TOWARD CHOSEN DOING: YOUNG WORKING WOMEN'S EXPERIENCES, PERCEPTIONS, AND CRITICAL RE-IMAGINING OF NON-WORK TIME

by

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Dalhousie is located in Mi'kma'ki, the

ancestral and unceded territory of the Mi'kmaq.

We are all Treaty people.

To my teacher and friend, Dr. Riley Olstead,

for encouraging me to go to grad school

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ABSTRACT

This study uses an exploratory approach to investigate the non-work time of young working women (YWW) in Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada. Of particular interest is the experience of time under late stage and digital capitalism. By thinking about and attending to *leisure as an alternate way of experiencing time* (Marx, 1894; Pieper, 1948; Holloway, 2010), this research considers whether and how a distinct kind of doing – chosen doing (Holloway, 2010) – within a distinct kind of time – doing time (ibid.) – pushes back against the dominant, abstracted and alienated experience of time characteristic of capitalism. In-depth qualitative interviews with eleven (n = 11) women revealed that the majority of YWW's time is subsumed by necessity; constituted of productive and reproductive labour (Marx, 1894) commensurate to maintaining their livelihood and/or meeting perceived obligations. Even in the absence of care-giving responsibilities (i.e., pertaining to childcare, eldercare, or dependents), conditions of real and perceived necessity barred YWW from autonomous non-worktime engagement. In response, this study evokes YWW's envisioning of alternative non-worktime grounded in desire: experiences that are characterized by creativity, freedom, and spontaneity and enabled by community, connection, and reliance on others. This study regards these envisioned instances of chosen doing and chosen modes of doing as critical sites for the potential transformation of non-worktime. The articulation of a desired, reimagined leisure that reconnects us and imbues our relations with interdependence, reciprocity, and obligation, offers critical reflection on the power of our engagement within non-worktime to transform our social world. In the wake of these findings, prefigurative action – the enactment of a desired future in the present (Springer, 2014) – toward postcapitalist praxis are discussed (Holloway, 2010; Chatterton & Pusey, 2020).

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS USED

YWW	Young working women
GIM	General inductive method
GT	Grounded theory
UBI	Universal basic income

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

This study utilizes the idea of leisure as a theoretical entry point into young working women's (hereafter, YWW) perceptions and experiences of non-work time in Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada, examining how the shifting parameters of the contemporary economy impact non-work time and subsequently, leisure. In qualitative interviews with a sample of eleven YWW, this research invited participants to share their conceptions of leisure, sourced in their lived experiences. Rather than attempting to pre-determine and typologize what "counts" or "doesn't count" as leisure before entering the field, the study used an open and exploratory approach to the idea of leisure. This dynamic orientation, while representing an epistemological position, is also a response to volatile and shifting boundaries between leisure and work under late stage and digital capitalism.

Indeed, leisure studies today faces novel challenges in separating out leisure as its own distinct experience. Increasingly, leisure is commodified and co-opted by consumerism, turned into a means of production, and subject to the encroachment of new labour regimes under digital capitalism (Frayssé, 2013). Foregrounding this, is the acknowledgment that non-work time – the site of potential leisure – is also the site of reproductive labour. To consider each of these challenges to leisure is to witness its systematic displacement to the point where the category threatens to collapse into itself and disappear altogether, becoming something else (Rojek, 2010).

Despite this vanishing tendency, I have persisted in using the term 'leisure', employing it in the broadest sense. What has been of central concern to the current research is the experience of time. In thinking about and attending to *leisure as an alternate way of experiencing time*, we can consider if and how its experience might push back against the dominant experience of time

– hegemonic, abstract time (Holloway, 2010). By offering the idea of leisure to my participants, I was able to listen for hints of this alternate, desired experience of time (Marx, 1894; Pieper, 1948; Holloway, 2010) – one in which alternative, chosen forms of *doing* (Holloway, 2010) are made possible. Before introducing the specific research questions investigated in this thesis, I will first provide some context to explain why it focuses on the leisure of young working women—a task which will draw on theoretical resources and contemporary evidence concerning leisure's relationship to capitalism, gender, social reproduction, and youth.

