Its Dominance', *The Guardian*, 2 June 2014, accessed 24 July 2016. [www.theguardian.com/](http://www.theguardian.com/)

[education/2014/jun/02/university-league-table-2015-cambridge-dominates](http://www.theguardian.com/education/2014/jun/02/university-league-table-2015-cambridge-dominates)  
9 The UK and other European countries have witnessed protests against tuition fees and student debt, as well as student writings, for example, University For Strategic Optimism, *Undressing the Academy* (New York: Minor Compositions, 2011).

shortages on the graduate labour market. Students are encouraged to complete unpaid internships during their summer breaks and more work placements are being embedded within higher education courses. We argue that the emotional and economic pressures inherent to the neoliberal system (which universities now promote and endorse) must be collectively addressed. This book is therefore a resource that offers tools for critical discussion so that students can develop an ethical code for their own labour and learning.

## READY FOR THE LOW AND NO WAGE ECONOMY

A student's fear and anxiety of failing to achieve an abstract version of success, as well as their desire for a career in something related to their studied subject, fosters acceptance of the low and no wage economy as a desperate measure to secure any competitive edge. This collective panic to always perform more and better is encouraged by many university career centres. For instance, Goldsmiths' Careers Service motivates students to take on any job, as 'even modest jobs like bar work or shelf stacking can demonstrate to employers that you have a responsible attitude to work'.<sup>10</sup>

There are still more women than men taking on unpaid internships.<sup>11</sup> Research also indicates that female interns are routinely tasked with administrative work within their internships, while their male counterparts are more often afforded more content-focused roles.<sup>12</sup> Likewise, students from Black and Minority Ethnic backgrounds find themselves more likely to be working un- or low paid.<sup>13</sup> One could argue that both groups do so to compensate existing biases within the labour market.

As Marx reminds us, there is only one thing worse within a capitalist economy than being exploited: not being exploited. Some students' class backgrounds, in addition to their gender and race, better prepare them economically and socially for the sort of individualising demands of the neoliberal economy. Not everybody

10 Infosheet by Goldsmiths Careers Service's parent group The Career Center, 'Internships, Work Experience and Vacation Work'. [www.gold.ac.uk/careers/info-zone](http://www.gold.ac.uk/careers/info-zone)

11 A study undertaken in the US found that women are 77% more likely to be taking up unpaid internships. See Intern Bridge, 'The Debate over Unpaid College Internships'. [www.ceri.msu.edu/wp-content/uploads/2010/01/Intern-Bridge-Unpaid-College-Internship-Report-FINAL.pdf](http://www.ceri.msu.edu/wp-content/uploads/2010/01/Intern-Bridge-Unpaid-College-Internship-Report-FINAL.pdf)

12 Louise Gracia, 'Employability and Higher

Education: Contextualising Female Students' Workplace Experiences to Enhance Understanding of Employability Development', *Journal of Education and Work* Vol. 22, No. 4 (2009): p. 301–318.

13 Emma Pollard et al., *Researching the Independent Production Sector: A Focus on Minority Ethnic Led Companies* (London: PACT and the UK Film Council, 2004), accessed 24 July 2016. [www.employment-studies.co.uk/system/files/resources/files/pactukfc.pdf](http://www.employment-studies.co.uk/system/files/resources/files/pactukfc.pdf)

is affected in the same way by the no/low wage economy and some are even excluded from it. Students from traditional working class and/or migrant backgrounds from post-1992 universities report difficulties in obtaining internships in the first place.<sup>14</sup> Most obviously this is because some simply cannot afford to work for free or must subsidise internships with other forms of low-wage exploitation, often in the service sector. Students' concerns about not having the right social and ethnic 'fit' for internships point to the discriminatory processes at stake. Internships function as a 'filtering site' where graduates holding middle class norms, values and ways of being, who fit into the existing company culture, are privileged.<sup>15</sup>

In the same work environment, but on the other end of the class spectrum, certain internships function as a luxury experience that allows for access to exclusive networks. Through auctions, for example hosted by Charitybuzz, one can obtain internships and 'coffee dates' if one bids the highest price. A six-week internship at the UN NGO Committee on Human Rights sold for \$22,000.<sup>16</sup> Meanwhile, a coffee date with the Apple CEO Tim Cook was priced at \$610,000.<sup>17</sup>

Low and unpaid labour, advanced by the false promise of employability for all, is thus mediated by existing social inequalities. Such conditions simultaneously entrench these social divisions, as internships function as prolonged job interviews in which employers may be predisposed to exclude or discriminate against people with certain accents, or according to gender, race, religion, age, or disability.

14 Lisa Russell, Robin Simmons and Ron Thompson, 'Ordinary Lives: An Ethnographic Study of Young People Attending Entry to Employment Programmes', *Journal of Education and Work* Vol. 24, No. 5 (2011): p. 477–499; Kim Allen et al., 'Becoming Employable Students and 'Ideal' Workers: Exclusion and Inequality in Higher Education Work Placements', *British Journal of Sociology and Education* Vol. 34, No. 3 (2013): p. 431–452; Carole Leathwood and Paul O'Connell, 'It's a Struggle: the Construction of the 'New Student' in Higher Education', *Journal of Education Policy* Vol. 18, No. 6 (2010): p. 597–615.

15 Kim Allen et al., 'Becoming Employable Students and 'Ideal' Workers: Exclusion and Inequality in Higher Education Work Placements', *British Journal of Sociology and Education* Vol. 34, No. 3 (2013): p. 431–452.

16 Ross Perlin, 'The New Elitism of Internships', *The Guardian*, 17 February 2011, accessed 24 July 2016. [www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2011/feb/17/internships-elitism-conservative-auction](http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2011/feb/17/internships-elitism-conservative-auction), Susanna Kim, 'How Much for This Internship?', *ABC News*, 3 May 2013, accessed 24 July 2016. [www.abcnews.go.com/blogs/business/2013/05/how-much-for-this-internship](http://www.abcnews.go.com/blogs/business/2013/05/how-much-for-this-internship)

17 Chris Welch, 'Tim Cook Coffee Date Fetches \$610,000 in Charity Auction', *The Verge*, 14 May 2013, accessed 24 July 2016. [www.theverge.com/2013/5/14/4331304/coffee-with-tim-cook-fetches-610000-charity-auction](http://www.theverge.com/2013/5/14/4331304/coffee-with-tim-cook-fetches-610000-charity-auction)

## RECENT SHIFTS – SOME GOOD, SOME BAD

Since we wrote the first version of this pack in 2012, several shifts have taken place. Over the last few years, internships and, in particular, unpaid internships have become a little less popular. In fact, according to a study conducted by the Sutton Trust in 2014, 70% of people aged between 16 and 76 in England believe that unpaid internships are unfair because only the wealthy are able to work unpaid.<sup>18</sup> Furthermore, thanks to pressure from the Arts Council of England, which published new guidelines on internships in 2012, and campaigns by organisations such as Intern Aware and Future Interns, an appreciation of the issues surrounding internships has increased. Many college and university departments, including careers services, are also less likely to send on adverts for these exploitative internships, with some actively refusing to do so (we have included a model letter in the *Tools* section for staff wishing to reject unpaid internships ads). In some respects, 'internship' has even become a dirty word.

However, while these developments are positive, internships have not disappeared and enforcement of National Minimum Wage regulation by HMRC remains very slow. The expectation that some kind of unpaid labour will be necessary in order to get onto the 'career ladder' is still a part of the popular narrative as well as the reality. Even for those rejecting unpaid labour in principle, there are few alternatives available in practice.

## VOLUNTEERING: THE REBRANDING OF FREE LABOUR

One of the ways in which unpaid labour appears more often nowadays is in the form of volunteer work. We, the PWB, have been sent a number of adverts for volunteer workers, including some for positions previously offered as internships. In terms of workers' rights and legal frameworks, charities and non-profit organisations (which many third sector and arts organisations are), are allowed a legal loophole enabling them to bring on board volunteers and voluntary workers. A voluntary worker differs from a volunteer in that volunteers are able to come and go as they please, while a voluntary worker commits to extended periods of time, but for free.

18 Sutton Trust, 'Internship or Indenture?' [www.suttontrust.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/11/Unpaid-Internships.pdf](http://www.suttontrust.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/11/Unpaid-Internships.pdf)



The issue of volunteering is a slippery one. It is much harder to campaign against volunteering per se, partly because of the moral aspect of the work – the connotations of doing one’s bit for society. A crucial differentiation needs to be made between what we call *career volunteering*, where the motive to undertake a voluntary internship / volunteering is first and foremost to advance one’s career, and volunteering which is *without* career intention and primarily time freely donated to a cause with which one identifies. If there are no other means of getting into a job than through volunteering, then clearly this ‘volunteering opportunity’ is an exploitative situation, not much different from interning. Volunteering is also an exploitative tool when employers use it as an opportunity to cut existing staff or wages. We have been notified of and challenged such instances too.<sup>19</sup>

Volunteering, we argue, is morally good, if a) all people in the organisation work unpaid, such as in small community-run organisations or activist groups, or b) there is an equal distribution of the limited (economic, cultural and emotional) funds and costs, facilitated by a democratic and accountable decision-making process.

We are not suggesting that it is enough to demand a wage though. We recognise the limitation of the wage relation. By that, we mean that we should not stop at fighting for better conditions and unconditional basic income, but create alternatives to capitalism in the here and now.

## EMBEDDED WORK PLACEMENTS

The embedding of work placements in university courses across a whole range of subject areas marks another shift in how un- or low-paid work becomes normalised. Both government policy and, to some extent, demand from students (who face the prospect of structural uncertainty and privatised student debt upon graduation) edge employability more centrally into university education. Over the next years, this means that there will be an increase in the numbers of courses offering some kind of embedded work experience. We are starting to hear about and share some good and some bad practices. Of the latter, there exist courses where students pay extra to complete a sandwich year, in which they must search out often unpaid work experience or placements where they find themselves filling in workplace gaps resulting from cuts and austerity.

<sup>19</sup> See our Open Letter to FACT, Liverpool [www.precariousworkersbrigade.tumblr.com/post/81277448894/open-letter-to-fact-liverpool](http://www.precariousworkersbrigade.tumblr.com/post/81277448894/open-letter-to-fact-liverpool)

In order to facilitate a critical engagement with ‘employability education’, we must start to ask important questions about lengths of placement, learning aims and objectives, monitoring frameworks and the types of liaisons between university and placement provider. Some courses and academics are already thinking critically about how to deliver work placement modules and we provide some examples in this pack that might prove helpful.

## EMPLOYABILITY, THE ARTIST AS THE EVERY-WORKER

As many of us in PWB come from the visual arts, we recognise the encroachment of employability in this area. However, the connections between creative work and free labour that we detail here can be applied to a wide range of courses and subjects. The artist is easily understood as a paradigm for the ideal worker: passionate about what they do and willing to forgo material wealth for the love of it. This ideal of personal, economic and emotional investment is being promoted across the economy, not least within the employability agenda. Unfortunately, this ideal can create subjectivities that are vulnerable to exploitation.

The position of art and design education as vocational pedagogy is grounded in the principle of art as a higher calling. This notion brings with it a belief in art’s higher status, which is sometimes at odds with how society actually supports artistic production. The contradictions inherent to this mode of thinking benefit those set to profit from neoliberal arrangements. On the one hand, there is art’s relationship with notions of genius, its role as a provider of luxury goods. On the other hand lies the stereotype of the suffering genius exemplified by the artist’s role in cities such as Berlin, which cashes in on the poor-but-sexy image of its artistic population. In UNESCO’s 1980 ‘Status of the Artist’ report, an artist is defined as someone who considers ‘artistic creation to be an essential part of their life... and who asks to be recognised as an artist, whether or not they are bound by any relations of employment or association’.<sup>20</sup> Through this idea of vocation, creative labour becomes something intrinsic to the artist’s subjectivity and therefore not definable within the terms of wage relations. At the same time, the bohemian sensibility of free-spirited defiance and non-conformity encourages people to reject both traditional working-class labour conditions and what might

<sup>20</sup> See UNESCO, ‘World Congress on the Status of the Artist, 1980’. [www.unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0011/001113/111305Eo.pdf](http://www.unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0011/001113/111305Eo.pdf)

be seen as bourgeois materialism.<sup>21</sup> The ideology follows that, for cultural workers, work is bound up with more than the immediate need for food and rent, incorporating desires around creativity, ego, authorship and individual performance. These affective ideals circulate within the pedagogy of art, and to some extent also design, within the academy.

Art school training often puts emphasis on the work coming over and above everything else, including individual subsistence. While this may provide some notion of value to the work produced, it can also lead to training in what Andrew Ross called 'sacrificial labour', creating a space open to self-exploitation.<sup>22</sup> Though creative labour can seem an escape from the 'Protestant work ethic', it may also end up mirroring it.<sup>23</sup> Work-as-play becomes more work and even over-work. The cliché that artists thrive on hardship conflates desires for freedom and choice over working conditions with a desire for precarious living conditions. It is therefore vital to question the role of the art school in producing subjectivities vulnerable to exploitation and the negative effects of precarity, adding also to the 'dark matter' as described by Gregory Sholette: the large numbers of 'failed' artists who shore up the illusion of meritocracy within the art world.<sup>24</sup>

## ALTERNATIVES TO EMPLOYABILITY – SOLIDARITY

Solidarity – this has almost completely disappeared from how learning about work is figured. In certain traditions like union-based learning, forms of solidarity that incorporate the analysis of working conditions and collective bargaining have been intrinsic. Not surprisingly, this perspective is at odds with the values of self-reliance and competition that flourish in neoliberal economies. To re-introduce solidarity into educational conversations about work is to offer an alternative that does not otherwise seem to exist. Under the neoliberal logic, anyone you meet, including a co-worker, is largely understood as another networking opportunity. Yet, it should be clear that competition is not the only way of us relating to each other; self-reliance is neither something desirable, nor possible to achieve. Though managerial logics might support collaboration

21 See Guy Standing, *The Precariat: The New Dangerous Class* (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2011).

22 See Andrew Ross, *No-Collar: The Humane Workplace and its Hidden Costs* (Philadelphia PA: Temple, 2003); Andrew Ross, 'The Mental Labour Problem', *Social Text* 63, Vol. 18, No. 2 (2000).

23 See Kathi Weeks, *The Problem with Work: Feminism, Marxism, Antiwork Politics, and Postwork Imaginaries* (Durham, NC and London: Duke University Press, 2011).

24 See Gregory Sholette, *Dark Matter: Art, Politics and the Age of the Enterprise Culture* (London: Pluto Press, 2009).

and co-operation, the emphasis is goal-oriented and comes without actual solidarity. Collaboration often takes place only for the purposes of content production and is not discussed in terms of the organisation of work. Such questions of how power and precarity define workplace relations remain unaddressed, thus marginalising essential work / life co-operative skills. The truth is we are deeply reliant on other people – the realms of Eton and Oxbridge, Harvard and Yale know this only too well. They operate according to exclusive networks through which an elite passes on jobs, money and resources to each other, contrary to the myths of meritocracy and the tenacious, ingenious individual they invoke to justify their own positions.

Solidarity is a very different kind of relating to and helping one another, of improving one's work and life. It is fundamentally linked to justice and ethics. It calls for standing together with other people. Solidarity becomes concrete when we consider how we think about our career dreams. How can we 'get there' differently? Do we actually like the way the 'there' operates? Since competition produces anxiety and stress, it can be a relief when the classroom becomes a space where it is possible to deconstruct this narrative and make room to explore more co-operative economies and goals. This process of addressing individualised competitiveness builds solidarities between students – and opens teaching to collective transformation.

Talking about and not assuming working conditions, recognising each other's value, not blaming the individual who can't (self-)manage or cope, addressing actual conditions and cultures of work are all ways of opening up the classroom to conversations around a number of issues. Here are some ideas for initiating debate in the classroom:

Frame work experience/placements/internships as something other than a way into a profession. Support and empower students to have more autonomy when dealing with work placements.

Prepare students for placements by giving workshops on 'ethical internships', critically reading the placement/internship descriptions, ethical contracts, labour rights, giving information on asking for a fee/wage, understanding the role of the unions and collective bargaining, as well as the wider context of the neoliberal economy.

Encourage work placements or internships as a kind of field-study, workers' enquiry or Militant Research, 'what are the working conditions in the (creative) industries from your experience – what is desirable about it, what isn't?' so that even if students insist on undertaking an internship/free labour, they pay attention to the working conditions.

Start up conversations about the material conditions required to even take up an internship or free labour. What role do gender, race, class and ability play in even the possibility of committing to this type of employment and how might they also shape the work environment? Give students the opportunity to critique placements and report back critically on their experiences. Organise critical feedback sessions when students return from placements so they can share information with other students who did not do the placements. Discuss different models of survival and subsistence and conceptions of success that artists and cultural workers use and the relationship their art practice has to earning a living. Introduce co-operation in the form of workers' co-ops and networks of mutual support, alternative economies, affinity groups, and the commons as they exist in a whole range of sectors. These are not only ways to cope with capitalism, but also serve as fertile ground for other ways of life informed by relations outside capitalism. Investigate alternative historical models that deal with the relationship between education and work, for example that of radical educator Celestin Freinet, who introduced 'Pedagogy of Work' or the activities of the Artist Placement Group.

**This is an open invitation to both educators and students to use and build on this pack. We'd love to hear what you make of it.**



# Influences

By tracing the influences of various pedagogies, methods and other approaches, this section aims to locate *Training For Exploitation?* within a well-established tradition that understands education – and, in many cases, work-related education – as a catalyst for change. More indicative than conclusive, the following thumbnails aim to acknowledge key characteristics of these ways of working. We also offer a few reflections along the way on how the Precarious Workers Brigade has engaged within these genealogies. We do so as a way of grounding these principles and highlighting how they have inspired our self-constitution and collectivism, which, in turn, allows us to connect with other groups who share our commitment to education in the service of widespread social change.

There is a sustained attempt on the part of the corporate elite, right wing fundamentalists, and others to disconnect the university from its role as a democratic public sphere capable of producing a critical formative culture and set of institutions in which complicated ideas can be engaged, authority challenged, power held accountable, and public intellectuals produced.\*

Militant research is not about studying militants, rather it takes its name from Martin Luther King Jr's particular sense of militancy as 'persistence, and therefore balance, rather than violence'.<sup>1</sup> A distinguishing characteristic of militant research is that it is 'a place where activism and academia meet'.<sup>2</sup> It foregrounds a production of knowledge that is bottom up, instigated and conducted by those affected and struggling for transformation. And it poses the questions: For whom are we producing knowledge? For academics or 'experts'? As labour scholar and activist Andrew Ross puts it, 'more often than not, it entails the researchers' active and committed participation in the political movement of their subjects... militant research involves participation by conviction, where researchers play a role in actions and share the goals, strategies, and experience of their comrades because of their own committed beliefs... The outcomes of the research are shaped in a way that can serve as a useful tool for the activist group'.<sup>3</sup> Methods include counter-mapping, citizen journalism and collective visioning.

Militant Research has informed much of the Precarious Workers Brigade's focus on the production of collective analysis and on creating tools for changing practices in the arts and higher education sectors. For example, rather than write individual papers for our research outputs that few people will ever read, we decided to collectively reflect on our own implication in training for exploitation and produce a hopefully useful resource for other educators.

Originally developed by Paulo Freire in the 1960s in Brazil, but taken up by many popular and social justice movements, Pedagogy of the Oppressed is a philosophy of education, which brings theory and practice together, recognising that people bring their own experiences to learning. Critical of the 'banking concept of education' in which learners are seen to be recipients of knowledge, Freire proposes problem-posing and dialogic forms of knowledge production through which groups develop shared reflections and analysis of the issues in their lives. Applied originally to literacy training, but extended into many other subject areas, this approach is concerned with understanding underlying ideologies that perpetuate social injustices and directly responding to them. It can be used to provide a framework for people to share their life experiences of work and education, and to act upon them.

The ideal of the average  
pedagogist is not a  
complete, wellrounded,  
original being; rather  
does he seek that  
the result of his art  
of pedagogy shall be  
automatons of flesh and  
blood, to best fit into  
the treadmill of society  
and the emptiness and  
dullness of our lives.†

Freire, Paulo. *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. New York: Continuum, 1972.

Freire, Paulo and Ira Shor. *A Pedagogy for Liberation*. Westport, CT: Greenwood Publishing Group, 1987.

