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LIST OF RESEARCH PROJECTS

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JOB MARKET PAPER

 "Metrics as Identity Baits: Hope Labor Sustained." (Ghaedipour, F., in preparation for submission to *Organization Science.* manuscript based on dissertation– selected as a finalist in the 2021 INFORMS/Organization Science Dissertation Proposal Competition.)

Hope labor refers to un(der)compensated productive work carried out at present in hope of future rewards (Kuehn and Corrigan, 2013). How is hope labor controlled and sustained in conditions of prolonged precarity and uncertainty? I explore this question through an inductive field study of Instagram content creators (hereafter, "creators"). I draw on 50 semi-structured interviews with creators, five years of participant observation as a creator on Instagram, and a walkthrough analysis of the platform. I find that identity pursuits, manifested as hope-induced effort, are controlled and sustained through what I label *identity baiting*–a recursive and habit-forming process in which evaluative metrics provide workers with an elusive yet alluring sense of affirmation, which instills hope about the potential of future enactment of a desired identity and fuels a compulsive cycle of further seeking of affirmation. I identify three strategies that workers employ to resist identity baiting, namely, optimism, abstinence, and mindfulness. Taken together, I show how, even in the absence or scarcity of material rewards or opportunities, hope labor is sustained and controlled through identity baiting. The process model contributes to our understanding of control and resistance in relation to hope labor, identity, and technology.

UNDER REVIEW

"With or Without You: How People Engage Family in Building Careers in Demanding and Precarious Professions." (Reid, E. Ghaedipour, F., and Obodaru, O., 2nd round of revise and resubmit, *Journal of Management Studies.*)

Professionals typically face extraordinarily high demands, including expectations of deep work devotion and willingness to work long hours. Professionals often cite the promise of stable employment and financial rewards as key motivations for acquiescing to these high demands in ways that require so much of their family members. However, such rewards are no longer assured: the precarity that has long been reshaping working-class jobs is now creeping into professions as well. As a result, members of many professions, including information technology, academia, and journalism continue to encounter high demands, yet find their work to be increasingly unstable, insecure and poorly paid. We examine how people engage their families when trying to build careers in demanding and precarious professions. Analyzing interviews with 102 journalists and drawing on the construct of career work, we uncover two types of career work practices that engage family: *career-family positioning* (i.e., crafting a narrative of how career and family relate) and *career-family resourcing* (i.e., generating or accessing resources from family for career or vice-versa). People piece together variations of these practices to enact one of three types of career work strategies that engage family. Two of these strategies involve *turning towards family* or *turning away from family* to build careers that

largely meet the demands and accept the precarity. The third strategy involves *tuning into family* to defy the demands and precarity. In enacting these strategies, people draw on information about and resources embedded within a broad range of family members—spouses, children, parents, siblings and others. Unlike in stable professions, gender does not seem to meaningfully influence which career work strategy people pursue. Our study advances scholarship on career and family in the professions, and theory on social-symbolic work by adding specificity to our understanding of career work, what it entails, and who it involves.

WORKING PAPERS

"Obfuscated Entrepreneurialism: Navigating the Contradiction of the Authenticity Mandate and Entrepreneurialism in Platform Occupations." (Ghaedipour, F., Karunakaran, A., in preparation for submission to *Administrative Quarterly,* manuscript based on dissertation.)

Through 50 interviews with Instagram content creators and five years of participant observation as an Instagram creator, we examine how people navigate the tension created by the demand for authenticity with the need to be entrepreneurial. We find that creators face an authenticity mandate (an expectation that they would be fully transparent and also disinterested in economic gain) that constructs the economic pursuit inherent in self-entrepreneurialism as a contested exchange of sacred and profane. To navigate the tension, creators use three forms of authenticity work (expressive transparency, protective transparency, and deflective transparency). Those using expressive transparency fulfilled the algorithmically intensified demand for full transparency, which led to higher rankings and online growth but prevented economic gain (disinterested entrepreneurialism). Deflective transparency involved rejecting self-exposure and commodification and shifting the focus to craft and expertise, which allowed transparent entrepreneurialism but limited online growth due to algorithmic penalties. Protective transparency, the most effective of all, involved selective desacralization, revelation, and instrumentalization of some vulnerable aspects of the self, while protecting others. This selective process allowed the creators to manipulate the boundary between the sacred and the profane by bundling their entrepreneurial exchanges with social entrepreneurship or friendship, thereby enabling obfuscated entrepreneurialism. By strategically disclosing vulnerabilities, they could present their entrepreneurial endeavors as either profane–profane or sacred–sacred exchanges. Thus, obfuscated entrepreneurialism reconciled the contradiction of authenticity mandate and entrepreneurialism and allowed for both online growth and revenue generation. Importantly, we find that the platform perpetuated the expectations of transparency through rhetorical invocations, technological features, and algorithmic evaluations. We contribute to the literature on emerging occupations by introducing obfuscated entrepreneurialism as a mechanism for overcoming the authenticity-entrepreneurialism contradiction. We also contribute to the literature on platform control by theorizing that the occupational mandate can be a target and medium of control; that is, it can be mediated, shaped, enforced by the platform in directions that align with its business objectives.