1.1 THE LOCUS OF LEISURE UNDER CAPITALISM

This research is contextualized by capitalism, within which social life is divided into work and not-work. Scholars have separated these two entities into the 'sphere of production,' where workers exchange labour for a wage, and the 'sphere of reproduction,' where expended labor power is replenished (Frayssé, 2013). These two spheres, in theory, produce an equilibrium. The time allotted to the worker to recover and reproduce themselves from work is sufficient to enable their subsequent outpouring of more work the next day; the work they do in the sphere of production justifies and affords them their replenishment in the sphere of reproduction. Taken together, the sphere of production and the sphere of reproductions constitute what Marx called the "realm of necessity" (Marx, 1894), each tied to the other by a relationship of mutual dependence.

Under this arrangement, leisure is located within 'non-work' time or, the sphere of reproduction, colloquially called '*free time*' (Spracklen, 2015). This follows from economics' definition of leisure as time that is *residual or marginal* to work (Roberts, 1999; Rojek, 2010; Surdam, 2015; Stebbins, 2018) – in essence, time which is *free* from work. This

conceptualization of leisure, however, is a rather vacuous one. It tells us nothing about what leisure *is.* Further, to conceive of leisure as time free from work necessitates the acknowledgment that freedom from work is not experienced equally. In particular, as per the focus of this research, women's leisure has been historically and structurally impinged upon.

1.2 GENDERED INEQUALITIES IN LEISURE: A BRIEFING ON SOCIAL REPRODUCTION

Marxist feminists remind us that freedom from work is not experienced equally. The capitalist division of life into work and not-work systemically makes invisible the necessary labour relegated to the sphere of reproduction. Historically, this has been the predominant work of women (Hochschild, 1989; Weeks, 2011; Jarrett. 2015). Data from the 2023 Federal American Time-Use Survey indicates that this disproportionate burden persists within heterosexual marriages despite the number of women earning the same or more than their male counterpart having tripled in the last fifty years. This trend persists even when women are the primary earners (Pew Research Center, 2023). The functioning of the economy thus remains heavily reliant on the unpaid labour of women – labour which is discounted from measures of economic productivity, yet enables the reproduction of "productive" labour (Waring, 2016). This is the basis of social reproduction.

This burden of reproductive labour (i.e., domestic chores, child-rearing, care-giving) on working women (Weeks, 2011; Jarrett, 2015) extends 'work' – albeit unpaid – into time otherwise reserved for non-work: for rest, recuperation, and maybe leisure. In contrast to the super-rich who can escape work and outsource care-giving and reproductive labour, the leisure of working women is structurally impinged upon.

This reality for women has even been found to manifest a distinctly gendered experience and perception of time (Hall, 1959, 1983; Bryson, 2007; Burnett et al. 2020). In departure from the dominant perception and experience of time as linear and monochronic, Burnett et al. (2020) considers how women often experience and perceive time in polychronic ways. For instance, in repetition due to care-giving responsibilities (Bryson, 2007), or, in holding multiple timelines at once – "caring for children or the elderly while multitasking" (p. 149). This experience of time does not adhere well to the efficient, forward-leaning, progress imperative of linear time (which will later in this thesis be developed as abstract time). Schulte (2014) describes women's time as "contaminated" because of the way it is broken up, interrupted, and sprinkled around – as "time confetti" (ibid.) – as a result of the reproductive and domestic responsibilities women take on outside (and sometimes also within) their paid work hours.

1.3 YOUNG WOMEN AND LEISURE

The "contaminated" condition of women's time is exacerbated by the omnipresence of technology, ensuring all the while, that formal work as well as "leisure" is infinitely available at one's fingertips (Wajcman, 2009). And this is especially the case for younger women. As Vilhelmson (2018) writes, "social changes in recent decades have transformed the conditions of free-time use and leisure activity, among younger generations in particular" (p. 2899). The transformation of "young people's every-day, their use of free time in particular, has changed along with intensified digitization" (ibid., p. 2904). The increasing impact of technology on the experience of non-worktime is thus of critical consideration as it facilitates simultaneous and uninhibited access to "work" and "leisure" at one's fingertips (Wajcman, 2009).