Radical Education Forum. *Radical Education Workbook*. 2012. Available online: [www.dropbox.com/s/kslnm5ll14atih6/ref%20workbook.pdf](http://www.dropbox.com/s/kslnm5ll14atih6/ref%20workbook.pdf)

Bookchin, Natalie et al. *Militant Research Handbook*. New York: NYU Steinhardt, 2013. Available online: [www.visualculturenow.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/09/MRH\\_Web.pdf](http://www.visualculturenow.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/09/MRH_Web.pdf)

Similar to militant research, action research connects critical enquiry to effecting change. Participatory Action Research was developed by critical sociologists in the 1970s, many of whom left their work in universities to put their analytic skills to work in the anti-colonial struggles of the poor. Building on Freire's Pedagogy of the Oppressed, PAR works through cycles of reflection, analysis and action, to support those most affected by an issue in producing an analysis of its dimensions with the aim of acting upon it. Researchers in communities of struggle, often called co-researchers, are involved in the research process as active, credited researchers. The Public Science Project refers to how PAR 'positions those most intimately impacted by research as leaders in shaping research questions, framing interpretations, and designing meaningful research products and actions'.<sup>4</sup> A number of varying research practices come under the name Participatory or Action Research today, but often do not share this dimension of co-research, nor the aim of social justice, both of which are defining characteristics of PAR. Precarious Workers Brigade work with interns and educators in the field of art engaging with PAR methods in order to develop the analysis that underpins this guide.

Fals-Borda, Orlando and Mohammad Anisur Rahman. *Action and Knowledge: Breaking the Monopoly With Participatory Action Research*. New York: Apex, 1991.

Malo de Molina, Marta. 'Common Notions, Part 2: Institutional Analysis, Participatory Action-Research, Militant Research'. *European Institute for Progressive Cultural Politics* (August 2004), accessed 24 July 2016. [www.eipecp.net/transversal/0707/malo/en](http://www.eipecp.net/transversal/0707/malo/en)

Consciousness raising was an essential organising tool for second wave radical feminists. The idea was that, rather than learn about women's oppression through studying pre-existing literature, one would start with one's own experiences. In groups, women listened to each other's feelings and experiences and, through that, came to understand the specific and systemic conditions that underlined and pulled together all these supposedly personal experiences. From these supportive discussions came the process of theorisation (many influential pamphlets and books were written in this period) and action. Consciousness raising has, at times, been reduced to a pre-stage, after which the real work (organising and action) starts. But we might better understand it as an ongoing process, where practices of coming together, talking, listening, analysing and activating our knowledge are integral parts of organising and movement building. PWB has strong feminist roots and it is important to us that we come to understand precarity through our own experiences and develop analysis, collectivity and actions that are relevant to our lives. This was an important mandate for *Precarity: A Participatory People's Tribunal* at the ICA (20 March 2011) in which we, along with other precarious workers, put the arts on trial. By sharing the testimonies of precarious workers, we aimed to create a body of knowledge that others might use to recognise how precarity feeds on our desires, affecting our minds and bodies. Creating solidarity through shared experience points to consciousness raising as a catalyst for taking action and making change.

Sarachild, Kathi. 'Consciousness-Raising: A Radical Weapon'. In *Feminist Revolution*, edited by Redstockings, p.144-150. Random House, New York, 1978. Available online: [www.womenwhatistobedone.files.wordpress.com/2013/09/1973-consciousness-raising-radical-weapon-k-sarachild-redstockings.pdf](http://www.womenwhatistobedone.files.wordpress.com/2013/09/1973-consciousness-raising-radical-weapon-k-sarachild-redstockings.pdf)

Malo de Molina, Marta. 'Common Notions, Part 2: Institutional Analysis, Participatory Action-Research, Militant Research'. *European Institute for Progressive Cultural Politics* (August 2004), accessed 24 July 2016. [www.eipecp.net/transversal/0707/malo/en](http://www.eipecp.net/transversal/0707/malo/en)

Critical of the state's hold on education, its function of imparting norms and supplying submissive workers and consumers to the economy, anarchists have argued for the creation of spaces outside of the school system that allow for situated, creative, playful, self-determined, non-coercive, questioning and collective learning. The aim is to cultivate free, fully-rounded individuals able to collectively shape their realities and create free communities. This often involves teaching from a class-conscious perspective – questioning what we are learning, why and on whose terms? – as well as encouraging artistic practice. Free schools, democratic schools, social centres, skill swaps, self-organised study groups and other forms of 'informal education', as well as some types of workplace- and museum-based education, are all experiments in libertarian pedagogies, prefiguring a free society in the here and now.

Anarchist approaches to education can allow us to radically rethink and undo existing education systems, rather than leaving them a bit bruised from critique, but relatively unscathed. Anarchist pedagogies acknowledge embodied forms of 'situated' knowledge, rejecting the notion of objectivity. We are all implicated in the research we are doing, never neutral observers unaffected by or unaffecteding the knowledge we are pursuing.

People can be passive recipients of knowledge — whatever the content — or they can engage in a 'problem-posing' approach in which they become active participants. As part of this approach, it is essential that people link knowledge to action so that they actively work to change their societies at a local level and beyond. ‡

Haworth, Robert. *Anarchist Pedagogies: Collective Actions, Theories, and Critical Reflections on Education*. Oakland, CA: PM Press, 2012.  
 Suissa, Judith. *Anarchism and Education: A Philosophical Perspective*. Oakland, CA: PM Press, 2006.

Drawing on Spinoza's philosophies of bodily experience, Brian Massumi defines affect in relational terms: a body's 'ability to affect and be affected'.<sup>5</sup> Awareness of our bodies can result in a heightened sense of the power relations inherent in systems of education. One of the ways that PWB deploys affective pedagogy in its collective practice is by 'taking the temperature of the group'. Each person in attendance offers a few reflections on where they're at, how they are feeling about the situation in question and so on. This process of sharing can often bring to the surface and transmit tacit and other bodily knowledge that can otherwise be difficult to grasp. Through engaging in exercises like temperature taking, we can gain insight into the ways in which our individual bodies work together in a shared becoming, a collective body that can, in turn, affect and be affected by other individual and collective bodies.

Massumi, Brian. 'Notes on the Translation and Acknowledgements'. In Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1987.  
 The Nanopolitics Group, *Nanopolitics Handbook*. New York: Minor Compositions, 2013. Available online: [www.minorcompositions.info/?p=590](http://www.minorcompositions.info/?p=590)

Workers' Education comes from an inspirational history of working-class self-organised adult education connected with trade union and labour movements. The Workers' Education Association (WEA), founded in 1903, is an organisation dedicated to delivering classes across a number of countries, particularly to adults who have not moved through standard educational institutions. They understand education as a democratic learning process where teachers and students work together as equals. Connecting education and work is an important way of exploring and investigating the material conditions we experience. In so doing, it can be a way to unearth the unequal aspects of our working lives.

*Training for Exploitation?* similarly rejects the idea of training purely for work or for 'future-proofing' our careers, and instead emphasises an awareness of the effect of work on our lives more generally and how this might inform the ways we work.

Work place skills' training is aimed at improving workers productivity and ensuring that they progress through promotions into more skilled jobs; however, this kind of training supports the capital agenda, makes the worker a better 'slave', and does not contribute to change in the structural relations between the forces of production.<sup>§</sup>

Workers' Educational Association. *A Brief History of the Workers' Educational Association*. London: Matrix, 2013. Available online: [www.issuu.com/weasheffieldwea/docs/history\\_booklet](http://www.issuu.com/weasheffieldwea/docs/history_booklet)  
 Waugh, Colin. *Plebs – The Lost Legacy of Independent Working-Class Education*. London: Upstream Limited, 2009. Available online: [www.ifyoucan.org.uk/PSE/Home\\_files/PSE%20Plebs%20pamphlet.pdf](http://www.ifyoucan.org.uk/PSE/Home_files/PSE%20Plebs%20pamphlet.pdf)

By taking on the role of investigators 'using sophisticated powers of detection', we can find out more about organisations and individuals in public and private sectors.<sup>6</sup> While all research involves investigation, 'investigative research' refers to methods for exposing social ills, including corruption in the public and private spheres. Through, for instance, exercising the Freedom of Information Act, we gain valuable knowledge and a better sense of how power operates. Evidence and information can then be shared using creative methods of storytelling (such as photo-romances). The tools we have to access information that might be hidden from us are manifold, from eliciting documents from government departments, local authorities and councils and securing intel about private companies whose businesses intersect with public authorities to becoming a 'web detective', who is able to cut through the spin and seek out those who might hold knowledge. As part of *Precarity: A Participatory People's Tribunal* at the ICA (20 March 2011), we collected testimonies from former workers to find out about the labour practices of the institution.

Gordon Nesbitt, Rebecca. *How to Conduct Investigative Research*. Glasgow: University of Strathclyde, 2011. Available online: [www.bookleteer.com/publication.html?id=930](http://www.bookleteer.com/publication.html?id=930)

## REFLEXIVE PRACTICE

Being reflexive involves critically examining one's own assumptions and opinions – how these might influence the way we teach and research – and then taking action to align espoused values and values in use. The reflexive, feminist researcher, for example, is embodied in a research process of 'permanent partiality'.<sup>7</sup> This means refusing to base politics on any supposedly universal identities, such as 'women', and instead embracing realities that are necessarily conflicted and dynamic. Adopting this position results in greater awareness of one's own non-innocence, subjectivity and relationship to one's research. The neutrality of the researcher is thrown into question, while power relations in the research are placed under the spotlight. In the context of practice, reflexivity builds on reflection, as the reflective practitioner critically and creatively thinks about experience in order to learn from it. John Dewey and Donald Schön among others have written about the significance of reflective practice.

Power was  
trying to  
teach us  
individualism  
and profit...  
We were  
not good  
students.<sup>1</sup>

Haraway, Donna. *The Haraway Reader*.

New York and London: Routledge, 2004.

Dewey, John. *How We Think. A Restatement of the Relation of Reflective Thinking to the Educative Process* (Revised edition), Boston: D C Heath, 1933.

Schön, Donald. *The Reflective Practitioner: How Professionals Think in Action*. New York: Basic Books, 1983.

## FORUM THEATRE

Forum theatre techniques are based on Paulo Freire's ideas of critical pedagogy. Developed by Augusto Boal in the 1970s in the context of the military regime in Brazil and as part of his Theatre of the Oppressed, these theatrical techniques allow people to 'rehearse' change. Experiences of oppression common to a group of people are workshopped with the group. A specific situation of this oppression is then re-enacted to a wider audience. In a second iteration, the audience are asked to become what Boal calls 'spect-actors'. They are invited to stop the script, take the place of the oppressed in the scene, and enact ways of resisting in this situation. This is followed by a collective discussion and somebody else proposing a different intervention. In order to reflect on all aspects of power, spect-actors also take the place of oppressors. Participation in a forum theatre can empower people to take action in their own lives.

These techniques were useful to us in workshopping our own experiences of desire and exploitation as interns and precariously employed artists and educators. Some of the scenes were turned into photoromances, others became groundwork for developing tools like the Bust Your Boss Card or were fed into the People's Tribunal on Precarity. We have included exercises that draw on forum theatre in the Teaching Tools section.

Boal, Augusto. *Theatre of the Oppressed*.

New York: Theatre Communications Group, 1993.

Boal, Augusto. *Games for Actors and Non-Actors*. London: Routledge, 1992.

## \*

Henri Giroux, 'Beyond the Limits of Neoliberal Higher Education: Global Youth Resistance and the American/British Divide', Campaign for the Public University, 7 November 2011, accessed 24 July 2016, [www.publicuniversity.org.uk/2011/11/07/beyond-the-limits-of-neoliberal-higher-education-global-youth-resistance-and-the-americanbritish-divide](http://www.publicuniversity.org.uk/2011/11/07/beyond-the-limits-of-neoliberal-higher-education-global-youth-resistance-and-the-americanbritish-divide)

## †

Emma Goldman, 'The Child and its Enemies', *Mother Earth* Vol.1 No.2 (1906): 7–14, cited in Robert H. Haworth, 'Introduction', in *Anarchist Pedagogies: Collective Actions, Theories and Critical Reflections on Education*, ed. Robert H. Haworth (Oakland, CA: PM Press, 2012), 8.

## ‡

Freire Institute, 'Paulo Freire': [www.freire.org/paulo-freire](http://www.freire.org/paulo-freire)

## §

Workers' College, 'What is Worker Education?' [www.workerscollege.org.za/about-us/what-is-worker-education](http://www.workerscollege.org.za/about-us/what-is-worker-education)

## ¶

Compañera Ana Maria, cited by Levi Gahman, 'Education: A Lesson from the Zapatistas', *Roar!*, 4 April 2016, accessed 24 July 2016, [www.roarmag.org/essays/neoliberal-education-zapatista-pedagogy](http://www.roarmag.org/essays/neoliberal-education-zapatista-pedagogy)

- 1 Natalie Bookchin et al, *Militant Research Handbook* (New York: NYU Steinhardt, 2013), 4.
- 2 Natalie Bookchin et al, *Militant Research Handbook* (New York: NYU Steinhardt, 2013), 6.
- 3 Natalie Bookchin et al, *Militant Research Handbook* (New York: NYU Steinhardt, 2013), 8.
- 4 The Public Science Project, 'Participatory Action Research As Public Science', [www.publicscienceproject.org](http://www.publicscienceproject.org)
- 5 Brian Massumi, 'Notes on the Translation and Acknowledgements', In *A Thousand Plateaus*:

*Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari, trans Brian Massumi (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1987), p.xvi.

- 6 For further guidance on this approach, see Rebecca Gordon Nesbitt, *How to Conduct Investigative Research* (Glasgow: University of Strathclyde, 2011).
- 7 Donna Haraway, *The Haraway Reader* (New York and London: Routledge, 2004), p.31.

# Teaching Tools

The exercises featured here can help us better understand the conditions of our lived experience. Through appreciating social, political, economic and other forces, we can develop sharper and more sensitive understandings of how we as individuals and communities negotiate the various contexts that organise our realities. These insights include how we relate to work as freelancers, self-employed, employee, volunteers, interns or these and other positions in combination. Where do they overlap and where are they distinct? Mapping these relations can help us come to terms with where and how exploitation occurs. This is foundational to self-organising networks of solidarity that resist injustice and promote more equitable alternatives distinguished by safe and desirable working conditions and a fair wage for work done.

The exercises in this section draw upon alternative pedagogies, critical thinking, useful definitions and extra-disciplinary research methods designed to support change, often related to social justice. Personal experience and practical engagement are touchstones throughout as we locate ourselves and appreciate the situated and specific position from which we act. The lesson plans sketched below are only rough guidelines and should be embraced as prompts for inspiration, as much as anything else. We are always looking for new material, so please send along exercises, tactics and other resources that you would like to share.

## SHORT MAPPING AND ANALYSIS EXERCISES

The following exercises run from between 10 to 30 minutes. They can be used within a lesson to engage students with a topic in different ways.

Active Listening, p. 30  
Spectrum Voting, p. 31  
Target Practice, p. 32–33  
Free Association, p. 34–35  
Paid/Unpaid Work Schedule, p. 36–37

## EXERCISES FOR INVESTIGATING INTERNSHIPS

These exercises help students interrogate internships and the intern culture.

Analysing an Advert, p. 38–40  
Photoromance (Quick Version), p. 41–43  
Discussing Internship or Volunteering Guidelines, p. 44–45  
Making the Argument..., p. 46  
The Making of a Resource or Tool, p. 47

## LONGER AND MORE COMPLEX EXERCISES AND TACTICS

The following exercises and tactics take a little more time and often benefit from several sessions that are spaced days or weeks apart. They can be joined with other exercises.

Writing Open Letters, p. 48–50  
Bust Your Boss, p. 51–53  
Manifestos, p. 54–55  
People's Tribunal, p. 56–57



## ACTIVE LISTENING

Duration:

20 minutes (two turns of 5 minutes, plus 10 minutes discussion)

Student numbers:

2–30 students

Active listening can be used to explore a personal and/or affective dimension of an issue. You might, for example, introduce it after watching a video or reading a case study that deals with pertinent issues around free labour, affective labour, debt or precarity.

Students are asked to work with the person next to them and, in turns, take on the role of the talker/listener. The listener simply listens without interrupting, chiming in, or reacting in any dramatic way – she simply gives the other person the space to express him/herself for the given amount of time. Then the other person contributes. Afterwards, participants are encouraged to share any insights they may have gained (you might want to think about making sure sensitive issues are kept confidential).

Example questions:

How did that make you feel?

Does it remind you of anything that has happened in your life?

What positive or negative experiences of internships/working for free have you had, if any?

This tool can also be combined into a larger exercise such as the People's Tribunal in order to allow people to digest and reflect on evidence before coming up with demands and recommendations.

## SPECTRUM VOTING

Duration:

20 minutes

Student numbers:

group of 4–15 students

This exercise is a physical one and needs a bit of space. A large classroom in which some tables and chairs can be moved should be sufficient. Invite students to stand up and arrange themselves along an imaginary axis between two different positions, the opposite poles representing strongly agreeing or strongly disagreeing with a statement. Ask people at different places along the line to explain why they have stood in that particular spot. Use this to start a larger discussion about the issue.

Example questions

How willing are you to work for free?

Would your position change if you considered the experience relevant to your future career?

Or if you thought you were aiding a worthwhile cause?

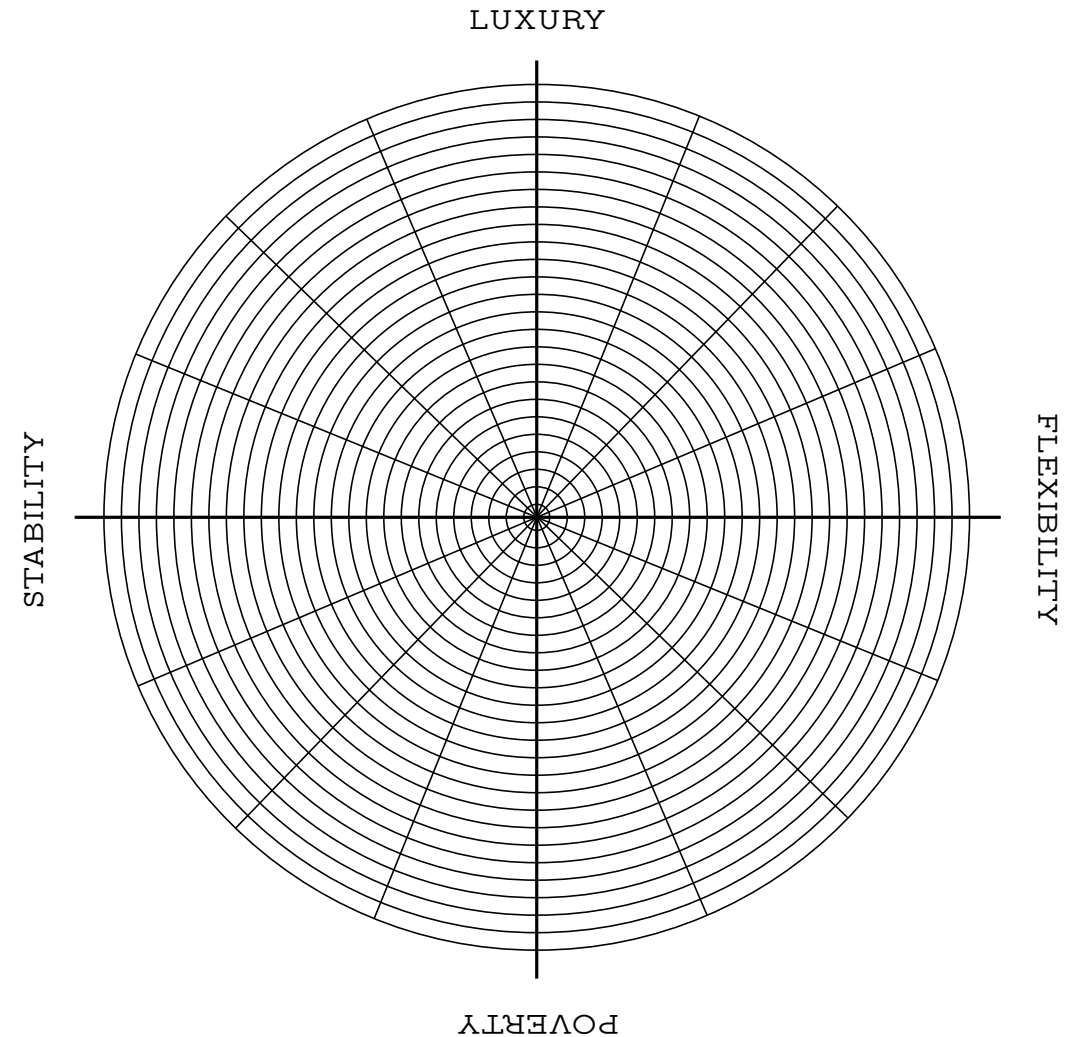
Where do you stand on competitive versus co-operative labour?