"Gendered Accent Penalty: An Informal Network Perspective on Employment Discrimination." (Ghaedipour, F., Reid, E., Schat, A., Targeting *Academy of Management Review*)

We theorize about whether having a non-native accent has different effects on men's and women's chances of being hired. We propose that in recruitment decisions, men are penalized

more severely for their accent compared to women. We develop the concept of informal network attractiveness as the mediator in the relationship between non-standard accent and recruitment outcomes. This study advances the literature on accent bias and intersectionality by shedding light on the interaction of accent and gender and broadening the explanatory power of accent bias in employment decisions. More broadly, it contributes to emergent research suggesting that hiring is a fundamentally complex interpersonal process fraught with biases rather than a mere skill-sorting one.

RESEARCH IN PROGRESS

"Career Trajectories of Independent Workers." (Reid, E., Ghaedipour, F., data collection)

We set out to explore in career trajectories of people across traditionally male and traditionally female-dominated occupations, with a specific focus on gender differences, and the intergenerational influence of family (i.e., family of origin and children) on career paths. Our initial findings based on 32 interviews with Upwork freelancers suggest that the career trajectories of gig workers might be less gendered than typically observed in professional occupations. We also find that family of origin shapes people's relation to precarity. Family influenced people's choices in entering freelancing by shaping their idealized notions of work in discursive ways (e.g., a father telling his daughter to embrace uncertainty and be entrepreneurial). Some were material (e.g., taking on temporary jobs to support the family of origin), and some were relational (e.g., a mother chose to go freelance to spend more time with her children).

"Rise of the Techno-Precariat: Understanding Insecurity in the Age of Digital Technologies." (O'Brady, S., Johnston, H., Ghaedipour, F., Maffie, M., theoretical work in progress)

We are developing a conceptual paper that considers how rapid technological changes in the workplace are fundamentally altering the contemporary organization of work so as to expand and entrench traditional forms of precariousness that were first identified in the 1980s. We focus on how the growing use of technology at work and simultaneous opaque power relations that are frequently embedded in technologically intermediated systems constitute a new form of insecurity. This process, which we term *techno-precarization*, reaches across the labor market and characterizes the experience of independent and employed service workers in a growing array of occupations. We argue that understanding this shift requires reflection on how technologies are reshaping the state of precarity, the processes through which precarity arises, and how precarity relates to class. This work advances how precarious work is conceptualized to provide a more accurate analysis of its current form in relation to technological change in the new economy.

"How Do Different Occupational Groups Integrate Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI) into their Workflow?" (Ghaedipour, F., Karunakaran, A., data collection in progress)

This study explores the varied patterns of adoption and integration of generative AI across diverse occupational groups, particularly emphasizing the roles played by occupation-specific cultural scripts and social structures. Recognizing that technological affordances alone cannot

explain the heterogeneity in the adoption of novel technologies, we explore the intersection of technology adoption and occupational narratives across technical and creative occupations.

"Implications of Idealized Images of Contemporary Work for People and Organizations: Authenticity, Entrepreneurialism, Passion, and Autonomy" (Ghaedipour, F., Karunakaran, A., conceptual, developing for Academy of Management Review)

This conceptual paper explores the multifaceted implications of idealized images of contemporary work on individuals and organizations, focusing on the key themes of authenticity, entrepreneurialism, passion, and autonomy. We examine the potential tension between the pursuit of passion-driven work and the emergence of precarious employment arrangements, revealing the potential for the exploitation of labor in the name of individual empowerment. Additionally, we consider how this shift contributes to a dichotomy between those who can fully embrace the new work paradigm and those who face barriers to its realization.