Here, Marshall Sahlins (1972) theorization of the original affluent society resonates. Despite Western notions of progress and increasing technological "advancement," we find that

these advancements have not necessarily resulted in greater leisure or free time (ibid.). Rather, "labour-saving" technologies have more often increased labor demands by bolstering productivity (Hochschild, 1989, 1997; Brynjolfsson & McAfee, 2014). This thesis will go on to explain this via Marx's theory of capitalist usurpation. For now, what is important to consider is how, in comparison to the hunter-gatherer societies that enjoyed abundant leisure time due to resource sharing, subsistence production, and communal structuring (Sahlins, 1972) – we today access much less leisure. Or rather, we have access to much more work.

Allen and Finn (2018) argue that technology and the constant market access enabled by digital capitalism have made young women, especially white, middle-class, cisgender women, the "poster girls" of #girlbossing[1] and the side hustle. Critically, success stories of #girlbosses feature dominantly white, middle-class, cis-gender young women (ibid., p. 9) while being simultaneously rooted in ideas of "ease, enjoyment, and accessibility" (ibid.). The biased visibility social media enables of these "success stories" perpetuates the narrative that one's free time, one's leisure, should be a means toward creating wealth and potentially even a career for oneself.

The ideology of the side hustle can be understood to be rooted in the notions of "hope labour" (Kuehn & Corrigan (2013) or "aspirational labour" (Duffy, 2016). These ideas advance the romanticization of work as a site of passion, fulfillment, self-expression (McRobbie, 2016; Weeks, 2017) all the while encouraging the subjugation of true leisure to the prioritization of capitalist value production – often in the form of low-paid, precarious work (Allen & Finn, 2018, p. 14). This discourse undoubtedly plays into the leisure "landscape" for young working women,

[1] Allen and Finn (2018) describe "#girlbossing" as a gendered entrepreneurial phenomenon in which women are encouraged to pursue self-employment under "the promise of 'passionate work', financial autonomy and time freedom" (1). This discourse positions young women as "poster girls" of entrepreneurialism, while masking the ongoing crises and gendered inequalities in the labor market.

encouraging an industriousness and self-serving-ness within non-worktime corrosive to experiencing true leisure.

Vilhelmson (2018) offers that despite literature on the impacts of digitization on young adults' time-use being limited, what does exist indicates "potential offline repercussions in the realm of free time" (p. 2904). We can consider the impacts of profuse technology and social media, for example, on the changing parameters of our socializing, our cultural participation, access to news and media, etc. (ibid.). Here, a parallel body of literature – that of the "loneliness epidemic" (Lin, 2022) in young adults – is pertinent.

Loneliness has been increasingly identified as a public health concern (Cacioppo & Cacioppo, 2018; Goodfellow et al., 2022; Fardghassemi & Joffe, 2022) – even prior to the Covid-19 pandemic which introduced novel challenges for connection and community. More specifically, the loneliness epidemic has been found to be experienced most acutely by young people. These findings are reflected in a 2018 survey which found that 79% of Americans aged 18-24 reported feeling lonely (Cigna Loneliness Index Report, 2018) and a 2022 study where young adults in the UK identified feelings of disconnection and the transition periods associated with their life stage as contributing to loneliness (Fardghassemi & Joffe, 2022). Further, the 2018 BBC Loneliness Experiment – the largest global study conducted on loneliness to date – found that those respondents aged 18-24 reported the highest perceived levels of loneliness (Barreto et al., 2020; Eccles & Qualter, 2021). Barreto et al.'s (2020) secondary analysis of this data found that the loneliness of young people increased with individualism.

These findings serve as important context for any investigation of young people's – in this case, young women's – leisure. To consider these findings is to ask, what might young people *not* be doing/having within non-worktime that contributes to the experience of loneliness?

Taken together, these critical contextual factors – the historical, structural impingement of women's leisure, the increasing and gendered subjugation of leisure to the forms of capitalist value production, the loneliness epidemic in young adults – have informed the question and direction of this research: *how do young working women in Halifax think about and experience non-worktime?*

1.4 TOWARD CHOSEN DOING

The interviews analysed in this thesis suggest that YWW's non-worktime is predominantly characterized by necessity and the imposing of constraints (financial and otherwise) on time. After necessary decompression from work and reproduction labour, the time left over for leisure was often deemed insufficient to undertake truly chosen forms of leisure. YWW frequently recounted how they would default to passive forms of media consumption (e.g., "scrolling" and "rotting") as a result. Beyond this, forms of reproductive labour themselves, such as showering and cleaning, were oriented to as leisure or self-care, blurring lines between leisure and reproduction.