## TARGET PRACTICE

Duration:  
30 minutes

Student numbers:  
group of 4–15 students

This exercise can either be completed on paper or physically, if there is enough space. Photocopy the 'target' opposite or create physical axes in the space using heavy-duty tape. You can print or write the terms onto four sheets of paper and place these at the end of the axes. Invite participants to either mark on their paper copy or stand where they feel they are in relation to the axes both now and at a time in the future where they would like to be. If people are standing, you can suggest they use a coloured shape on the floor to show where they have stood. Ask people at different positions why they stood where they did. Use this for the basis of a group discussion. This can be a good exercise for discussing attitudes towards hopes, fears and desires for the future as well as students' present situations. The terms themselves are also open for discussion, for instance, poverty and luxury can pertain as much to time as to money.



Mapping your working life

## FREE ASSOCIATION

Duration:

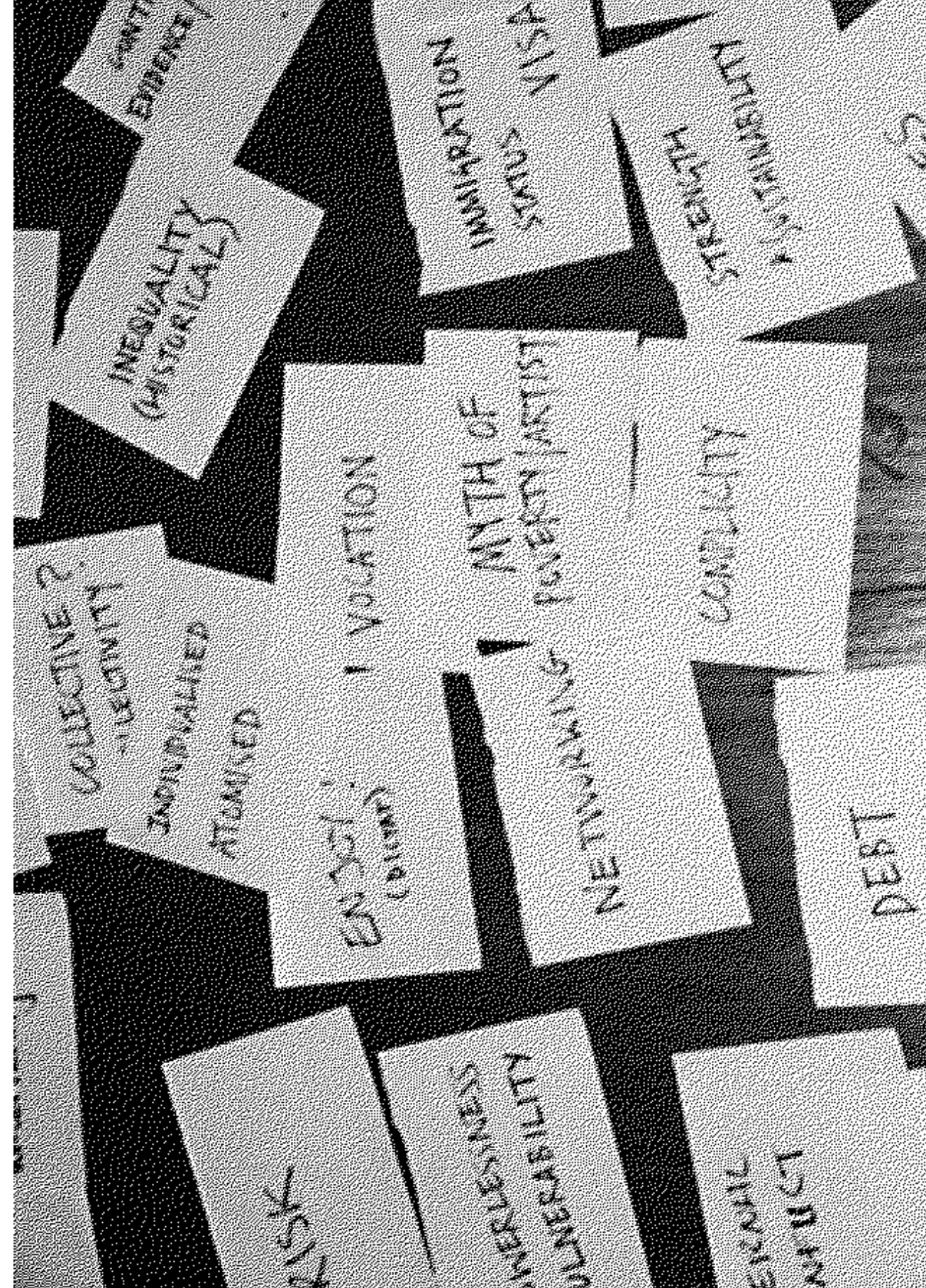
30 minutes

(10 minutes to brainstorm, 20 minutes for group discussion)

Student numbers:

Group of 4–15 students

Students are given a term you want them to discuss (for example, 'creative work', 'internship', 'voluntary work', or 'precarity' – see image opposite from a workshop) and asked to write words they associate with the term on post-its or pieces of paper. These are then grouped and discussed collectively. This exercise can help the group to map out the often-contradictory aspects of perhaps seemingly straightforward terms and to engage in a critical discussion about them. The exercise allows for the inclusion of terms that complicate the picture (for example, health, visa, childcare).

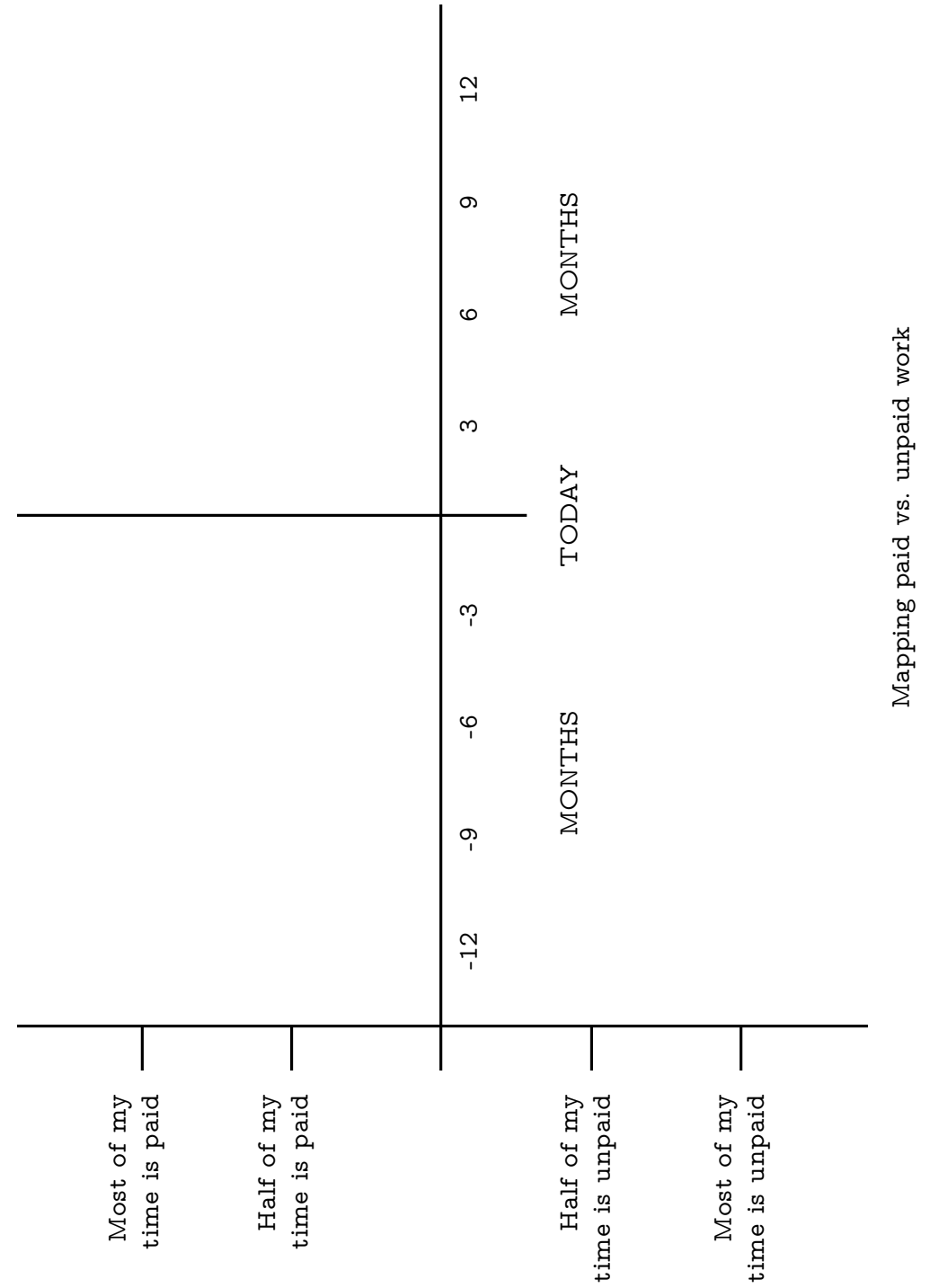


PAID/UNPAID WORK SCHEDULE

Duration:  
20 minutes

Student numbers:  
4–25 students

Ask students to fill in their own weekly schedule using the table provided or similar. The task is to map paid and unpaid work, shading in one's different types of work and projects. To do this, students might need to define what they see as 'work'. Encourage them to share their completed schedules with their neighbour and then broaden to a wider discussion on work. The Wages for Housework campaign in the 1970s could be used as a historical comparison in order to open out the discussion about 'productive' and 'reproductive' labour, value, gender, class, and race.



## ANALYSING AN ADVERT FOR AN INTERNSHIP/VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITY

Duration:  
45 minutes  
(20 minutes to 'read', 25 minutes to discuss reflections)

Student numbers:  
Small groups of 4-5 students

Together, students read internship/volunteering adverts with their group. This can be a quite playful exercise, students could annotate the ad with their comments, and it could form part of the manifesto exercise below. Encourage them to 'read between the lines', and interrogate the institutional/euphemistic language used in the ads to describe the jobs. Out of this, you can develop more serious discussions about the kind of work/situation that is offered.

Example questions:

How is language used to represent the job (is it part of the 'passion industry' discourse, does it appeal to one's sense of moral duty, is it pure neoliberal discourse, or all of the above)?

Does it fulfil the legal requirements of National Minimum Wage legislation? In what ways might it be targeting a particular group of people and excluding others with the language it uses or the skills it presumes?

**Junior Graphic Design Voluntary Internship at**

Design Studio is looking for a talented, enthusiastic junior graphic designer to join the team as an Intern. This new position is a great opportunity for you to experience a wide variety of design projects at . This voluntary position is offered for a six-month period, three consecutive days a week (preferably Wednesday - Friday), commencing at the beginning of March.

→ SMILE AND JUST SAY YES

YOU HAVE TO BE AVAILABLE ON THOSE DAYS

→ MORE DAYS REQUIRED

We are looking for an individual with flair and flexibility. Working closely with Graphic Designer, you will need to be an engaged, collaborative, friendly team player, who will be able to assist and contribute to new and existing projects. → DO WHAT YOU ARE TOLD

You will help with the design for exciting creative projects for a range of departments within . Projects may include posters, invites, programmes, flyers and other branded material. You will also be providing general assistance and support to Design Studio. → COPY AND PASTE LAYOUTS

POSITION FOR PEOPLE WHO HAVE BEEN MADE REDUNDANT

You will need to be educated to graduate level in a relevant creative field, with demonstrable experience of design for the arts, good typographic skills, attention to detail and extensive familiarity with Adobe Creative Suite. → FREE LABOUR THEY DO NOT WANT TO EMPLOY

Although unpaid, this opportunity would provide someone with both an interest in art and design the chance to join leading professionals in the sector and to develop their skills. You will receive a travel and lunch allowance and additional benefits including free entry to exhibitions for the duration of your placement and additional benefits from being a member of staff. → NO TIME TO SEE EXHIBITS AS YOU WILL BE WORKING

Please note that this internship is offered as a volunteer activity and as such is understood to be outside the scope of the National Minimum Wage legislation. → COVERING THEIR BACKS

How to apply

DO YOU TICK THEIR BOXES

To apply for this placement please download the application form from www.

We will only accept applications via email. Please send your application form along with a PDF showing a range of work (five to ten projects) that you consider relevant to this position. Note only PDF examples of work will be accepted - do not send hard copy prints. Email to @

→ NO STUDENTS ALLOWED ONLY PROFESSIONALS

Only successful applicants will be contacted for interview. Due to the demands on the Design Studio, increasing postal costs and our constant need to make the best possible use of our resources, we will be unable to respond to each applicant, so if you haven't heard from us within two weeks of the application deadline, please assume that you were unsuccessful in this attempt. → CANT BE BOTHERED TO SEND A REJECTION EMAIL

The closing date for the return of completed application forms with PDF samples is Friday 5 February by 17.00. If you are shortlisted, we will invite you to meet us for an interview and to take a short test.

Unfortunately is unable to make an offer of permanent employment at the end of the programme.

↓

THIS MEANS THEY WILL KEEP ON EMPLOYING UNEMPLOYED PROFESSIONALS FOR FREE TO SAVE COSTS

PHOTO-ROMANCE  
(QUICK VERSION)

Duration:  
10 minutes

Student numbers:  
3 students per group

Use the example sheet shown or create your own from a magazine or similar. In small groups, ask students to fill in the speech bubbles to reflect their ideas about work placements, internships or similar. This can then be used as part of a wider discussion.

**Applying for an internship at the**

Our Internship scheme provides invaluable experience for anyone over the age of 18 wishing to work in the Arts. Please note: The is a charity and all internships are offered on a voluntary/unpaid basis. We usually advertise for all internship opportunities on our website. All vacancies are also placed the mailing list.

**What the expects from Interns**

Interest in contemporary arts and the programme  
Excellent spoken and written English essential  
Good telephone manner and ability to take clear messages  
Willingness to undertake wide range of duties

*VAGUE  
E.G. CLEAN,  
PUT STAMPS  
ON ENVELOPES*

*DO ANYTHING  
YOU ARE TOLD E.G. MAKE  
COFFEE*

**What Interns can expect from the**

To gain experience, working in all aspects of a busy, high profile multidisciplinary arts centre  
Travel expenses: Travel card zones 1-4 → IF YOU DONT LIVE IN LONDON TOUGH LUCK!  
Average of 30 to 40 hours per week  
staff card for duration of internship  
Complimentary tickets to events (where possible) and selected cinemas  
20% discount at the Bookshop

*WHEN IS THERE TIME TO STUDY OR SOCIALISE?*

*RUNNING AROUND WORKING MORE HOURS THAN SPECIFIED*

*BUY BOOKS WITH NO MONEY*

*NO TIME AS YOU WILL BE WORKING*

**How to Apply**

In order to apply for an internship vacancy, you must fill out an Internship application form which is available to download from this page.

The Internship application form is designed to enable you to give the short-listing department full and clear information about yourself. To ensure we treat all applicants fairly we do not make any assumptions, we only look at what you have told us about yourself on the form.

*MAKE SURE YOU TICK THEIR BOXES*

*COVERING THEIR BACKS  
NO BLAME*

Excellent spoken and written English is essential. If you do not meet these standards your application will not be considered.

If your application is considered suitable for an internship vacancy, a member of the recruiting Department will contact you to arrange an interview. Due to the high volume of applications we cannot reply to all applicants. If you do not hear from us within one month, then unfortunately your application has been unsuccessful.

*NO FOREIGNERS*

*CANT BE BOTHERED TO RESPOND*

Please note: Please apply for a specific vacancy only as we do not keep unsolicited applications on file. Internships cannot be guaranteed as there are always more people interested than places available.

Please return your completed Internship application form to:  
Internship Department  
London  
UK

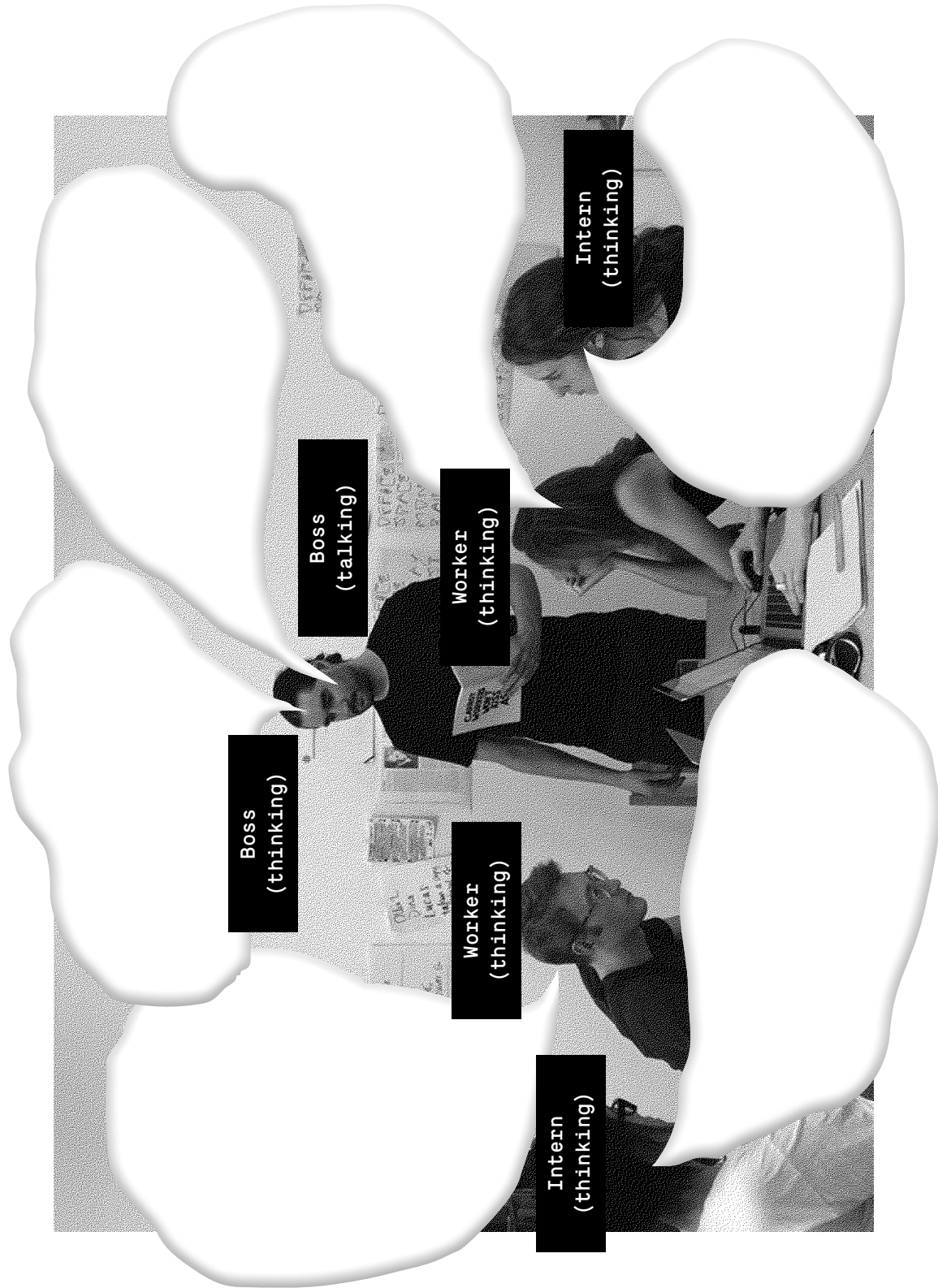
Alternatively, if you wish to return your application form by email, please send it to  
@

We look forward to receiving your application.