YWW's leisure was also frequently bound up with perceptions or expectations about what they *should* do in their non-worktime – what I have called *perceived necessity*. This was exacerbated by social media as it enables the display of other people's leisure and apparent non-worktime, altering the quality and scope of leisure desired. This imposing of *should do* within non-worktime can be understood as secondary, exogenous sources of necessity, reflecting external pressures from neoliberal patriarchal capitalism and reinforcing the notion of the self as a site of production within non-worktime.

In response to non-worktime being predominantly characterized by necessity, the question of *chosen doing* was posed to YWW: essentially, asking what they might do in their

non-worktime if the 'stuff' of necessity were taken care of. As the linchpin concept to the findings of this thesis, *chosen doing* represents any autonomous, desired – hence, *chosen* – action undertaken freely and voluntarily. While it may serve useful ends, its undertaking need not be explained or justified in terms of this utility. It is simply, "*because I want to"*. In probing for chosen doing with my participants, reflection on the realities of their free time and leisure shifted toward envisioning alternative leisure grounded in *desire*. Here, YWW evoked chosen doing by recalling memories of childhood, forms of creating, and experiences characterized by freedom and spontaneity. Beyond instances of chosen doing, YWW also envisioned alternate, chosen *modes* of doing, structures and practices that might be conducive to more of what they desired in their non-worktime. Here, community, connection and reliance on others emerged as core desired modes of doing within non-worktime.

By exploring YWW's desires for alternative ways of doing, being, and relating within non-work time, this research advances the concept of chosen doing (Holloway, 2010) as a key materialist challenge to the hegemony of work and abstract time under capitalism. The implications of evoking chosen doing will be discussed in relation to abstract time as it characterizes the realm of necessity. Following Holloway's (2010) lead, if "the abstraction of doing into labour is the homogenization of time" (p. 135), then the evocation of non-abstracted, non-alienated doing, *chosen* doing, breaks it.

In light of the findings above, as well as the theoretical implications of 'chosen doing,' the results further suggest that structural supports like universal basic income could play a crucial role in alleviating the pressures of necessity, enabling greater chosen doing and challenging the dominance of abstract time.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

The following review is directed by an attempt to understand and orient to the ways that capitalism abstracts "doing" into labour (Holloway, 2010) within 'non-work' time. This idea will be considered in relation to three bodies of literature: social reproduction, governmentality/biopolitics, and consumer culture theory. These bodies of literature in particular will advance an understanding of the contemporary landscape within which young women navigate *leisure.* Essential to any investigation of leisure, and thus threaded throughout this review, is the basic question of how time is experienced.

In situating this investigation within the theoretical container of 'non-work' time, I wish to acknowledge how within late-stage capitalism, work and therefore non-work time is unfixed, *not contained* – the implication of which is the rendering of each moment a possible site of 'work' or not-work. However, for the sake of this review, which requires first to conceptualize the sphere of production/work and reproduction/'not-work' (Marx, 1894) in relation to each other, non-worktime can be thought of, conceptually, as fixed, contained time that follows from the formal (male) workday. That is, a conception of the workday that excludes reproductive labour. Later, having established and considered social reproduction within these spheres when they are distinct, we can consider how digital capitalism alters social reproduction by blurring the boundaries between work and not work.

As the theoretical site of leisure, this review's exploration of how capitalism, abstract time, neoliberal governmentality, and consumerism shape 'non-work' time is crucial. However, before delving into this discussion, I wish first to develop the concept of leisure as it foregrounds what will follow.

2.1 LEISURE

Leisure theorists can be generally grouped, as Rojek (2009) distinguishes them, into visionaries and pragmatists (p. 95). One of the earliest conceptions of leisure can be found in Greek philosophy, where Aristotle – one such visionary – wrote of leisure as that which is undertaken intrinsically and for its own sake (2009, 1177b6-18). These undertakings were truly *free* and noble as they were directed towards virtue rather than instrumental ends (ibid.). Ultimately, leisure was concerned with human fulfillment through activity aimed at the cultivation of virtue (i.e., philosophy, music, poetry) (Hemmingway, 1996, p. 27) and "the good life" (Aristotle, 1905, 2009; Marx, 1894).