*WILL ONLY TAKE YOU WHEN THEY HAVE NO MONEY TO PAY YOU*

*YES THEY DO!*

Monday meeting at the cultural institution,  
the Boss is briefing on an unexpected event...



Setting up for an event...



DISCUSSING INTERNSHIP  
OR VOLUNTEERING GUIDELINES

Duration:  
2 hour workshop

Student numbers:  
5-25 students

This workshop is designed for students or graduates who are about to start an internship or volunteering situation, especially when there is no formal agreement between the university and the organisation (which we would hope there is!).

The group starts by discussing what basic (and then more complex) principles and provisions need to be agreed upon in order to make the internship or volunteering educational and valuable for the student. A list of general themes could be collectively identified. Then details can be worked on in small groups. The Carrotworkers' Ethical Internship Contract and the UAL's Fair Internship animation ([www.bit.ly/1tLBzbo](http://www.bit.ly/1tLBzbo)) might be useful for the discussion.

We feel that, during this exercise, it is important to stress that an ethical contract doesn't solve the issue of free labour or low paid precarious work conditions. It should, however, make it possible to start conversations on these topics in the workplace. It is hard to say what an ethical contract may look like within a system so flawed and inherently exploitative. Yet setting out reciprocal obligations in the form of a contract can give students ground for negotiating and help them get what they really want from the internship.

Contract for an Ethical Internship

1. Intern Induction: A detailed induction shall be carried out on the first day of the placement, covering introductions to other staff, office procedures, expected practice in an office environment, health and safety, details of complaint procedures and company confidentiality requirements.
2. Preliminary Assessment and Tasks:
  - 2.1 Assessment of intern's skills shall determine aim of tasks during employment. Intern is allowed to negotiate the terms of these tasks.
  - 2.2 Intern is to be given a variety of tasks that fully utilize their skills.
  - 2.3 Intern shall not be given repetitive tasks.
3. Assigning Supervisor / Mentor and Inclusion:
  - 3.1 Upon commencement of internship a supervisor or mentor is assigned to the intern, with whom a contract with clear learning objectives and tasks are formulated from the start.
  - 3.2 Intern shall be given the opportunity to shadow supervisor/mentor and to sit in on meetings, and see how processes work, how decisions are made.
  - 3.3 Intern shall not be excluded from meetings.
4. Expenses: Travel and lunch expenses will always be included when paid wage is not present.
5. Exit Interview:
  - 5.1 An exit interview with mentor and intern where by an assessment of contracted goals set at beginning of internship is discussed. Documentation of this shall be provided to intern.
  - 5.2 Even if the internship in the institution doesn't lead to a job there, there should be some support for finding a job afterwards.
  - 5.3 Repetitive relocation within same institution of internships is not allowed. Intern must be offered contracted paid position.
  - 5.4 Workplace must limit the number of internships, having clear progression to paid and contracted work.
6. Special Consideration: Consideration should be given to potential interns who cannot afford to work full time for free opening opportunity to workers from all economic backgrounds. (Eg. Limiting work hours during week, limiting length of internships, stipends if the hours required exceed a certain amount.)
7. Acknowledging Contribution and Credit: Projects in which intern contributes labour, acknowledgment by name and recognised contribution shall be given. I accept the terms outlined in this contract for an ethical internship.

Signature of Employee \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

Signature of Employer \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_



MAKING THE ARGUMENT AGAINST UNPAID  
INTERNSHIPS/VOLUNTEERING – AN ESSAY ASSIGNMENT

Students are asked to write a letter to an institution in which they make an informed, complex and well-researched argument against unpaid internship and/or volunteering. For this, they need to engage with the arguments made by the chosen organisation in their adverts, as well as those put forward by campaigners and scholars. Students can also be encouraged to lay out what a better situation would look like.

It would make sense for this assignment to follow a collective analysis of internship adverts or a lecture that familiarises students with the issues. An example could be this letter by the campaign group Intern Labor Rights: [www.internlaborrights.files.wordpress.com/2013/04/open-letter-to-robertas.pdf](http://www.internlaborrights.files.wordpress.com/2013/04/open-letter-to-robertas.pdf)

THE MAKING OF A RESOURCE OR TOOL

Duration:  
Minimum 2 day workshop

Student numbers:  
3–25 students

This exercise draws on Freinet's 'pedagogy of work and co-operative learning,' which suggests that students learn by making useful products or providing useful services. The workshop asks a group of students to develop a resource that can be useful to others in raising awareness and thinking through their relationship to free labour/placements/work in the context of their sector.

For example, the following workshop took place with design students at the HGB Leipzig, where work placements are part of the curriculum. After an introduction to the notion of precarity, labour in the arts and a discussion of their own experiences, the students decided that, since there is frustratingly little good information and guidance available to students, they would put together, design and distribute an info-sheet with analysis, concrete tips and links to resources for other students at their university. They also considered running advice sessions for students to create further support for each other.

These tools could also take different formats, for instance, a card or board game, a map, a flowchart diagram asking questions that help one think about free labour, a short investigative film or a radio show.

## WRITING OPEN LETTERS

### Duration:

Variable, though a minimum of 2–3 hour sessions recommended (one to write the letter and another to write the follow up and/or response)

### Student numbers:

2–25 students, ideally with access to an open source collaborative text editor

### Variation on this exercise:

see below

When it comes to making a complaint or raising an injustice, letter writing may well be as old a tactic as it is an effective one. And its power is only increasing, with the internet proving a powerful platform for sharing letters and seeing what happens next. Ideally, this is an exchange among the affected parties that elaborates the issue in question, followed by action that rectifies the situation. Consider the open letters published at [www.precariousworkersbrigade.tumblr.com/tagged/open-letter](http://www.precariousworkersbrigade.tumblr.com/tagged/open-letter). We've written to Barbican, Serpentine Gallery, Sydney Biennale, ICA, Whitechapel and many more besides.

Using these letters as examples, this session involves working with students to collectively write an open letter to an arts or other organisation who are advertising a position (internship, volunteering, or similar) that promotes unfair labour practices.

Begin by reading the ad together and establishing what makes the position unjust. Is it beyond the scope of volunteering because the expectations are more like those of an employee? Or will it replace a paid position with an unpaid one? Spend some time discussing the position en route to formulating a description of the problem. This is a useful way to familiarise students with what distinguishes different employment roles (employee, worker, volunteer, etc – all defined below).

After stating the injustice in the letter's opening lines, students should then outline why the position is unacceptable and encourage the arts organisation to join with them, PWB and others in addressing free

labour in the arts. Ensure the open letter invites a response. Post it online and advise the addressee of the URL where it can be found. Hopefully, this public 'naming and shaming' will provide sufficient leverage for the arts organisation to reconsider and offer a more appropriate position.

Allow ten days to two weeks for a response to the open letter before following up. Review any responses in subsequent sessions. Respond to these in turn. Has the arts organisation taken appropriate action? If not, why not?

A few things to consider: Central to this exercise is that the letter is collectively written and signed. There is real purchase in taking a stand together and there is real authority in authoring the letter as a group. This also ensures that individuals aren't vulnerable; they won't be blackballed when applying for employment. Something else to consider is the importance of sharing the open letter and response on social media. We use the hashtag #openletter to lodge the ones we write in an online history of struggles. Consider doing the same, and be sure to share materials directly with interested people on social media so that they might like and share in turn.

Finally, be sure to discuss with students the effectiveness of open letters. While change isn't guaranteed, writing is often an important first step. And letters often work well in conjunction with other tactics. Consider PWB's letter to the Serpentine Gallery back in 2013. This primed a joint action with Future Interns that was dubbed, 'All I Want for Christmas Is Pay' in December of that same year. Together, the letter and action proved successful, with Serpentine responding as follows: 'The points you make are valid and we have listened to your protest. We take our responsibility as employers very seriously, and this advertisement is not in line with our current terms on volunteer placements'.

On the following page is PWB's template for an open letter, which we offer out as a tool for anyone to use.

Hello,

We notice that you have recently advertised an unpaid internship.

We understand the pressures publicly funded, non-profit arts organisations such as yours are under. We salute you for taking the time and effort to mentor and train people wanting to work in the arts sector.

However, we are concerned that by not paying people, only those who can afford to work for free will be able to benefit from your internship scheme. As internships are becoming more prevalent than graduate jobs, those who are unable to take up these unpaid ‘opportunities’ are less likely to enter the sector.

This seems unfair and exclusionary. Demonstrating such unfair employment practices also seems to contradict your constitution as a charitable trust.

We wanted to flag this up and ask you to consider the ethics of offering unpaid internships in your organisation. There’s lots of information out there that might help you develop a new and more equitable approach to working with interns. Here are a few links:

Art Council England’s guidelines Internships in the Arts:  
[www.artscouncil.org.uk/advice-and-guidance-library/internships-arts](http://www.artscouncil.org.uk/advice-and-guidance-library/internships-arts)

The Carrotworkers’ Collective’s Counter Guide to Free Labour in the Arts:  
[www.carrotworkers.wordpress.com/counter-internship-guide/](http://www.carrotworkers.wordpress.com/counter-internship-guide/)

Intern Aware:  
[www.internaware.org/about/why-unpaid-internships-are-wrong/](http://www.internaware.org/about/why-unpaid-internships-are-wrong/)

Artquest’s Intern Culture report:  
<http://www.artquest.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/Intern-Culture-report.pdf>

From,

Precarious Workers Brigade  
[precariousworkersbrigade.tumblr.com](http://precariousworkersbrigade.tumblr.com)

-----  
Variation: Students are often encouraged to send their CVs out to employers. But they are rarely encouraged to send out ‘rejection letters’ to those who offer unfair conditions. Consider a mass ‘sendout’ by anonymised writers. Or use pseudonyms – dead artists, cartoon characters, scientific names of trees, etc.

Duration:

2 hour workshop in two sessions

Student numbers:

3 – 25 students

Variation(s) on this exercise:

See various scenarios below

This workshop activates the Bust Your Boss card, a playful tool by PWB to challenge the culture of silence around wages and labour, especially in the arts. This exercise also takes aim at the insufficient advice often given by career services (‘sell yourself’). The workshop allows students to rehearse how they might address and negotiate pay and working conditions in situations like job/internship interviews. It encourages them to go beyond insisting on individual rights and to create collective solidarity instead.

#### SCENARIO 1: THE INTERVIEW

The workshop takes a scene of a job/project/placement interview as its starting point. Typically, in these situations, a lot of time is spent discussing the role and its ‘opportunities’ (and duties), but often there is only a vague or no mention of remuneration, reimbursement of expenses, working hours, union representation and so on.

The group scripts a typical situation of this kind, based on an actual job/internship ad and, where possible, on their own experiences.

Questions to start this process might be:

What positive or negative experiences of (job) interviews have you had, if any, especially with regard to negotiating or clarifying payment, working hours, etc?

How did the interview make you feel?

The typical scenario is then acted out with somebody taking the role of the employer and somebody the prospective employee/freelancer/intern. The rest of the group observes.

The scene is then acted out again, but this time the group is asked to stop where there could be an opportunity for the interviewee to challenge the boss (ie bring up payment or other rights).

The scene is then rewound a bit and acted out as suggested to see how it could end differently, for example, the interviewee walking away with more clarity or even a written contract. What the ideal outcome might be is also up for group discussion. Several scenarios can be played through in this way, with students taking turns at acting (in classic Forum Theatre, the person suggesting an intervention in the script is also the one to act it out, to 'practice' what they would do, and it is then reflected on together. More on Forum Theatre in the *Influences* section). The discussion should also be open to addressing how the power dynamic of a job interview is experienced now. Has anything changed?

#### SCENARIO 2: WORKPLACE ISSUES

The group considers what a person could do in the case where something goes wrong during a job/internship: non-payment or unpaid overtime, for instance. Individual as well as more collective solutions should be addressed here. Could she get together with colleagues at the pub to find out if this is a more general issue at stake and then figure out ways of addressing it collectively? Could she speak to her union rep? The role of unions should be explained here, especially for students who may be unfamiliar how they function. In what forms of collective action could interns or freelancers engage? Might an anonymous naming-and-shaming, or a public campaign be a good idea?

This exercise could be expanded to consider transversal solidarity – supporting other workers in the workplace, such as cleaners.

## BUST YOUR BOSS!\*

card for freelance art and cultural workers

During a negotiation about work you have the right:

**not** to remain silent about money

**not** to subsidise the production from your own pocket

**not** to accept a change of agreed conditions without a renegotiation

**not** to take this job on the promise of a future!

\* *Warning: In the cultural sector your boss may not look like a boss – they could be your friend/drinking buddy... It might even be you!*



In solidarity – Precarious Workers Brigade  
[www.precariousworkersbrigade.tumblr.com](http://www.precariousworkersbrigade.tumblr.com)

**BUST YOUR BOSS!**  
YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO ASK:



*What's the budget? How much am I getting paid? How much are YOU getting paid? When am I getting paid? Do I get paid sick leave and holidays? Will my pay cover a living wage for the period of the project? What union can I join? Are there separate budgets for production, expenses and pay? When shall we agree the terms of the contract? What is the compensation fee if the work gets cancelled? Has all the money for the project been raised? What is the maternity/paternity and pension provision? Where is the money for the project coming from and what degree of involvement do funders have in my work? etc..*

## MANIFESTOS

Duration:

2 hour workshop

Student numbers:

5 – 25 students

Variation(s) on this exercise:

See various scenarios below

A manifesto is a declaration of ideals and intentions that calls for urgent change and proposes radical new solutions. Manifestos often address broad political or social objectives. Think: *The Communist Manifesto* or Valerie Solanas' *S.C.U.M Manifesto*. For centuries, cultural workers have put out potent rallying calls, from Fernando Solanas and Octavio Getino's 'Towards a Third Cinema' and Audre Lourde's 'Poetry is not a Luxury' to more recent declarations like Grimes' 'I Don't Want to Compromise My Morals in Order to Make a Living'. Manifestos typically blend an incendiary critique of what's wrong with a set of captivating, straight-to-the-heart alternatives. They see artistic practice and experience as inextricable from the material conditions in which culture is produced.

Spend some time briefly reading through some short manifestos or a few excerpts from longer ones, provided by the convenor. Get a feel for the sorts of language they use and the desires being expressed. In groups of four or five, write a manifesto dedicated to changing the nature of work for the better in your particular area or sector.

You might want to consider:

What are your core principles and how are they going to shake up and improve on the current status quo? What is your utopian vision for the future and how can it be achieved? Dealing with this question might well lead you into an important conversation about why what you do matters.

Remember, the manifesto genre encourages bold, direct and unapologetic expression. It largely strives to be clear and enticing to a wide range of people. While you might sometimes struggle to synthesise a number of different voices, this task asks you to think collectively and find common ground from which to fight.

When you have a draft ready, share it with the other groups. Discuss some of the most appealing and imaginative elements you've devised. How would you make this manifesto more available to the wider world? What avenues are there for sharing your vision?

## PEOPLE'S TRIBUNAL

Duration:

3–4 hours for the event. Requires several preparatory research and workshop sessions

Student numbers:

group of 10–25

A people's tribunal is not a trial but a court of the people. It draws on courtroom protocols (giving/listening to testimony, calling expert witnesses, formulating a ruling) to publicly and collectively address injustices, and to take collective action. People's tribunals have been used especially when the identified injustices are not or cannot be prosecuted by the courts, for example, if they are not illegal per se, but could and should be outlawed, or if injustices cannot be grasped by the law because the existing law is unable to identify structural causes that lead to an unjust situation. For example, in our People's Tribunal on Precarity, held at the ICA in 2011, we wanted to publicly address the systemic causes that lead to the precarity we experience in work and life and the way we are implicated in them. The aim was to find and voice collective judgements, remedies and demands.

The people's tribunal, as a tool, can be applied in, for instance, work-related situations where systemic injustice, normalised to the point of intractability, lies beyond the reach of existing labour and employment legislation and policy. The tribunal provides a public space where the voices of the implicated can be witnessed. In our case, we collectively listened to the stories of precarious workers (interns, volunteers, freelancers, and artists) in their own words, gestures, sounds and images. These testimonies had been gathered together and scripted in a series of workshops beforehand, which, in themselves, were vital moments of collective analysis. We did not anticipate the strength of the emotional aspects of the tribunal—the anger, relief, anxiety, fear. It can be difficult to talk about such issues and even more so to listen. It is particularly empowering to speak and listen collectively. Tribunals commonly consist of an 'evidencing/witnessing' dimension, followed by a collective deliberation section. Last comes the declaration of a 'verdict', which is then sometimes followed by a symbolic action (for example, naming and shaming an organisation, handing the verdicts and demands to identified 'culprits', or devising a plan of further actions from

the verdicts). A tribunal can be quite simple, or more elaborate, depending on one's time, resources and the scope of the issue selected. In our experience, it is a powerful tool for consciousness raising and collective action.

For a detailed description and analysis of the People's Tribunal On Precarity: [www.dismagazine.com/discussion/21416/tools-for-collective-action-precarity-the-peoples-tribunal](http://www.dismagazine.com/discussion/21416/tools-for-collective-action-precarity-the-peoples-tribunal)

## OTHER EXAMPLES OF PEOPLE'S TRIBUNALS

Cambodian Garment Workers Tribunal

'The two-day hearing aims to raise awareness of low pay and long working hours that workers say are partly responsible for a series of 'mass faintings' involving hundreds of workers at factories supplying H&M, Gap and sports brands. Up to 300 workers will give evidence about the fainting incidents and about living conditions resulting from low wages'. Butler, Sarah. 'Cambodian Factory Workers Hold 'People's Tribunal' to Look at Factory Conditions'. *The Guardian*, February 2, 2012. [www.theguardian.com/world/2012/feb/02/cambodian-workers-peoples-tribunal-factory](http://www.theguardian.com/world/2012/feb/02/cambodian-workers-peoples-tribunal-factory)

Goldsmiths: *A People's Tribunal – What Has Happened to Our University?*

Students and staff initiated a people's court at Goldsmiths College, examining the changes in universities since 2011 through the presentation of several cases on Criminalisation, Money, Governance, Work and Reproductive Labour, and Anxiety. A set of demands were formulated from the tribunal, the Gold Paper (2016): [www.goldsmithsucu.wordpress.com/the-gold-paper](http://www.goldsmithsucu.wordpress.com/the-gold-paper)  
Video documentation of the people's tribunal: [www.youtube.com/watch?v=3j6j6StGBwQ](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3j6j6StGBwQ)

# Calling all University Staff – Letter

We [insert name of course or department] do not circulate adverts for unpaid internships or voluntary work to students or graduates. Employers offering UK based job vacancies, work experience or internships are expected to comply with UK equal opportunities, employment and health and safety legislation. Students or graduates undertaking any work experience where responsibilities and tasks are given as part of the role should be paid the National Minimum Wage.

Here are some guidelines and information that might help you develop another approach to working with students and graduates:

Art Council England's guidelines 'Internships in the Arts':  
[www.artscouncil.org.uk/advice-and-guidance-library/internships-arts](http://www.artscouncil.org.uk/advice-and-guidance-library/internships-arts)

The Carrotworkers' Collective's 'Counter Guide to Free Labour in the Arts':  
[www.carrotworkers.wordpress.com/counter-internship-guide](http://www.carrotworkers.wordpress.com/counter-internship-guide)

Intern Aware:  
[www.internaware.org](http://www.internaware.org)

Artquest's 'Intern Culture' report:  
[www.artquest.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/Intern-Culture-report.pdf](http://www.artquest.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/Intern-Culture-report.pdf)

From,

Mario Rossi

---

You can adapt and use this statement, on the above, to reply to organisations that email you asking to forward 'opportunities' of unpaid or volunteer work and internships to your students. This statement is adapted from the one used by The Department of Film, Media and Cultural Studies at Birkbeck College, who agreed as a department to take a stand and not forward these emails on to students.

# Work Placements at the University

We have separated out credited work placements from issues of unpaid internships because placement modules offer a specific pedagogical challenge in higher education. Many courses now include placements as an option at undergraduate and postgraduate level and we are interested in exploring how these modules can incorporate a critical, ethical approach. The credited work placement is primarily educational and needs to have agreed learning outcomes – this is different to non-credited internships or voluntary positions students may take up alongside study. Credited work placements form a specific part of the overall course of study and are therefore assessed and related to academic, as well as professional, development. This section starts with two examples of placement modules. The first is a 15-credit module on a BA Art History, which requires a research project in a public body. The second is an outline of a module where sociology students work together to build a collective picture of the organisations in which they are working. This section ends with information about the Critical Work Placement Website.



### Examples of Work Placements

The following two placement modules have been developed and designed by experienced tutors in a university context. We have chosen them as examples of good practice and as critical responses to placements and internships in university settings.

### VISUAL CULTURES AS PUBLIC PRACTICE:

#### A PLACEMENT MODULE

Visual Cultures is a field of inquiry that engages with a variety of creative or cultural practices within larger socio-political contexts. The questions we ask are very much informed by the urgencies of the world we live in, locally and globally, historically and within a contemporary context. Visual Cultures is interested in what art does in the world.

With this background, the central objective of Visual Cultures as Public Practice is to offer students a research opportunity within a public body. The placement will allow you a substantial engagement with material and practices from outside the university context and to develop a research project that probes, challenges, complements, experiments with the readings and ideas you engage with in the classroom.

The placement partners will often be institutions keeping a collection or an archive relevant to Visual Cultures, which is either already made public in some form or stored with the institution without public access. You will be introduced to the collection by the placement partners and given initial support to access materials. On the other hand you could think of an organisation which is not immediately linked to Visual Cultures or the Arts – there are no limits to thinking creatively of other kinds of placement options as long as we can work out a research project in coordination with the selected institution.

In each case you are asked to identify and develop a focused and manageable research project in discussion with the academic supervisor who will assist the process through group seminars and individual tutorials. You will also develop a personal portfolio, based on your experience in which you explore how the work that you do within your university modules relates to the practices of the public organisation hosting your project.

## LEARNING OUTCOMES

Students will be able to apply previously-gained, theory-derived knowledge to a practical project within the host organisation by identifying the potential for a research project from a given body of archival materials, a particular collection or a set of work practices and develop a focused research process from there.

Students will learn to critically evaluate and apply the materials and experiences which they have encountered during their placement to inform and enhance their knowledge and propose novel solutions to a specific academic issue.

Students will develop forms of presentations to feedback gained knowledge into the public domain/host organisation.

Students will gain critical insight into a particular working environment and working cultures within the cultural sector more broadly. They will learn to assess the competencies and traits required and be able to articulate their own response to these requirements.

Students will gain confidence in articulating their values, academic interests and skills with reference to their placement experience to reflect on their paths once they complete their degree.

## TIMEFRAME

During the summer term, i.e. May and June, you will spend ten full days, either as a block of two weeks or spread out over a few weeks, with an institution or organisation. In addition there will be 4 mandatory seminars, including one introductory session and 3 academic seminars with required readings. See also assessments below.

## ASSIGNMENT

The final presentation of your research project could lead to a small exhibition, a talk, a text, a performance, a performative lecture or any other appropriate form. This presentation could take place within the public organisation, at the university or another place of your choice in agreement with the host organisation.

Presentation: 5% – this will be scheduled for mid to end June and will include key themes for your personal portfolio and research report

Personal portfolio: total 1,100 words – 20% – submission during autumn term. Comprising a reflective (1,000 words) and an action plan: i.e. a summary of your next steps (100 words, tabulated)

Research report: 3,000 words – 75% – submission during autumn term

### CO-RESEARCH AND COLLECTIVE PROJECTS

This placement project outline responds to the following four questions regarding placements and internships in university settings:

How can placement projects be more coherently embedded in educational frameworks appropriate to the degree programmes that students are studying on and accompanied by regular facilitated reflections and workshops that help students to think through the issues they encounter in the organisation and also address any concerns that arise while doing a placement?

How can the experience of a placement be collectivised so as to ensure students are not isolated in individual organisations, but benefit from the collaboration and exchange of experiences and ideas with other students in similar roles and situations?

How can placements be co-research orientated? Co-research means that the organisations, the students and the mentors/co-ordinators devise, design and evaluate the programme of research together in an active consideration of the social conditions informing and surrounding the organisation, with a view, potentially, to transforming them.

How can students be enabled to bring their existing perspectives, knowledge, skills and inputs to organisations such that their presence is valued and can make a real contribution to what the organisations are doing?

### PROGRAMME OUTLINE

Placement students collaborate in and with their organisation for a maximum of six weeks (full or part-time). While students will be associated with one organisation in particular, they collaborate as a group, exchanging their experiences, views and insights in regular discussions with one another, facilitated by an academic coordinator and/or mentor. The task will be to build a collective picture of the organisations in accordance with themes set by the project; students will produce a final report that they present in person at a final event. Work should always be remunerated. While it might not always be possible or appropriate to do so in the context of the particular project, travel and subsistence expenses must be covered for all students.

Students are required to attend three preparatory workshops before beginning their placements. They are as follows.

### DOING A PLACEMENT

This workshop will address the particulars of undertaking a work placement and will include a critical reflection and discussion on the broader socio-political context and the role of work experience and internships in contemporary society. The workshop will also address ethico-political issues of work and/or volunteering in an educational setting—in terms of the responsibilities of the organisations hosting placement students, the academic institution running the programme, and the students themselves.

### ORGANISATIONS IN CONTEXT

This workshop will inform students about the history, role and social, economic and political context of the organisations they are placed in.

### RESEARCHING THE ORGANISATION

This workshop will address questions of how to go about undertaking the research project and will introduce students to relevant theories and perspectives and research methods.

Assignment: Students are required to complete a short written essay describing their organisation. This will include a critical reflection on their first impressions of the organisation.

Questions to guide the critical reflection: the academic coordinator/mentor sets appropriate questions together with students. These first impressions will serve as the starting point for their further research and should be submitted as part of the overall assessment. Students are provided with relevant academic literature as it relates to their project.

## PART 2: DOING THE PLACEMENT

Placements take place over a period of six weeks part or full time.

Students contribute to the daily activities of the organisations and conduct their research.

### WEEKS 1–6

The programme for each individual week follows the same format:

Theme: Topic to guide this week's research (set with academic coordinator/mentor).

Research: Questions to guide students (set with academic coordinator/mentor).

Debrief: Weekly two hour facilitated workshop for collective reflection and debrief, including input session by coordinator/mentor on relevant academic theories and perspectives.

## PART 3: COMPILING THE REPORT AND PREPARING THE PRESENTATION

To complete the project, students produce a final collective report and presentation. This forms part of the assessment. A collective meeting will take place with students and mentors/coordinators for the purposes of final collective reflection and discussion and to begin putting together the report and presentation.

## PART 4: FOLLOWING UP AND COMPLETING THE PROJECT

Six to eight months later, students will be asked to follow-up on how their challenges/ideas/critiques were taken up by the organisations. The project ends with a collective debrief with all students and mentors/coordinators on the experience of the placement project.

## CRITICAL WORK PLACEMENT WEBSITE

The set of tools presented on the Critical Work Placements website ([www.criticalworkplacements.org.uk](http://www.criticalworkplacements.org.uk)) can be used by students, placement hosts and placement tutors in higher education when embarking on a work placement. The tools have been developed in consultation with postgraduate students, representatives of arts organisations and academic teaching staff on MAs in Applied Theatre, Curating, Arts Management and Museums, Galleries and Contemporary Culture. They have been co-developed to facilitate critical engagement with the process of carrying out a work placement from these three perspectives. These tools aim to support ethical, tripartite agreements between the three parties involved – the student, the academy and the host organisation.

On the website, you will find a set of overarching considerations and three flow diagrams for students, tutors and placement hosts.

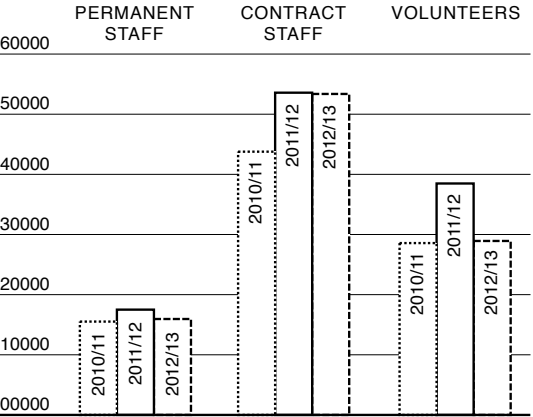
You can download the tripartite agreement and flow diagrams and go through them before embarking on a work placement (as student/tutor/host).

Discuss with each other the different steps involved. What are the different steps before, during and after taking on a credited placement? What are the potential hurdles?

# Some Useful Statistics

## STAFFING: PERMANENT / CONTRACT / VOLUNTEERS

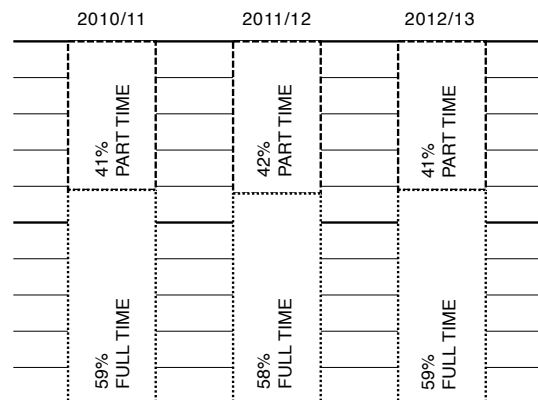
According to data collected by the Arts Council of England, the total number of staff employed in 2012/13 by National Portfolio Organisations and Major Partners was 75,509.<sup>1</sup> 17,309 were permanent and 58,200 contractual, while an additional 33,532 volunteers gave their time to support the work of National Portfolio Organisations. This represents an 8.9% decrease in permanent staff, a 0.4% decrease in contractual staff and a 25% decrease in volunteers from the 2011/2012 figures.



1 'National Portfolio Organisations' (NPOs) include a total of 696 UK organisations that will receive £1.04 billion between 2012 and 2015 from Arts Council England (ACE). 'Major Partners' are organisations who apply and are deemed by ACE to make a substantive contribution to the arts in keeping with its five goals laid out in Arts Council England, 'Great Art and Culture for Everyone', [www.artscouncil.org.uk/great-art-and-culture-everyone](http://www.artscouncil.org.uk/great-art-and-culture-everyone); Arts Council England, 'National Portfolio Organisations and Major Partner Museums Key Data from the 2012/13 Annual Submission'. [www.artscouncil.org.uk/media/uploads/pdf/NPO\\_Survey\\_201213\\_FINAL\\_020414.pdf](http://www.artscouncil.org.uk/media/uploads/pdf/NPO_Survey_201213_FINAL_020414.pdf)

**TIME: PART-TIME / FULL-TIME WORK**

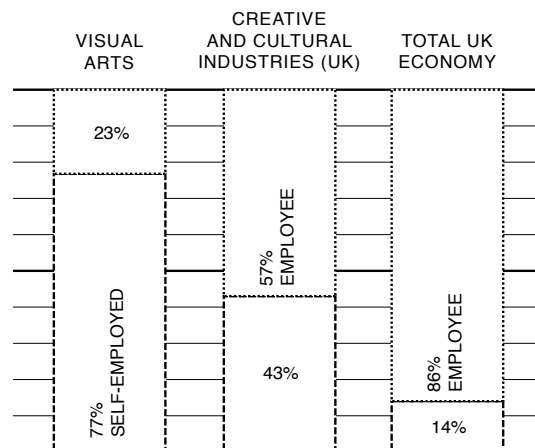
Arts Council of England goes on to say that, 'Of the permanent staff employed in 2012 –13, a total of 10,104 (58%) worked full time while the remaining 7,205 (42%) worked part time'.<sup>2</sup> (No statistics on this split were provided for contract staff and volunteers in this annual submission.)



2 Arts Council England, 'National Portfolio Organisations and Major Partner Museums Key Data from the 2012/13 Annual Submission', March 2014, p.16. [www.artscouncil.org.uk/sites/default/files/download-file/2012\\_13\\_Full\\_annual\\_submission\\_report.pdf](http://www.artscouncil.org.uk/sites/default/files/download-file/2012_13_Full_annual_submission_report.pdf)

**EMPLOYMENT: SELF-EMPLOYED / EMPLOYED**

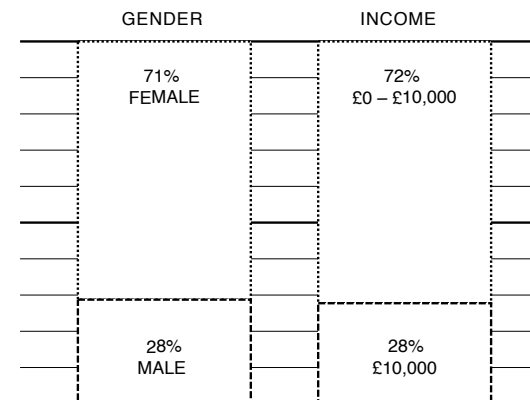
Note the high number of self-employed people in this sector relative to the total UK economy. This data comes from *The Creative and Cultural Industries: Visual Arts 2012/13*, which aims to provide statistics on employment, economic contribution and business structure for the visual arts industry across the UK.<sup>3</sup>



3 Creative Blueprint, 'The Creative and Cultural Industries: Visual Arts 2012/13', October 2012. [www.creative-blueprint.co.uk/statistics/reports/industry-statistics](http://www.creative-blueprint.co.uk/statistics/reports/industry-statistics)

**STATE OF THE ARTS**

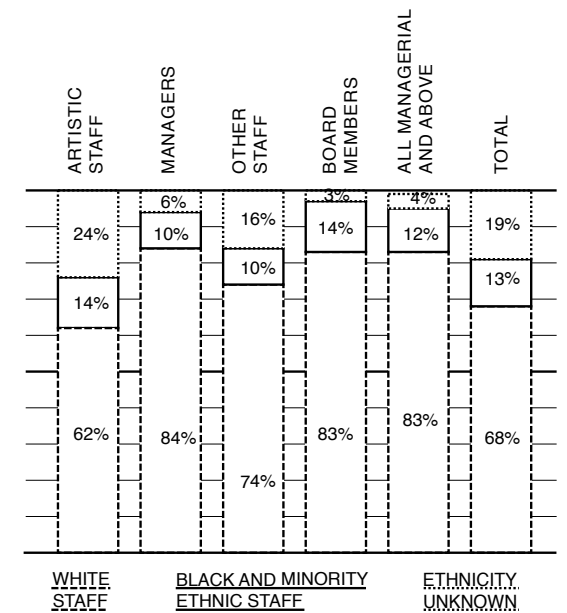
Some startling statistics from a-n (The Artists Information Company), based on their first survey on paying artists – *AIR: Artist Interaction and Representation*.<sup>4</sup> Note that 71% of those who answered identified as female and almost the same number, 72%, earn less than £10,000 per year, placing them below what is an acceptable, minimum standard of living.<sup>5</sup>



4 The Artist Information Company, 'AIR: Artist Interaction and Representation', June 2013. [www.a-n.co.uk/news/paying-artists-survey-71-receive-no-fee-for-exhibiting](http://www.a-n.co.uk/news/paying-artists-survey-71-receive-no-fee-for-exhibiting)  
 5 Joseph Rowntree Foundation, 'Households Below a Minimum Income Standard: 2008/09 to 2012/13', January 2015. [www.jrf.org.uk/publications/households-below-minimum-income-standard-2015](http://www.jrf.org.uk/publications/households-below-minimum-income-standard-2015)

**ETHNIC DIVERSITY: PERMANENT / CONTRACTUAL**

More data from the Arts Council of England, this time on the ethnic diversity of staff by position in 2012/2013. This figure shows that the proportion of Black and Minority managers increased (10%) as did those in the all managerial and above (13%), but that representation in all other positions decreased.<sup>6</sup>



6 Arts Council England, 'National Portfolio Organisations and Major Partner Museums Key Data from the 2012/13 Annual Submission', March 2014, p.16. [www.artscouncil.org.uk/media/uploads/pdf/NPO\\_Survey\\_201213\\_FINAL\\_020414.pdf](http://www.artscouncil.org.uk/media/uploads/pdf/NPO_Survey_201213_FINAL_020414.pdf)

# Pushing Back

## LEGAL CLAIMS

In recent years, we have seen considerable push back against the normalisation of un- and low-paid labour. Some of the campaigns include:

In 2009 and 2011, former interns Nicola Vetta and Keri Hudson successfully claimed wages for their internships through employment tribunals, arguing that the nature of the work they did as interns put them in the legal category of worker and thus entitled them to the NMW. This individualistic method has since been pursued by advocacy group Intern Aware as a campaign, with ex-interns assisted in their claims for wages.

In 2011, Arts Council England published its *Internship Guidelines*, reminding organisations of the legal status of interns at for-profit organisations as workers.

## PROTEST AND NAMING AND SHAMING

Intern Labour Rights in the US, Future Interns, PWB and others in the UK named and shamed art institutions such as the Serpentine and Barbican through flashmob protests and open letters. Thanks to persistence and, especially, to coordination with unionised staff on the inside, this achieved considerable results. The Gulf Labour Rights Coalition occupied the Guggenheim Museum in New York and Venice to address the exploitation of migrant workers building the Guggenheim (and other cultural and academic institutions) on Saadiyat Island, Abu Dhabi.

The group No Pay No Way organised around the lack of entry-level position at NGOs and charities, which are able to exploit their charitable status and graduates' desire to 'work for a good cause' by 'hiring' people as volunteers.

Other low-waged workers – most notably cinema workers (Ritzy Living Wage, Curzon campaign) and cleaners (3 Cosas and United Voices of the World) – have, in recent years, organised militantly with their unions to push up wages to the London Living Wage and secure contractual sick pay. And grassroots group Boycott Workfare has, since 2010, organised against workfare regimes which force people receiving welfare to do unpaid labour by naming and shaming and taking action against profiteers and encouraging organisations to join in pledging to boycott workfare.

Many of these campaigns have supported each other in recognition that the issues are connected to each other.

## CERTIFICATION AND UNIONISATION

In 2014, US-based group W.A.G.E. launched a certification program, to which non-profit arts organisations can voluntarily sign up, committing themselves to paying decent artist fees. That same year, Artists' Union England (AUE), the UK's first trade union for artists was founded. AUE aims to represent artists at strategic decision-making levels, challenge economic inequalities and exploitative practices in the art world and to negotiate fair pay and better working conditions for artists. Also in 2014, a-n (The Artist Information Company) launched The Paying Artists campaign, which aims to secure payment for artists who exhibit in publicly funded galleries. In 2016, they published *Paying Artists Draft Exhibition Fee Framework and Guidelines*.

# Against Free Labour

# Alternative Economies

This section provides examples, ideas and projects demonstrating the wealth of different models of employment and organising alternatives to market-led and hierarchical organisations. Most of the institutional examples in this section look beyond both the formal top-down power structures found in corporations, government and traditional business and the structurelessness of more informal organisations.<sup>1</sup>

It is important to note that these types of institutions and forms of co-operation typically encourage greater diversity by reaching beyond the usual pools of educated, white middle class participants.

<sup>1</sup> For a critique of structurelessness, see Jo Freeman, 'The Tyranny of Structurelessness', *The Second Wave* Vol. 2 No. 1 (1972): p.20. Available online: [www.jofreeman.com/joreen/tyranny.htm](http://www.jofreeman.com/joreen/tyranny.htm)



## WORKER CO-OPERATIVES

Worker co-operatives are trading enterprises run and owned by workers, rather than shareholders or owners of investment capital. In a co-operative, workers have equal say in what the business does, and equitable share in the wealth created from the services and products they provide. All co-operatives share internationally agreed principles and values (self-help, self-responsibility, democracy, equality, equity and solidarity).<sup>2</sup> Worker co-operatives exist all over the world, and there are about 500 worker co-operatives in UK. Usually, worker co-operatives are more resilient than ordinary capitalist businesses.

- 2 The International Co-operative Alliance lays these principles out as: 1. Voluntary and Open Membership; 2. Democratic Member Control; 3. Member Economic Participation; 4. Autonomy and Independence, 5. Education; Training and Information; 6. Co-operation among Co-operatives; 7. Concern for Community. For fuller definitions, see International Co-operative Alliance, 'Co-operative Identity, Value & Principles'. [www.ica.coop/en/whats-co-op/co-operative-identity-values-principles](http://www.ica.coop/en/whats-co-op/co-operative-identity-values-principles).