This is the same leisure that Marx would theorize within the "realm of freedom" to-come (Marx, 1894, p. 959-960) where individuals would be free to do as they wished, unconstrained by economic necessity (Veal, 2020, p. 110). In departure from more everyday ideas of leisure and free time as something "trivial or inertial" (Kandiyali, 2014, p. 108), however, Marx envisioned emancipated leisure as a site of "great exertion and creative activity" (ibid.), not directed toward instrumental ends. This would enable the generic pursuit of "the good life" through the "free development of each [individual]" (Marx, 1978, p. 491) toward self-realisation and actualization. For it is through leisure, too that a person may engage in the important philosophical contemplation of what it means to live a good life.

In her book, *Decolonizing Time* (2014), Nicole Marie Shippen draws on this "Aristotelian-Marxist tradition" (p. 9), describing how capitalism's colonization of time has inhibited individual's autonomous pursuit of the Aristotelian "good life" and the arrival of Marx's "realm of freedom" where proper human development/realisation are made possible (p. 17). Shippen, too, sees leisure as something more than "freedom from the necessity to labour at menial tasks"

(Aristotle, 1905, 1269a) and rather, what allows for the critical and "active contemplation of the lived experience" (Shippen, 2014, p. 160). While this value-latden Aristotelian-Marxist idea of leisure highlights its existential utility, the conditions of our having-leisure – both historically and in the perpetual meantime – are less idyllic.

Critically, idealist conceptions of leisure necessitate the labour of others. This enabling character of labour can be traced historically. The society in which Aristotle theorized this leisure was a slave society. "Thus, by nature most things are ruling and ruled," he wrote (1905, 1260a), referring to the natural disposition of certain people toward being ruled. For Aristotle, the existence of "natural slaves" (1252a) benefited society in that it enabled leisure for the ruling class. The time of those enslaved existed for the sake of those enslaving.

Within the feudal period too, characterized by the agrarian economy and manorial system, peasant labour facilitated the leisure of the ruling class. However, this pre-capitalist society was characterized by a subsistence economy and a "leisure ethic" (Swidler, 2016) as opposed to a work ethic (Weber, 1930; Weeks, 2011), prioritizing the "richness of social interaction over that of material goods" (Swidler, 2016, p. 28). Even amidst the early industrial revolution in Europe and North America, workers did maintain a semblance of this leisure ethic, with "work as an integrated part of daily life, accompanied by eating and socializing, much to the chagrin of emerging industrialists" (ibid.). Work competed with attractive alternatives within family life and the public sphere. Without the impetus to accumulate wealth beyond one's necessities – as we witness within a market economy – subsistence was balanced with leisure.

The primitive accumulation inherent to feudalism's land-based power structuring, however, would lay the foundation for capitalist relations, facilitating the enclosure and transformation of pre-capitalist relations and modes of production into capitalist ones (Marx, 1894). The

emergence of a ruling/owning bourgeoisie class and the material conditions which would follow for the working/selling proletarian class would come to transform and formalize leisure as something that existed in opposition to work (which will be developed further in what's to come). For now, it is essential to recognize that the conditions of leisure's existence were and continue to be dictated by the socioeconomic structures in which they are situated. In this instance, industrial capitalism dictated whether, when, and under what circumstances a person was permitted to have leisure. Primarily, the existence of leisure for the ruling class depended on the labour of the working class – whose own leisure was contingent upon having laboured first.

This precondition for leisure was observed and theorized by Thorstein Veblen (1899), who characterized the leisure class by its ability to engage in non-productive activity – namely conspicuous leisure and conspicuous consumption (ibid., p. 70) – to convey class status (ibid.). This capacity was enabled by the labour of others. Veblen's observations were rooted in the early industrial capitalist society of the late nineteenth century. However, permutations of conspicuous leisure and conspicuous consumption (arguably mutual inclusive today) continue to be readily observable within late-stage capitalism (Jaworski & Thurlow, 2010; Smith, 2021).

Because *time is money*[2] under capitalism, the variability it produces through systemic wealth inequality is the same variability that elicits disparities in non-worktime, with the working class selling increasingly more of their time, the elite buying more of it. In this way, increased leisure is made possible via the ability to purchase the time of others. For example, the elite can outsource reproductive labour (e.g., domestic work, caregiving) for the sake of having more time – be it for higher valued work or for leisure.

[2] Benjamin Franklin's aphorism

To be clear, this research is concerned with the leisure of working people. Yet our leisure too, is not free of exploitation/unstained by the labour of some unnamed *other*. Bound up with leisure's existence in the colloquial Global North – in all its consumptive permutations – is the labour and exploitation of the Global South. Even the most "idyllic", "virtuous" expression of leisure – the contemplation of "the good life" – is not apolitical. The very idea of "the good life" is embedded within neocolonial, white modernity.

Under capitalism, leisure assumes labour as its basic prerequisite – be it yours or someone else's. It follows from work. Hence, the conceptualization of leisure as *residual or marginal* to [formal] work (Roberts, 1999; Rojek, 2010; Surdam, 2015; Stebbins, 2018), or as *not-work*, necessitates the question, *not-work for whom?* This dominant and subsequently commonsensical (Gramsci, 1980; Crehan, 2015) conception of leisure – as that which is residual/marginal to work – is legitimated by the authority of economics which defines it as such. However, this conception is a vacuous one, telling us nothing about what leisure *is* or can be – only what it isn't and what it cannot be. We can consider the local implications of this orientation.

If leisure is not-work, the question that follows is: *would there be leisure without work?* To which I will argue, based on what has been established thus far, *no*. The existence of leisure as a theoretical category for a particular type of *doing*, or rather, *not-doing* (not-work) is bound up with the existence of labour and of [formal] work. Without work, it is not that those activities we might think of as leisure would cease to exist. Rather, they would lack enclosure. The container for "leisure" would dissolve, giving way to other ways of making meaning out of our doing. Without work, and without the chronic identification with work that work culture brings (Weeks, 2011), the question "what do you *do*?" would elicit different responses. Instead of our

jobs, we might be identified with types of doing undertaken out of autonomy, curiosity, and passion. *If we could give our time and energy freely to these pursuits, would we still call them leisure?* Similarly, *if we engaged freely in non-alienated labour, would we still call it work?* It is the conditions of our *doing* under capitalism that bifurcate human experience into labour or leisure, worktime or nonwork-time.

Before capitalism's abstraction of time into labour (to be developed in what's to come), the distinction between work and nonwork was often negligible. To the pre-industrial, task-oriented communities whose conduct accorded to cultural and environmental contexts that provided rhythm and constraint, the idea of abstract time/labour was alien (Thompson, 1967). Before months, weeks, days, hours, minutes, seconds, and now milliseconds were standardized as the empirical measurements for quantifying the passage of time, there were other ways of knowing time that gave orientation, meaning, and authority. For example, "in Madagascar, time might have been measured by 'a rice cooking' (about half an hour) or 'the frying of a locust' (a moment)" (ibid., p. 57). In Burma, it was time for monks to rise when there was enough light to see the veins of one's hand (ibid.). Common to these culturally situated notations of time was their "essential conditioning" (ibid., p. 60). These time notations were meaningful because of the familiar, culturally specific contexts in which they were used. In this way, these kinds of time are *heterogeneous*. They are incomparable unit to unit.

When we consider alternative notations of time and subsequently, alternative ways of experiencing time, we can defamiliarize the concept of abstract time/labour. In doing so, we defamiliarize the bifurcation of time into work and non-work time (and subsequently the invention of leisure as a category of doing) – something necessary for beginning to rethink the dominant conception of leisure that stems from a logic of enclosure. To consider how work and

leisure are simultaneously shaped by the enclosure of time allows us to recognize how leisure is necessarily bound up with the creation and perpetuation of work. By defamiliarizing ourselves with the sociohistorical conditions that shape the way we think of leisure today, we can hold its idea in a more liminal way.

This active, open consideration of leisure invites us to re-imagine it as something more than a biproduct of work – as a way of experiencing time, a way of relating, a way of doing. It allows us to begin filling in an otherwise vacuous conception of leisure, edging toward a working understanding of what leisure *can* or *could be* at its best. By doing so, we can hope to cultivate a greater reverence and valuation for non-worktime, and to make it an attractive sphere to inhabit (Swidler, 2016).