## CASE STUDY: CERAMICS STUDIO CO-OP, NEW CROSS, LONDON

Ceramics Studio Co-op is a small worker co-operative established in London in 2014. We (Tatiana and Anna Baskakova) started the organisation with a belief in a culture of equality and the need for decent jobs. Both of us were graduates from London's schools of art and design: young cultural workers, makers, and artists. Worker co-operative was the model we decided to take up after thinking through other possible forms of co-operative that focused on the provision of service to members.

What attracted us to the worker co-operative model were radical and ethical ideas about work, and its culture of equality and respect that stand in distinct alternative to relations describing working conditions that cultural producers experience and perpetrate in London. Desire to part with precarity, non-payments, and hypocritical culture of the art world, but also to act politically within the cultural industry and stay true to our needs as cultural organisers, artists, makers and activists, led to the establishment of Ceramics Studio Co-op. A need for decent employment that could help us support our lives was what we were after, and we wanted to re-establish a ceramics workshop after former premises were taken away and their collective dispersed. We believe in the positive influence of our organisation on the development of emerging artists and makers who need access to the medium and ceramics equipment.

We aimed to reach a minimal wage target for both workers within a year of running, have managed to pay off a part of our loan, and have begun to be more involved in co-operative organising on

a regional level. We are also looking to start sharing some decision-making with workshop users in relation to the studio's common areas, which will hopefully lead the studio to developing a platform for further co-operation with people who directly benefit from its premises and equipment.

### Setting up steps:

- 1 REGISTERING A LEGAL BODY: In the UK, there is no special co-operative legislation, and co-operatives can use any legal frameworks, including those pertaining to companies, societies or partnerships. We have registered our company as a legal liability partnership because it seemed appropriate and relevant to our needs.
- 2 TEAM: Finding a committed team is difficult, and starting a company is a tough journey on which to embark. We had people leaving the team right before the registration of a legal entity, and joining right at the end. Having families around was a huge help in terms of being able to have hands-on support and a roof over our heads when we were reworking our business plan and learning how to install plugins to our DIY website. If you want to start a co-operative, look around for people with whom you would be able to work in the most difficult situations, but also those who may share your commitment to co-operative values and principles.
- 3 ADVICE: We have been supported by advice from Sion Whellens of Calverts Co-operative, which was highly beneficial in helping us navigate difficult times when we did not know what we were doing.
- 4 GUIDES: Co-operative principles and the Worker Co-operative Code were helpful guides at every step of setting up the workshop. Checking with them in situations when we did not know what was the best path to take or whether to refuse an offer or a deal was helpful to keeping our autonomy and staying on the path we have chosen for our company and collective.
- 5 PREMISES: We found premises for the studio by setting up a work group, a twitter account, and shouting out across social networks until we had our unexpected dream referral for the space. In other cases, this could be more difficult, as one may not have the necessary connections. (We did not know we had them either.) From experience of founding our co-op, it's important to start looking early for things you'll need: both for friendly capital, space, help and business.

6 CAPITAL: We took out a private loan to support our early running cost (for more information about raising start-up finance for a new co-op see 'Raising the Money' in *How to Set Up a Worker's Co-op* by Radical Routes). The most expensive and onerous job was securing a space and building it into the studio we wanted to see. Everything else was the day-to-day running of a co-operative business, and we have learned everything by doing it.

Organising ourselves as a co-operative, we have managed to overcome some individual precarity that defines the life of an independent freelancer or artist. We are able to face problems that, before, as an institution, were individualised, and are learning to cope with those issues on a collective level through democratic decision-making processes. We are a small co-operative and make most of our decisions informally. We rely on worker's individual expertise, and different members lead in their relevant fields. Together, we are handling all the necessary tasks that enable our co-op to stay afloat and we take responsibility for our own pitfalls. We are also carrying out highly rewarding work, helping people bring their ideas to life and educating them about making, using materials, and new ways of working.



## OTHER EXAMPLES OF WORKERS CO-OPS IN THE CULTURAL SECTOR

There are many creative sector co-ops in the UK and internationally, from filmmakers and printers to graphic designers and programmers:

Cultural co-operatives  
[www.cultural.coop](http://www.cultural.coop)

A platform set up to encourage collaboration, mutual support and solidarity among cultural co-ops and educate about co-operatives in the cultural sector. They provide a directory and video portraits of cultural co-ops in the UK, including the Ceramics Co-op.

Justseeds Artists' co-operative  
[www.justseeds.org](http://www.justseeds.org)

'Justseeds is... a decentralized, artist run co-operative that is a cross between a producers' co-operative, artisans' guild, artists' collective, and artist-run space. Members are geographically dispersed across North America from New York to Wisconsin to California, Montreal to Mexico City and elsewhere'.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>3</sup> Dara Greenwald, 'Justseeds Artists' Collective', *Affinities: A Journal of Radical Theory, Culture, and Action* Vol. 4, No. 1 (Summer 2010): p.145.

### Resources:

International Co-operative Alliance  
'Co-operative Identity, Values and Principles'.  
[www.ica.coop/en/whats-co-op/  
co-operative-identity-values-principles](http://www.ica.coop/en/whats-co-op/co-operative-identity-values-principles)

Co-operatives share internationally agreed principles, and act together to build a better world through co-operation.

Worker Co-operative Council, Co-operatives UK  
'The Worker Co-operative Code 2011/2012'.  
[www.uk.coop/sites/default/files/uploads/attachments/worker\\_  
co-operative\\_code\\_2nd\\_edition\\_0\\_0.pdf](http://www.uk.coop/sites/default/files/uploads/attachments/worker_co-operative_code_2nd_edition_0_0.pdf)

A guide for worker co-operatives written by a group of experienced UK worker co-operators explaining how to use the co-operative principles to create good co-operative businesses. This code sets out what anyone should expect, and should work together to achieve, as a member of a worker co-operative.

## The Co-operative Party

Founded in 1917 to represent and defend the co-op movement, their roots go back to 1844 and the Rochdale Pioneers, the founders of the modern day co-operative Movement. The Party has had an electoral agreement with the Labour Party since 1927, which enables them to stand joint candidates in elections.

## Radical Routes

'How to Set Up a Workers' Co-op' (third edition), 2012.

Radical Routes <http://www.radicalroutes.org.uk/publicdownloads/setupaworkerscoop-lowres.pdf>

Information on what you would need to setup a worker co-operative from scratch. Some chapters can be useful source of guidance for established and new co-operatives.

## Seeds for Change / Radical Routes

'Timeline for Setting Up a worker's Co-op'

[www.seedsforchange.org.uk/WC\\_setup\\_timeline.pdf](http://www.seedsforchange.org.uk/WC_setup_timeline.pdf)

## Seeds for Change, Acorn Co-op Support

'Financial Literacy for Co-operatives'

[www.seedsforchange.org.uk/financialliteracy.pdf](http://www.seedsforchange.org.uk/financialliteracy.pdf)

This guide is aimed at anyone who is involved in co-ops – from workers' co-ops and housing co-ops to social centres. The aim is to demystify the world of finance to enable all co-op members to fully participate in financial decision-making.

## Whellens, Sion

The Precarious Generation of Creative Workers

'Bethnal Bling', 7 March 2014. [www.bethnalbling.blogspot.co.uk/2014/03/creative-workers-precarious-generation.html](http://www.bethnalbling.blogspot.co.uk/2014/03/creative-workers-precarious-generation.html)

[www.bethnalbling.blogspot.co.uk/2014/03/creative-workers-precarious-generation.html](http://www.bethnalbling.blogspot.co.uk/2014/03/creative-workers-precarious-generation.html)

Sion Whellens, of Calverts Print Co-op, reflects on the potential for introducing current art/design/craft students to the co-operative model.

## *The Take*

Directed by Avi Lewis. Written by Naomi Klein (2006).

Documentary film about the wave of factory takeovers by workers in the wake of the crisis in Argentina, 2001.

## LEARNING TO CO-OPERATE

It is worth pointing out that running an organisation or group on egalitarian principles requires the learning of skills that facilitate non-hierarchical organisation and interaction and the instituting of a culture of support and care. These are not skills the institutions and workplaces we generally find ourselves in teach or practice – those tend to be structured around hierarchies, non-democratic decision-making and competition. But we can learn from social movement culture: consensus decision-making and facilitation techniques, mechanisms for addressing problems and dealing with conflict have long been developed by movements that understood the necessity of un-learning oppressive behaviour.

Some useful tools for co-operators:

## Common Ground Collective

'Steps for Dealing with Oppressive Behaviour in a Community'

[www.docs.google.com/document/d/1bKmaAdu-1XRuy4L-1renrlzZXTZeAGcpa1v\\_-Wg24ts/preview](http://www.docs.google.com/document/d/1bKmaAdu-1XRuy4L-1renrlzZXTZeAGcpa1v_-Wg24ts/preview)

## Fithian, Lisa

'Guide to Conflict Resolution'

[www.docs.google.com/Doc?id=dd323hvj\\_1211hkrs85hh](http://www.docs.google.com/Doc?id=dd323hvj_1211hkrs85hh)

## Starhawk

'Short Consensus Summary'

[www.starhawk.org/short-consensus-summary](http://www.starhawk.org/short-consensus-summary)

Organizing for Power, Organizing for Change. 'Organizing Resources'

[www.organizingforpower.wordpress.com/organizing/organizing-resources](http://www.organizingforpower.wordpress.com/organizing/organizing-resources)

Seeds for Change. A Consensus Handbook: Co-operative Decision Making for Activists, Co-ops and Communities. Leeds: Footprint Workers' Co-op, 2013.

Available online: [www.seedsforchange.org.uk/handbookweb.pdf](http://www.seedsforchange.org.uk/handbookweb.pdf)

Starhawk. 'The Empowerment Manual: A Guide for Collaborative Groups'

Vancouver: New Society Publishers, 2011.

Freelancers' co-operative is an organizational model that allows freelancers to alleviate the precarious conditions of freelance work by pulling together resources. Some of the freelancer's earnings (5–10%) are paid into a pot to support sick pay, accountants' fees, invoicing systems or pensions.

Examples of freelancer co-operatives:

Broodfonds (translated as Bread Fund) in the Netherlands.

SMart (Societe Mutuelle pour Artistes, translated as the Mutual Society for Artists) Belgium and other European countries.  
[www.smart-eu.org](http://www.smart-eu.org)

AltGen is a London-based campaign that educates 18–29 year olds about worker co-operatives. They aim to set up the first freelancers' co-op in the UK.  
[www.altgen.org.uk](http://www.altgen.org.uk)

BASIC INCOME

'A basic income is an income unconditionally granted to all on an individual basis, without means test or work requirement. It is a form of minimum income guarantee that differs from those that now exist in various European countries in three important ways: It is being paid to individuals rather than households; it is paid irrespective of any income from other sources; it is paid without requiring the performance of any work or the willingness to accept a job if offered', Basic Income Earth Network.

Basic Income Earth Network. 'About Basic Income'. [www.basicincome.org/basic-income](http://www.basicincome.org/basic-income)

Includes a more detailed description, history and FAQ.

Weeks, Kathi. *The Problem With Work: Feminism, Marrisism, Antiwork Politics, and Postwork Imaginaries*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2011. Available online: [www.libcom.org/files/the-problem-with-work\\_-feminism-marxism-kathi-weeks.pdf](http://www.libcom.org/files/the-problem-with-work_-feminism-marxism-kathi-weeks.pdf)

Weeks invites us to imagine what de-centering work from our existence, a basic guaranteed income and a shorter working week without a cut to pay could mean for our lives.

TIMEBANKS

Timebanks use time as currency. They usually operate in local communities where people swap time and skills with each other in an alternative micro-economy guided by shared core values of assets, redefining work, reciprocity, respect, and community/ social networks.

Leeds Creative Timebank

[www.leedscreativetimebank.org.uk](http://www.leedscreativetimebank.org.uk)

Leeds Creative Timebank facilitates an informal economy between creative professionals in the city. It is an autonomous and self-perpetuating structure that uses an online database system serviced by time brokers earning hour credits.

Community Currency. 'Timebanking'.

[www.community-currency.info/en/glossary/timebanks](http://www.community-currency.info/en/glossary/timebanks)

An overview of the history, principles, practices and impact of timebanking, including examples.

Community Currency. 'Core Values in Time-Banking'. [www.community-currency.info/en/toolkits/tb-toolkit/core-values-timebanking](http://www.community-currency.info/en/toolkits/tb-toolkit/core-values-timebanking)

The core values of time-banking explained.

## DEBT RESISTANCE

Debt resistance comes out of an understanding that debt is political (rather than a result of, say, personal failure), that debt is a social construct and therefore not inevitable, and that resistance to it is a way to achieve economic justice.

## DEBT JUBILEE

A jubilee is an event in which all debts are cancelled and all those in bondage are set free. Jubilee comes from many faith traditions including Judaism, Christianity and Islam, and Strike Debt insists jubilees should be considered a norm today as they were in the past.

## THE ROLLING JUBILEE

[www.rollingjubilee.org](http://www.rollingjubilee.org)

A US Strike Debt project that buys out debt at random and abolishes it.

## DEBT STRIKE

A debt strike is a coordinated form of collective bargaining for debtors, involving the collective non-payment of bills in order to pressure banks to re-negotiate the debt. An example is the protest action by indebted graduates refusing to repay student loans that came out of the Occupy movement in the US.

Strike Debt. *The Debt Resisters' Operations Manual*. Oakland, CA: PM Press/Common Notions, 2014. Available online: [www.strikedebt.org/drom](http://www.strikedebt.org/drom)

A manual that offers advice to all kinds of debtors about how to escape debt and how to join a growing collective resistance to the debt system.

'Promises, Promises, A History of Debt'. Presented by David Graeber. Producer: Max O'Brien, A Juniper production for BBC Radio 4, 2015

A ten part series in which anthropologist David Graeber explores how society's attitude to debt and its function has varied over millennia and shaped our society.

## COMMON HOUSE

Unit 5E Pundersons Gardens,  
Bethnal Green,  
London E2 9QG  
[www.commonhouse.org.uk](http://www.commonhouse.org.uk)

A collectively managed space for radical groups, projects and community events. It is an experiment in building an urban commons – a resource that is organised and structured by people's collective activity as a community and not by money or property rights.

## THE FIELD NEW CROSS

385 Queens Rd, New Cross,  
London SE14 5HD  
[www.thefieldnx.com](http://www.thefieldnx.com)

A collaboratively run community space. Those who regularly use The Field manage, maintain and fund it through weekly pay-what-you-can kitchen. The space is a free platform for local community and activist groups.

## DIY SPACE FOR LONDON

96-102 Ormside Street,  
London SE15 1TF  
[www.diyspaceforlondon.org](http://www.diyspaceforlondon.org)

A music / cultural venue that offers low cost creative facilities, meeting rooms and social areas, and works to promote the ideas of mutual aid and co-operation. Its operational model is a members' club run by volunteers.

## SUTTON COMMUNITY FARM

[www.suttoncommunityfarm.org.uk](http://www.suttoncommunityfarm.org.uk)

A community-owned smallholding farm in Surrey.

## OPEN WORKSHOPS NETWORK

[www.openworkshopnetwork.com](http://www.openworkshopnetwork.com)

Open Workshop Network is a platform for London-based open access workshops and hackspaces. Workshops, studios and laboratories on this map are dedicated to providing publicly accessible ways to make, break and create. Most of the workshops are organised through different social enterprise or co-operative models.

## RADICAL HOUSING NETWORK

[www.radicalhousingnetwork.org](http://www.radicalhousingnetwork.org)

A UK-based network of groups fighting for housing justice (from social housing, private renting, squatting, homelessness, co-operative housing, access to benefits). The website includes a resources section.

## TRANSITION TOWNS

[www.transitionnetwork.org](http://www.transitionnetwork.org)

A movement that aims to equip communities for the challenges of climate change. The main aim of Transition Towns is to raise awareness of sustainable living and build local resilience in the near future. There exist thousands of transitions initiatives worldwide.

# Some Transparency

Evening Class started from one individual's desire to initiate a self-organised programme of education in a time of increasingly unaffordable, stagnant MA courses. She circulated an open call by mailing list and word of mouth, which confirmed that disappointment with current institutional offerings was felt by many others. The twenty or so respondents then met and started having conversations about how to work together, which began to shape how the group would operate. It was clear that many factors motivated everyone's decision to be involved – whether a vague desire to expand ones interests beyond those permitted by paid work, to share dissatisfaction with experiences of employment and freelancing, to make friends, to share skills, and so on.

After ten months, many discussions, long email exchanges, and heated debates, we are still uncomfortable defining exactly what we are. Perhaps if we ever find out, the collaboration will render itself pointless and end. Though this text may suggest otherwise, we don't speak with one voice. The challenges involved in maintaining a transparent, non-hierarchical

approach to organising and decision making continue to force us to reexamine our methodology – with the hope of opening up new methods of participation within the group and to the public. Otherwise, we risk becoming just another anti-network network.

When Precarious Workers Brigade invited us to work on *Training for Exploitation?*, we considered how to approach it at length, before group consensus determined that the project should be a collective experiment in which all of us would contribute to the design. For us, this decision related to the nature of precarious work, as discussed in the book, as well as being a way to challenge the conventional modes of selection within design practices. For example, Evening Class weren't chosen to design this book on the basis of work that we had done before, as we have no portfolio – it was instead because of our interest in collective working. We concluded that it would be more interesting to embrace clashing viewpoints and any antagonism that might arise within the group when planning out a visual style together. <sup>1</sup>

# from Evening Class

But how do twenty-plus individuals begin to work on something like this? How can we remain non-hierarchical when decisions need to be made and deadlines met? In the embryonic stages of any project, much of the work manifests as discussion and sharing of ideas – almost so much that there is no end in sight (or in this case, a start...).<sup>2</sup>

An early suggestion was to split into groups to complete individual sections, with each one working under a different political condition, ie dictatorship, communism, etc. Another was to make oblique reference to our labour by including a commentary in the margins throughout.<sup>3</sup> Another was for groups to continually pass on the working document, refining – or sabotaging – the work from the previous group, with little regard to having a coherent visual style. The book would need to be functional, though, so the eclectic collage of styles would have to be 'reigned in' somehow.

As interesting as all of these methods were, the need to cease thinking and begin designing had reached breaking point, so we forced ourselves to settle on a system of 'Anarchy in Action'<sup>4</sup>: two or more people would work on the book during pre-allocated time slots at our studio space, with remote working allowed. In an attempt to remain collaborative, we also decided that no one should work on the design alone. Groups of individuals would clock in and out, annotating decisions made and calculating the amount of hours spent working on each page, and so on.

In theory, it was a workable system but problems soon emerged. The nature of working within pre-determined slots resulted in those who had more free time or a flexible working day being able to spend more time shaping the design. Not surprisingly, some of those who work full time did not warm to the prospect of working in the evening, after work, in order to offer their input. Also, group working often

became one person in control of a laptop with a dozen backseat art directors, which was – apart from being an amusing scenario – a wasteful use of our resources as a group.

There was also an issue of people feeling a lack of ownership of the project, which may have been because they had been away (the bulk of work was done over the summer holiday), or because they felt that they should not pick up (or criticise) where others, who were seemingly more informed about what needed to be done, had left off.

In other words, it is only because we allowed our system to break, and released ourselves from the restrictions we forced on ourselves, that the finished book is now in the hands of the reader.

Despite these difficulties, working together in this way has been a worthwhile step for us in testing out alternatives to how we have so often worked – individually – in the professions of art, design and education. We hope the final design reflects our continuing efforts in working collaboratively, and also that sharing these experiences and learning from them can encourage and empower others to do the same.

1 MFK. *Do the Right Thing*. [www.studio-sm.se/MFK\\_Do-the-right-thing\\_ENG.pdf](http://www.studio-sm.se/MFK_Do-the-right-thing_ENG.pdf)

2 Verwoert, Jan. *If Things are not Quickly to go Pear-shaped*. [www.servinglibrary.org/journal/2/if-things-are-not-quickly-to-go-pear-shaped](http://www.servinglibrary.org/journal/2/if-things-are-not-quickly-to-go-pear-shaped)

3 Lüthi, Louis. *On the Self-reflexive Page*, Roma Publications, 2010.

4 Ward, Colin. *Anarchy in Action*, Freedom Press, 1973.

# BIBLIOGRAPHY

## REFERENCES BY SUBJECT: THE CREATIVE / WORKER SECTOR

- Benjamin, Walter. 'The Author as Producer', *New Left Review* Vol. 1, No. 62, July / August 1970. Available online: [www.marxists.org/reference/archive/benjamin/1970/author-producer.htm](http://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/benjamin/1970/author-producer.htm). In this seminal essay, Benjamin introduces and discusses issues of authorship in the processes of production. The ideas in this piece are pertinent across the sector and beyond.
- Hesmondhalgh, David, and Sarah Baker. 'A Very Complicated Version of Freedom: Conditions and Experiences of Creative Labour in Three Cultural Industries'. *Variant* 41 (2011). Available online: [www.variant.org.uk/41texts/complicated41.html](http://www.variant.org.uk/41texts/complicated41.html). The article summarises key findings and debate around the quality of working life and experiences in the cultural industries. Sections include: a general Introduction; Pay, working hours and unions; Insecurity and uncertainty; Socialising, networking and isolation; Conclusions.
- Horkheimer, Max, and Theodor W Adorno. 'The Culture Industry: Enlightenment as Mass Deception'. In *Dialectic of Enlightenment: Philosophical Fragments*, edited, by Gunzelin Schmid Noerr, translated by Edmund Jephcott, Stanford CA: Stanford University Press, 2002. p. 94–136. Available online: [www.marxists.org/reference/archive/adorno/1944/culture-industry.htm](http://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/adorno/1944/culture-industry.htm). In this key and hugely influential chapter, Adorno and Horkheimer condemn industrially produced mass culture including films, radio and magazines for their role in pacifying us through the gratification of false, constructed psychological needs. This culture industry is characterised as a threat to autonomous or difficult art.
- Lloyd, Richard. *Neo-Bohemia: Art and Commerce in the Post-Industrial City*. London: Routledge, 2010. From Amazon: 'Neo-Bohemia brings the study of bohemian culture down to the street level, while maintaining a commitment to understanding broader historical and economic urban contexts... The relevance of understanding the trends it depicts has only increased, especially in light of the current urban crisis puncturing a long period of gentrification and new economy development, putting us on the precipice, perhaps, of the next new bohemia.'
- McRobbie, Angela. *Be Creative: Making a Living in the New Culture Industries*. London: Polity Press, 2014. From the publisher: 'McRobbie charts the

"euphoric" moment of the new creative economy, as it rose to prominence in the UK during the Blair years, and considers it from the perspective of contemporary experience of economic austerity and uncertainty about work and employment... She incisively analyses "project working" as the embodiment of the future of work and poses the question as to how people who come together on this basis can envisage developing stronger and more protective organisations and associations.'

Oakley, Kate. *'Art Works' Cultural Labour Markets: A Literature Review*. London: Creativity, Culture and Education, 2009. Available online: [www.creativitycultureeducation.org/art-works-cultural-labour-markets-a-literature-review](http://www.creativitycultureeducation.org/art-works-cultural-labour-markets-a-literature-review). From the introduction: 'The review seeks to give a flavour of the major debates in the academic literature on what is called, "cultural labour". These include: the degree to which cultural work serves as a template for other forms of work, the pains and pleasures of cultural work, the geography of work and the importance of the network and of social contacts, and the growing importance of "free work" of all sorts.'

Quigg, Anne-Marie. *Bullying in the Arts: Vocation, Exploitation and Abuse of Power*. Aldershot: Gower, 2011. From the publisher: 'having witnessed bullying in a number of different arts organisations, Quigg researched whether the behaviour represented isolated, rare occurrences in specific creative environments or if it was indicative of a more widespread problem in the arts and cultural sector. She discovered the highest level of bullying recorded in any single employment sector in the UK.'

Raunig, Gerald et al., eds. *Critique of Creativity: Precarity, Subjectivity and Resistance in the Creative Industries*. London: MayFlyBooks, 2011. Available online: [www.mayflybooks.org/?page\\_id=74](http://www.mayflybooks.org/?page_id=74). From the publisher: 'In the hype of the creative class and the high flights of the digital bohemians, the renaissance of the creatives is visibly enacted. The essays collected in this book analyse this complex resurgence of creation myths and formulate a contemporary critique of creativity.'

Taylor, Stephanie, and Karen Littleton. *Contemporary Identities of Creativity and Creative Work*. Farnham, Surrey: Ashgate, 2012. From the publisher: 'Employing a crossdisciplinary methodology and analytic approach, the book investigates the new cultural meanings in play around a creative career. It shows how classic ideals of design and the creative arts,

reinterpreted and promoted within contemporary art schools, validate the lived experience of precarious working in the global sectors of the creative and cultural industries, yet also contribute to its conflicts.'

## FASHION LITERATURE

Arvidsson, Adam, Giannino Malossi and Serpica Naro. 'Passionate Work? Labour Conditions in the Milan Fashion Industry'. *Journal for Cultural Research* Vol. 14, No. 3 Special Issue: Autonomy and Creative Labour (2010): p. 295–309. Available online: [www.tandfonline.com/doi/10.1080/14797581003791503](http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/10.1080/14797581003791503).

From the abstract: 'This article analyses labour conditions among creative workers in the Milan fashion industry. Employing both qualitative and quantitative methods, the article shows how workers in the Milan fashion industry are generally underpaid and overworked. Despite such dire conditions, fashion work is generally considered gratifying and workers express high levels of satisfaction.'

Gherardi, Silvia, and Annalisa Murgia. 'Staging Precariousness: The Serpica Naro Catwalk during the Milan Fashion Week'. *Culture and Organization* vol. 21 No. 2 (2015): p. 174–196. DOI:10.1080/14759551.2013.837051. Available online: [www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/14759551.2013.837051](http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/14759551.2013.837051). From the abstract: 'The article illustrates the Italian process of work precarisation and the collective resistance of precarious workers. It interprets them in terms of the birth of a collective identity that conducts a critique against precariousness while developing learning resources.'

Hoskins, E Tansy. *Stitched Up: The Anti-capitalist Book of Fashion*. London: Pluto, 2015. From the publisher: 'Moving between Karl Lagerfeld and Karl Marx, the book explores consumerism, class and advertising to reveal the interests which benefit from exploitation. Hoskins dissects fashion's vampiric relationship with the planet and with our bodies to uncover what makes it so damaging. Why does 'size zero' exist and what is the reality of working life for models? In a critique of the portrayal of race in fashion, the book also examines the global balance of power in the industry... In a compelling conclusion *Stitched Up* explores the use of clothing to resist.'

McRobbie, Angela. *British Fashion Design: Rag Trade or Image Industry?* London: Routledge, 1998. From the publisher: '*British Fashion Design* explores the tensions between fashion as art form,

and the demands of a ruthlessly commercial industry. Based on interviews and research conducted over a number of years, McRobbie charts the flow of art school fashion graduates into the industry; their attempts to reconcile training with practice, and their precarious position between the twin supports of the education system and the commercial sector.'

Romano, Zoe. 'Passion and Fashion: The Highly Qualified for Work'. *Digicult* 51 (2010). Available online: [www.digicult.it/hackivism/passion-and-fashion-the-highly-qualified-for-work](http://www.digicult.it/hackivism/passion-and-fashion-the-highly-qualified-for-work).

In this article Romano summarises the history and research of the collective Serpica Naro who condemned the conditions of precarious workers within Italian fashion industry and has been working on the concept of open-source brand and empowerment concerning the subjectivity of workers in the creative industries. For more details see also: [www.serpicanaro.com/research/ricercaurbana-milano](http://www.serpicanaro.com/research/ricercaurbana-milano)

Ross, Andrew. *No Sweat: Fashion, Free Trade and the Rights of Workers: Fashion, Free Trade and the Rights of Garment Workers*. London: Verso, 1997. From the back cover: 'Are you aware that the T-shirt or the running shoes you are wearing may have been produced by children as young as 13 years old, working 14-hour days for 30 cents an hour? Don't be reassured by a label that claims the item was manufactured in the USA or Europe. It could have been sewn in Haiti or Indonesia or in a domestic sweatshop where conditions rival those in the Third World. The label may tell you how to treat the garment, but it says nothing of how the worker who made it was treated.'

Sluiter, Liesbeth. *Clean Clothes: A Global Movement to End Sweatshops: The Story of the Clean Clothes Movement*. London: Pluto Press, 2009. From the publisher: 'The Clean Clothes Campaign is a worldwide movement that aims to improve the wages and conditions of sweatshop workers. This is the story of their struggle. Large retailers such as Tesco, Walmart and Carrefour lure shoppers in with prices that seem too good to be true.'

## FASHION DOCUMENTARIES

*Dirty White Gold* (2013, dir. Leah Borromeo; Dartmouth Films). From the website: 'A feature-length documentary that unpicks the fashion supply chain and finds out why 300,000 Indian farmers have committed suicide to get out of debt. When you bag a bargain, who's paid for it?'

*China Blue* (2005, dir. Micha X Peled).

*China Blue*, which was made without permission from the Chinese authorities, offers an alarming report on the economic pressures applied by Western companies and the resulting human consequences, while the real profits are made and kept in firstworld countries. The unexpected ending makes the connection between the exploited workers and US consumers even clearer. Available online: [www.pbs.org/independentlens/china-blue/film.html](http://www.pbs.org/independentlens/china-blue/film.html)

## MEDIA LITERATURE

Caldwell, T John. *Production Culture: Industrial Reflexivity and Critical Practice in Film and Television*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2008. From the publisher: 'Caldwell investigates the cultural practices and belief systems of LA based film and video production workers: not only those in prestigious positions such as producers and directors but also many belowtheline laborers, including gaffers, editors, and camera operators. Caldwell analyzes the narratives and rituals through which workers make sense of their labor and critique the film and TV industry as well as the culture writ large.'

Gregg, Melissa. *Work's Intimacy*. Cambridge: Polity Press, 2011. From the publisher: 'Gregg provides a long-overdue account of online technology and its impact on the work and lifestyles of professional employees. It moves between the offices and homes of workers in the new "knowledge" economy to provide intimate insight into the personal, family, and wider social tensions emerging in today's rapidly changing work environment.'

Hesmondhalgh, David, and Sarah Baker. *Creative Labour: Media Work in Three Cultural Industries*. London: Routledge, 2011. From the publisher: 'What is it like to work in the media? Are media jobs more creative than those in other sectors? To answer these questions, this book explores the creative industries, using a combination of original research and a synthesis of existing studies... the book undertakes an extensive exploration of the creative industries, spanning numerous sectors including television, music and journalism.'

Mayer, Vicki. *Below the Line: Television Producers and Production Studies in the New Economy*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2011. From the publisher: '*Below the Line* illuminates the hidden labor of people who not only produce things that the television industry needs, such as a bit of content or a policy soundbite, but also produce

themselves in the service of capital expansion. Mayer considers the work of television set assemblers, softcore cameramen, realityprogram casters, and publicaccess and cable commissioners in relation to the globalized economy of the television industry.'

Mayer, Vicki et al., eds. *Production Studies: Cultural Studies of Media Industries*. New York: Routledge, 2009. From the publisher: '*Production Studies* is the first volume to bring together a star-studded cast of interdisciplinary media scholars to examine the unique cultural practices of media production. The all-new essays collected here combine ethnographic, sociological, critical, material, and political-economic methods to explore a wide range of topics, from contemporary industrial trends such as new media and niche markets to gender and workplace hierarchies.'

## ART LITERATURE

Abbing, Hans. *Why are Artists Poor. The Exceptional Economy of the Arts*. Amsterdam: University Press, 2002. Available online: [www.oapen.org/search?identifier=340245](http://www.oapen.org/search?identifier=340245). From the publisher: 'Most artists earn very little. Nevertheless, there is no shortage of aspiring young artists. Do they give to the arts willingly or unknowingly? Governments and other institutions also give to the arts, to raise the low incomes. But their support is ineffective: subsidies only increase the artists' poverty... This unconventional multidisciplinary analysis explains the exceptional economy of the arts. Insightful illustrations from the practice of a visual artist support the analysis.'

Amariglio, Jack et al., eds. *Sublime Economy: On the Intersection of Art and Economics*. London and New York: Routledge, 2009. From the publisher: 'Over the last two centuries, artists, critics, philosophers and theorists have contributed significantly to such representations of 'the economy' as sublime... *Sublime Economy* seeks to map this critical territory by exploring the ways diverse concepts of economy and economic value have been culturally constituted and disseminated through modern art and cultural practice.'

a-n, Guidance on fees and day rates for visual artists, a-n, 23 November 2015. Available online: [www.a-n.co.uk/resource/guidance-on-fees-and-day-rates-for-visual-artists](http://www.a-n.co.uk/resource/guidance-on-fees-and-day-rates-for-visual-artists). Summary: Sample day rates to guide arts budgeting and to help visual artists negotiate a fair rate of pay for short-term contracts such as commissions, residencies and community projects.

Antrobus, Claire. *Consulting The Funding and Finance Needs of Artists. Research Findings, June 2009*. London: Artquest (University of the Arts), 2009. Available online: [www.artquest.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/ARTQUEST-artists-money-research.doc](http://www.artquest.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/ARTQUEST-artists-money-research.doc). In March 2009, Artquest asked its newsletter subscribers to tell them their experiences of funding and finance, so where they get income, what they spend money on, and their general attitudes to loans, grants and other forms of income generation. The aim of this report is to identify areas for further research with the view of establishing the potential for increasing the supply of finance to artists. Central to this report are areas of expenditure suitable for finance. Based on the experience of introducing loan finance to not-for-profit sector (which has seen significant development in the past decade), the report also explores attitudes to finance and financial management in the research, as these have proved major barriers in this area.

Beech, Dave. *Art and Value: Art's Economic Exceptionalism*. In 'Classical, Neoclassical and Marxist Economics'. Boston: Brill, 2015. From the publisher: 'Art and Value is the first comprehensive analysis of art's political economy throughout classical, neoclassical and Marxist economics. It provides a critical-historical survey of the theories of art's economic exceptionalism, of art as a merit good, and of the theories of art's commodification, the culture industry and real subsumption. Key debates on the economics of art, from the high prices artworks fetch at auction, to the controversies over public subsidy of the arts, the "cost disease" of artistic production, and neoliberal and post-Marxist theories of art's incorporation into capitalism, are examined in detail. Subjecting mainstream and Marxist theories of art's economics to an exacting critique, the book concludes with a new Marxist theory of art's economic exceptionalism'.

Diederichsen, Dierich. *On (Surplus) Value in Art*. Berlin: Sternberg Press, 2008. From the publisher: 'Diederichsen applies the Marxist theory of surplus value (Mehrwert) to rationalize value formation in contemporary art, in sly defiance of the invocation of art's "extra special" quality (which, ironically, is also implied in the colloquial use of Mehrwert) as a substitute for serious discussion on the subject. He then goes on to elaborate on art as a "commodity form" and on the notion of "aura" that applies to this'.

Fraser, Andrea. 'L'1%, C'est Moi'. In *The Collectors, Texte zur Kunst* 83 (September 2001). From the introduction:

'How do the world's leading collectors earn their money? How do their philanthropic activities relate to their economic operations? And what does collecting art mean to them and how does it affect the art world? If we look at the incomes of this class, it is conspicuous that their profits are based on the growth of income inequality all over the world'.

Gielen, Pascal. *The Murmuring of the Artistic Multitude Global Art, Memory and Post-Fordism*. Amsterdam: Valiz, 2015 (third revised & expanded edition). From the publisher: 'In *The Murmuring of the Artistic Multitude* art sociologist Pascal Gielen defends the hypothesis that the globalized art scene is an ideal production entity for economic exploitation. How can the art world preserve its own dynamic and freedom?'

McGettigan, Andrew. 'Ten Things Everyone Working in or Studying Art Should Know'. *Afterall*, 22 July 2011. [www.afterall.org/online/ten-things-anyone-involved-in-art-education-should-know-about-the-white-paper-for-higher-ed.V\\_Zz34X3-Qk](http://www.afterall.org/online/ten-things-anyone-involved-in-art-education-should-know-about-the-white-paper-for-higher-ed.V_Zz34X3-Qk) Summary: McGettigan unpicks the new White Paper on higher education, *Students at the Heart of the System* (UK's Department of Innovation and Skills, June 2011), and highlights the ramifications for the arts.

Sholette, Gregory. *Dark Matter: Art, Politics and the Age of the Enterprise Culture*. London: Pluto Press, 2011. Available online: [www.1000littlehammers.files.wordpress.com/2010/02/sholette\\_dark\\_matter.pdf](http://www.1000littlehammers.files.wordpress.com/2010/02/sholette_dark_matter.pdf). From the publisher: 'Art is big business, with some artists able to command huge sums of money for their works, while the vast majority are ignored or dismissed by critics. This book shows that these marginalised artists, the dark matter of the art world, are essential to the survival of the mainstream and that they frequently organise in opposition to it'.

Stallabrass, Julian. *Art Incorporated: The Story of Contemporary Art*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004. From the publisher: 'Stallabrass notes that the spectacular crash of 1989 profoundly changed the character of contemporary art, shattering the artworld's self-importance and producing a reaction against art that engaged with theory and politics, in favor of art that set out to awe, entertain, and be sold'.

The Arts Group. *Emerging Workers: A Fair Future for Entering the Creative Industries*. London: The Arts Group, 2010. The Arts Group is calling for legislation governing the practice of work experience, internships and placements. In its *Emerging Workers* document, the Arts Group puts forward the case that

Government action is needed in order to protect students and graduates in the arts and creative industries.

Temporary Services. 'Art Work: A National Conversation about Art, Labour, and Economics'. *Art Work* (12 August 2009). [www.artandwork.us/2009/12/this-is-our-real-job/](http://www.artandwork.us/2009/12/this-is-our-real-job/). *Art Work* is a newspaper and accompanying website that consists of writings and images from artists, activists, writers, critics, and others on the topic of working within depressed economies and how that impacts artistic process, compensation and artistic property.

Wu, Chin-Tao. *Privatising Culture: Corporate Art Intervention since the 80s*. London, New York: Verso, 2003. From the publisher: 'Corporate sponsorship and business involvement in the visual arts have become increasingly common features of our cultural lives. From Absolut Vodka's sponsorship of art shows to ABN-AMRO Bank's branding of Van Gogh's self-portrait to advertise its credit cards, we have borne witness to a new sort of patronage, in which the marriage of individual talent with multinational marketing is beginning to blur the comfortable old distinctions between public and private'.

#### NEOLIBERALISM, POSTFORDISM, AND PRECARIETY

*Are You Working Too Much? Post-Fordism, Precarity, and the Labor of Art*. Berlin: e-flux Journal, Sternberg Press, 2011. From the publisher: 'The book... is a collection of texts that have, over the past year, dealt with the subject of art as work and art-related workers in the post-Fordist economy. Include texts by Dierich Diederichsen, Hito Steyerl, Franco Berardi Bifo, Precarious Workers Brigade among others'.

Berardi, Franco (Bifo). *The Soul at Work. From Alienation to Autonomy*. Cambridge, Mass. and London: Semiotext(e), 2010. From the publisher: 'Capital has managed to overcome the dualism of body and soul by establishing a workforce in which everything we mean by the Soul – language, creativity, affects – is mobilized for its own benefit. Industrial production put to work bodies, muscles, and arms. Now, in the sphere of digital technology and cyberculture, exploitation involves the mind, language, and emotions in order to generate value while our bodies disappear in front of our computer screens. [Berardi] addresses these new forms of estrangement'.

Denning, Michael. 'Wageless Life'. *New Left Review* 66 (November–December 2010). Available online: [www.newleftreview.org/II/66/michael-den-](http://www.newleftreview.org/II/66/michael-den-)

[ning-wageless-life](http://www.newleftreview.org/II/66/michael-denning-wageless-life) Denning asks if we need new concepts for contemporary forms of wagelessness. 'The fetishism of the wage may well be the source of capitalist ideologies of freedom and equality, but the employment contract is not the founding moment. For capitalism begins not with the offer of work, but with the imperative to earn a living. Dispossession and expropriation, followed by the enforcement of money taxes and rent: such is the idyll of 'free labour'.

Harvey, David. *A Brief History Neoliberalism*. Oxford University Press, 2005. Available online: [www.sok.bz/web/media/video/ABriefHistoryNeoliberalism.pdf](http://www.sok.bz/web/media/video/ABriefHistoryNeoliberalism.pdf). In this concise and authoritative account, Harvey traces the growth and eventual dominance of neoliberal ideology, paying particular attention to its international determinations and ultimately addressing the prospects for a more socially just future.

Hochschild, R Arlie. *The Managed Heart: Commercialization of Human Feeling*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003. From the publisher: 'In private life we try to induce or suppress love, envy, and anger through deep acting or 'emotion work' just as we manage our outer expressions through surface acting... But what occurs when emotion work, feeling rules, and the gift of exchange are introduced into the public world of work? In search of the answer, Hochschild closely examines two groups of publiccontact workers: flight attendants and bill collectors'.

Kirn, Gal, ed. *Postfordism and its Discontents*. Lulu.com, 2010. Available online: [www.p-dpa.net/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/Kirn-post\\_fordism\\_and\\_its\\_discontents.pdf](http://www.p-dpa.net/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/Kirn-post_fordism_and_its_discontents.pdf). From the publisher: 'Post-Fordism and its Discontents is rethinking the recent transformations of global capitalism in the light of its manifold internal fractures and contradictions. It addresses complex connections between culture and economy in order to scrutinize what underpins the logic of late capitalism. This volume is not a post-Fordist reader, but offers a confrontation on major controversies of post-Fordist theory'.

Klein, Naomi. *No Logo*. Fourth Estate, 2010. First published by Knopf Canada and Picador in 1999. From an Amazon review: 'In *No Logo*, Klein patiently demonstrates, step by step, how brands have become ubiquitous, not just in media and on the street but increasingly in the schools as well'. Sections of the book include No Jobs, an analysis of the manufacturing jobs, in particular places know as 'export processing zone' and which have no labour laws and poor

working conditions. The final section of *No Logo* discusses various movements that sprang up during the 1990s.

Malik, Shiv, and Ed Howker. *Jilted Generation: How Britain Has Bankrupted Its Youth*. London: Icon Books, 2010. From the publisher: 'Drawing on their own startling new research and writing with an irresistible polemical energy, twenty-something journalists Ed Howker and Shiv Malik argue that, in stark contrast to their parents generation, millions of young Britons today face the most uncertain future since the early 1930s'.

Lazzarato, Maurizio. *The Making of the Indebted Man: Essay on the Neoliberal Condition*. Los Angeles: Semiotext(e) / Intervention Series, 2012. From Amazon: 'In *The Making of the Indebted Man*, Lazzarato shows that, far from being a threat to the capitalist economy, debt lies at the very core of the neoliberal project... Lazzarato demonstrates that debt is above all a political construction, and that the creditor / debtor relation is the fundamental social relation of Western societies'.

Perlin, Ross. *Intern Nation: How to Earn Nothing and Learn Little in the Brave New Economy*. London and New York: Verso, 2011. From the publisher: '*Intern Nation* is the first exposé of the exploitative world of internships... Perlin profiles fellow interns, talks to academics and professionals about what unleashed this phenomenon, and explains why the intern boom is perverting workplace practices around the world'.

Ross, Andrew. 'The New Geography of Work: Power to the Precarious?' *Theory, Culture & Society* Vol. 25, No. 7-8 (December 2008): p. 31-49. 'Though they occupy opposite ends of the labor market hierarchy, workers in retail and lowend services and the 'creative class' temping in highend knowledge sectors share certain elements of precarious, or nonstandard employment. While these different segments have existential conditions in common, is there any reason to imagine that they interpret or experience them in similar ways? And, even if they do, is there enough commonality to forge a political coalition of interest against the class polarization associated with economic liberalization?'

Sennett, Richard. *The Corrosion of Character: The Personal Consequences of Work in the New Capitalism*. New York: WW Norton & Company, 1998. From *Publishers Weekly*, starred review: '*The Corrosion of Character* explores how new forms of work are changing people's communal and personal experience. This book challenges the reader to decide whether the flexibility

of modern capitalism... is merely a fresh form of oppression'. Standing, Guy. *The Precariat: the New Dangerous Class*. London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2011. From the publisher: 'This book presents the Precariat – an emerging class, comprising the rapidly growing number of people facing lives of insecurity, moving in and out of jobs that give little meaning to their lives. Standing argues that this class is producing instabilities in society... The Precariat is dangerous because it is internally divided, leading to the villainisation of migrants and other vulnerable groups'.

Virno, Paolo. *Culture Industry: Anticipation and Paradigm in The Grammar of the Multitude*. Cambridge, Mass. and London: Semiotext(e), 2004. Available online: [www.sdok.us/afterwork/virno\\_a\\_grammar\\_of\\_the.pdf](http://www.sdok.us/afterwork/virno_a_grammar_of_the.pdf). From the preface: 'Virno's essay examines the increased mobility and versatility of the new labour force whose worktime now virtually extends to the entire life. The "multitude" is the kind of subjective configuration that this radical change is liberating, raising the political question of what we are capable of'.

Weeks, Kathi. *The Problem with Work: Feminism, Marxism, Antiwork Politics, and Postwork Imaginaries*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2011. From the publisher: 'Weeks boldly challenges the presupposition that work, or waged labour, is inherently a social and political good... Weeks proposes a postwork society that would allow people to be productive and creative rather than relentlessly bound to the employment relation'.

#### SELF-ORGANISATION

Bradely, Will et al., ed. *Self-organisation/counter economic strategies*. Berlin: Sternberg Press, 2006. From the publisher: 'Essays by ten writers covers a wide crosssection of activity, from new approaches to intellectual property and the implication of the free / open-source software movement to political activism and the de facto self-organisation embodied in informal architecture and the so-called black economy'.

Carlsson, Chris. *Nowtopia: How Pirate Programmers, Outlaw Bicyclists, and Vacantlot Gardeners Are Inventing the Future Today*. Oakland, CA: AK Press, 2008. From the publisher: '*Nowtopia* uncovers the resistance of a slowly recomposing working class in America. Rarely defining themselves by what they do for a living, people from all walks of life are doing incredible amounts of labor in their "nonwork" time, creating immediate practical



improvements in daily life. The social networks they create, and the practical experience of cooperating outside of economic regulation, become a breeding ground for new strategies to confront the commodification to which capitalism reduces us all.

Carrot Workers Collective. *Surviving Internships: A Counter Guide to Free Labour in the Arts*. London, The Carrot Workers Collective, 2011. Available online: [www.precariousworkersbrigade.tumblr.com/survivinginternships](http://www.precariousworkersbrigade.tumblr.com/survivinginternships). In 2009 the Carrotworkers' Collective (out of which PWB emerged in 2010) began work on an alternative internship guide, addressing the growing phenomenon of unpaid or underpaid labour that is happening under the headings of internship schemes, volunteering, job placements and trainee positions. The guide consists of several sections, each addressing a different reader group: those thinking about doing an internship; those currently in an internship; employers who have interns or are thinking of taking on interns. Finally there is a section that asks how we can organise, fight back and / or exit the internship (and the culture of free labour) and create alternatives to it.

De Peuter, Greig, and Nick Dyer-Witford. 'Commons and Cooperatives'. *Affinities: A Journal of Radical Theory, Culture, and Action* Vol. 4, No. 1 (2010): p. 30–56. Available online: [www.ojs.library.queensu.ca/index.php/affinities/article/view/6147/5831](http://www.ojs.library.queensu.ca/index.php/affinities/article/view/6147/5831). In the last decade, the commons has become a prevalent theme in discussions about collective but decentralized control over resources. This paper is a preliminary exploration of the potential linkages between commons and cooperatives through a discussion of the worker co-operative as one example of a labour commons.

Federici, Silvia. *Revolution at Point Zero: House-work, Reproduction and Feminist Struggle*. Brooklyn, NY: Autonomedia / Common Notions and Oakland, CA: PM Press, 2012. Available online: [www.libcom.org/library/revolution-point-zero-silvia-federici](http://www.libcom.org/library/revolution-point-zero-silvia-federici). From the publisher: 'Written between 1974 and 2012, *Revolution at Point Zero* collects forty years of research and theorizing on the nature of housework, social reproduction, and women's struggles on this terrain – to escape it, to better its conditions, to reconstruct it in ways that provide an alternative to capitalist relations'.

Graziano, Valeria. 'Neither Scylla Nor Charybdis: Some Musings on Forming One's Practice and Resisting Bad Arguments' *Precarity Pilot*. Available online: [www.precaritypilot.net/valeria-](http://www.precaritypilot.net/valeria-graziano-organising-yourpractice)

[graziano-organising-yourpractice](http://www.precaritypilot.net/valeria-graziano-organising-yourpractice) Parker, Martin, Valérie Fournier and Patrick Reedy. *The Dictionary of Alternatives: Utopianism and Organisation*. London: Zed Books, 2007. From the publisher: 'Using hundreds of entries and cross-references, [this dictionary] proves that there are many alternatives to the way that we currently organise ourselves... Part reference work, part source book, and part polemic, this dictionary provides a rich understanding of the ways in which fiction, history and today's politics provide different ways of thinking about how we can and should organise for the coming century'.

Plotegher, Paolo. 'How to Turn a Career into a Commons'. *Precarity Pilot*, Available online: [www.precaritypilot.net/paolo-plotegher-how-to-turn-a-career-into-a-commons/](http://www.precaritypilot.net/paolo-plotegher-how-to-turn-a-career-into-a-commons/)

Sandoval, Marisol. 'Fighting Precarity with Cooperation? Worker Co-operatives in the Cultural Sector'. *New Formations* 88 (Spring 2016): p. 51–68. Available online: [www.lwbooks.co.uk/new-formations/88/fighting-precarity-with-co-operation](http://www.lwbooks.co.uk/new-formations/88/fighting-precarity-with-co-operation). This paper explores avenues for resistance to precarious and exploited labour in the cultural sector. It investigates the potential [and limits] of worker cooperatives to help improve working conditions and radically reimagine cultural work'.

Intern Aware. *Are You Free?*. London: Intern Aware, 2009. Intern Aware is the national campaign for fair, paid internships. See also: [www.internaware.org](http://www.internaware.org)

Stewart, Martin. 'Pedagogy of Human Capital'. *Mute* Vol. 2, No. 8 (February 2008). Available online: [www.metamute.org/editorial/articles/pedagogy-human-capital](http://www.metamute.org/editorial/articles/pedagogy-human-capital). From the publisher: 'Post-Fordism's appetite for self-directed activity is bringing about a crisis in progressive education. No longer perceived as threatening, a workforce trained to think for itself has become highly desirable. So what should an emancipatory education entail today?.'

#### EMPIRICAL RESEARCH REPORTS

Arts Council England (ACE). *Internships in the Arts: A Guide for Arts Organisations*. London: ACE, November 2011. Available online: [www.artscouncil.org.uk/advice-and-guidance-library/internships-arts](http://www.artscouncil.org.uk/advice-and-guidance-library/internships-arts)

Bakhshi, Hasan, ed. *The Art of Innovation: How Fine Arts Graduates Contribute to Innovation*, Research Report 2008. London: NESTA, 2008. Available online: [www.nesta.org.uk/sites/default/files/art\\_of\\_innovation.pdf](http://www.nesta.org.uk/sites/default/files/art_of_innovation.pdf). This report gives insights into how fine arts graduates contribute to innovation in the creative industries and beyond, and

what policymakers can do to support their contribution.

Ball, Linda, Emma Pollard and Nick Stanley. *Creative Graduates Creative Futures*. Council for Higher Education in Art and Design; University of the Arts London: 2010. Available online: [www.employment-studies.co.uk/resource/creative-graduates-creative-futures](http://www.employment-studies.co.uk/resource/creative-graduates-creative-futures). This is a study investigating the earlycareer working lives of over 3500 art, craft, media and design graduates, finding high levels of freelancing, unpaid work and portfolio working.

DHA Communication. *Paying Artists, Valuing Art, Valuing Artists. Paying Artists Consultation Report 2015*. Available online: [www.a-n.co.uk/resource/paying-artists-consultation-report-2015](http://www.a-n.co.uk/resource/paying-artists-consultation-report-2015). A summary of the consultations that took place as part of the Paying Artists campaign to listen to feedback from the arts sector about the issue of paying artists who exhibit in publiclyfunded galleries. See also: [www.a-n.co.uk/tag/paying-artists](http://www.a-n.co.uk/tag/paying-artists)

Institute for Public Policy Research (IPPR). *Why Interns Need a Fair Wage*. London: IPPR, July 2010. Available online: [www.ippr.org/publications/why-interns-need-a-fair-wage](http://www.ippr.org/publications/why-interns-need-a-fair-wage)

Thelwall, Sarah. *Size Matters: Notes towards a Better Understanding of the Value, Operation and Potential of Small Visual Arts Organisations*. London: Common Practice, 2011. Available online: [www.commonpractice.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2014/11/Common-Practice-London-Size-Matters.pdf](http://www.commonpractice.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2014/11/Common-Practice-London-Size-Matters.pdf)

#### OTHER ONLINE PLATFORMS AND RESOURCES

Artquest. Artquest encourages critical engagement and provides practical support to visual artists throughout their careers. [www.artquest.org.uk](http://www.artquest.org.uk)

Creative Choices. Artists, entrepreneurs, commentators, analysts, policy-makers, policy-sceptics, academics, financiers and citizens set out their hopes and fears for the future. [www.creative-choices.co.uk](http://www.creative-choices.co.uk)

Precarity Pilot. An online platform and a series of nomadic workshops that aim at addressing in inventive ways issues faced by precarious designers. [www.precaritypilot.net](http://www.precaritypilot.net)

Think Tank That Has Yet to Be Named. *22 Readings on Research, Activism, the Academy and Conduct*. Think Thank Reader, Vol. VI, 2010. This publication is part of an occasional series of educational readers that was created as part of the conference *Open Engagement: Making Things, Making Things Better, Making Things Worse*. [www.wearethethinktank.org](http://www.wearethethinktank.org)

#### RESOURCES ON SOLIDARITY AND UNIONS

Artists' Union England (AUE) is a new trade union for professional visual and applied artists, founded in 2014. In 2016 it received a Certificate of Independence, enabling it to be the first certified trade union which represents and works together with artists for better pay and conditions across England. Available online: [www.artistsunionengland.org.uk](http://www.artistsunionengland.org.uk)

BECTU is the UK's media and entertainment trade union; sectors covered include broadcasting, film, independent production, theatre and the arts, live events, leisure and digital media. Available online: [www.bectu.org.uk](http://www.bectu.org.uk)

Equity is the UK trade union for professional performers and creative practitioners. Available online: [www.equity.org.uk](http://www.equity.org.uk)

Honneth, Axel. *Disrespect: The Normative Foundations of Critical Theory*. Cambridge: Polity Press, 2007. From the publisher: 'Honneth pursues his pathbreaking work on recognition by exploring the moral experiences of disrespect that underpin the conduct of social and political critique. What we might conceive of as a striving for social recognition initially appears in a negative form as the experience of humiliation or disrespect. Honneth argues that disrespect constitutes the systematic key to a comprehensive theory of recognition that seeks to clarify the sense in which institutionalized patterns of social recognition generate justified demands on the way subjects treat each other'.

Rights for Interns. The TUC's website with advice and guidance for interns. Available online: [www.rightsforinterns.org.uk](http://www.rightsforinterns.org.uk)

Scottish Artists Union lobbies on behalf of visual artists working in Scotland, defending their rights, expanding their benefits and fighting to make their professional practice a means to support a better quality of life. Available online: [www.sau.org.uk](http://www.sau.org.uk)

The University and College Union (UCU) represents over 110,000 academics, lecturers, trainers, instructors, researchers, managers, administrators, computer staff, librarians and post-graduates in universities, colleges, prisons, adult education and training organisations across the UK. Available online: [www.ucu.org.uk](http://www.ucu.org.uk)

### APPENDIX – A Few Common Categories of Work Defined in Brief

INTERN	VOLUNTEER	WORKER	SELF-EMPLOYED
<p><b>Interns</b> undertake internships or work placements, typically to learn and gain experience by doing a specific job for a set period of time. This work may be paid or unpaid; an intern's rights depend on their employment status and whether they're classed as a volunteer, a <b>worker</b> or an <b>employee</b> or <b>self-employed</b> (see below). Students required to intern for less than a year as part of a UKbased further or higher education aren't entitled to National Minimum Wage.</p>	<p>The following definitions are more indicative than conclusive. This is because they are often used interchangeably in common parlance and subject to change in employment policy and legislation. The following are based on current definitions provided by Government at the time of writing the second edition of <b>Training for Exploitation?</b> in 2016. These categories imply different rights entitlements and responsibilities.</p> <p><b>Volunteers</b> are motivated by a desire to make a difference rather than because they seek financial remuneration. As they don't have contracts of employment, they don't have the same rights as workers and employees. They may, however, be reimbursed for out of pocket expenses, such as travel and food. They should be treated fairly and consistently. (See more on the volunteer in the Introduction)</p>	<p>A <b>worker</b> is generally someone who has a contract of employment, or any other contract (written or implied) in which they agree to carry out personally any work or services for another party. This excludes work they may do as part of their own limited company where the 'employer' is actually a customer or client. Some workers' rights include: (1) payment of at least the full National Minimum Wage; (2) protection against unlawful discrimination; (3) the statutory minimum level of rest breaks and paid holiday.</p> <p><b>EMPLOYEE</b></p> <p>All <b>employees</b> are workers but an <b>employee</b> has extra employment rights and responsibilities that don't apply to workers who aren't employees. These include: (1) statutory sick pay; (2) statutory maternity, paternity, adoption and shared parental leave; (3) minimum notice period if their employment will be ending; (4) statutory redundancy pay.</p>	<p>Someone who is self-employed runs her/his own business, works for her/himself (such as freelance work; working from home etc) and takes responsibility for their business' success or failure. In the UK, a self-employed person is normally classed as a sole trader by HM Revenue and Custom (HMRC). This form of employment does not entail rights such as paid holiday, statutory sick pay, or statutory maternity leave.</p> <p>You can be both employed and self-employed at the same time, for example, if you work for an employer during the day and run own business in the evening.</p> <p>Source: <a href="http://www.gov.uk/national-minimum-wage/who-gets-the-minimum-wage/">www.gov.uk/national-minimum-wage/who-gets-the-minimum-wage/</a></p>

TRAINING FOR EXPLOITATION? has been a long time in the making and many people contributed to it in various ways and forms. Thank you to everyone who participated in workshops and discussions, shared their insights, frustrations and practices. While this counter curriculum is a product of collective knowledge, it was the willingness of students during the workshops to share their varied experiences that spurred us on to update and expand the previous edition of Training for Exploitation?, released in May 2012. The current iteration owes special thanks to Silvia Federici for the foreword, everyone at Evening Class for their beautiful and accessible design, Journal of Aesthetics & Protest Press for their generous help with publication and distribution, and LCC Research for funding the project. We would also like to acknowledge the importance of our meeting spaces, the Common House and The Field, where, away from universities, class rooms, galleries, we can come together to share experiences, reflect, get angry, self-organise and make change.

PRECARIOUS WORKERS BRIGADE (PWB) is a UK-based group of precarious workers in culture & education. We call out in solidarity with all those struggling to make a living in this climate of instability and enforced austerity.

PWB's praxis springs from a shared commitment to developing research and actions that are practical, relevant and easily shared and applied. If putting an end to precarity is the social justice we seek, our political project involves developing tactics, strategies, formats, practices, dispositions, knowledges and tools for making this happen.

EVENING CLASS is a self-organised design education experiment, consisting of 19 participants from various cultural and educational backgrounds. For now, they are located at 48 Aberfeldy Street, Poplar – an area soon to be flattened, regenerated and transformed into the 'New Shoreditch' of East London.

TRAINING FOR EXPLOITATION? POLITICISING EMPLOYABILITY AND RECLAIMING EDUCATION by Precarious Workers Brigade  
[www.precariousworkersbrigade.tumblr.com](http://www.precariousworkersbrigade.tumblr.com)

PUBLISHED AND DISTRIBUTED by Journal of Aesthetics & Protest Press 2017. London / Leipzig / Los Angeles  
[www.joaap.org](http://www.joaap.org)

DESIGNED by Evening Class  
[www.evening-class.org](http://www.evening-class.org)

PRINTED by Calverts Co-op  
[www.calverts.coop](http://www.calverts.coop)

ALL IMAGES by Precarious Workers Brigade and Evening Class

ISBN 978-0-615-59011-0

This text and images are licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 4.0 International License CC BY-NC-SA 4.0



**PRECARIOUS  
WORKERS  
BRIGADE**



THE JOURNAL OF  
**Aesthetics & Protest**

**ual:** london college  
of communication