Noticing the conceptual emptiness which marked the leisure conceived in opposition to work, Josef Pieper (1948) wrote:

> "Leisure, it must be clearly understood, is a mental and spiritual attitude—it is not simply the result of external factors, *it is not the inevitable result of spare time*, a holiday, a weekend or a vacation. It is, in the first place, an attitude of mind, a condition of the soul […] Compared with the exclusive ideal of work as activity, leisure implies (in the first place) an attitude of non-activity, of inward calm, of silence; it means not being "busy", but letting things happen. Leisure is a form of silence, of that silence which is the prerequisite of the apprehension of reality […] For leisure is a receptive attitude of mind, a contemplative attitude, and it is not only the occasion but also the capacity for steeping oneself in the whole of creation." (Pieper, 1948, p. 32) [emphasis mine]

For Pieper, leisure did not passively follow from work's absence but rather was cultivated actively through a distinct, spiritual-like disposition toward one's present experience of time. It was through this idealist, receptive condition, Pieper argued, that one could truly experience leisure (ibid.). And through leisure, he argued, we become and remain fully human (ibid.). In this way, leisure serves an essential existential purpose. It is not for the sake of work, he critically notes: "However much strength it may give a man [*sic*] to work […] that is not the point." (p. 49). Should leisure "refresh us for work, that is merely secondary" (ibid.). This departs from capitalist conceptions of leisure which treat leisure as a functional aspect of the economy (Marx, 1894). Pieper's theory of leisure offers, alternatively, that the purpose of leisure is not to reproduce labour power, Alternatively, leisure is removed from work, an altogether different type of thing existing on an altogether different kind of timeline (Pieper, 1948; Holloway, 2010). As Pieper continued:

> "Leisure stands opposed to the exclusive ideal of work *qua* social function. A break in one's work, whether for an hour, a day or a week, is still part of the world of work. It is a link in the chain of utilitarian functions. The pause is made for the sake of work and in order to work, and a man [sic] is not only refreshed *from* work but *for* work. Leisure is an altogether different matter; it is no longer on the same plane; *it runs at right angles to work*." (Pieper 1952, p. 49.) [emphasis mine]

Leisure, then, involves a distinctly different attitude and orientation toward time than that which is required by the world of work – a world whose discursive parameters are frequently shifting, at other times, vanishing. Today, where work ends and leisure begins, is often muddied. Each bleeds into the other. The logic of capitalist usurpation (Marx, 1894); the work ethic (Weber, 1930); the increasing emergence of new labour regimes (Frayssé, 2017) persists. By effect, what may have been previously reserved for leisure becomes corroded, imbued by the prospect of producing value for capital. This will be developed further in chapters to come.

When the prospect of leisure does arrive, then, it competes with the hegemony of the work world – a world systematically reinforced by institutions and structures which reproduce capitalism. The implications of chronically choosing the development of the private sphere – a choice reinforced and rewarded by capitalism – is the underdevelopment of the public sphere/the Commons and the non-cultivation of a leisure ethic. Swidler (2016) argues that it is our neglect to restore a vibrant, appealing public sphere, "a social world independent of the market and the workplace," (p. 30) that reinforces our default to work. She writes:

> "[I]f and when we become individuals without an imperative to go to work, and if we are simultaneously without a community to be a part of, we have 'time on our hands', time to be 'killed', time to be 'passed.' We need to 'stay busy.' When work fills so much of our lives and our society that we go to work even on days off to be in the company of others; when we do not take vacation days because we do not know what to do with ourselves outside work; […] then there is no doubt that work reduction cannot be instituted individually. An alternate, collective, social world must co-exist without work worlds, to provide an alternate home, [...] web of connections, […] identity, […] constellation of

> values, activities, and purposes, **even alternate markings of time**." (Swidler, 2016, p. 30-31) [emphasis mine]

Through leisure we might begin to restore "a social world independent of the market and the workplace" (ibid.) For Swidler, we do so by tending to "[the] vital cultural commons beyond the world of paid labour" and cultivating a leisure ethic alternative to the contemporary work ethic (Weeks, 2011). An alternative leisure ethic poses "a constant challenge to the very concept and valorization of work" (Swidler, 2016, p. 32). In taking up this struggle against the hegemony of work, we "push back against the constant attempts of capital to encroach on work-free time and the unmonetized forms of everyday life and community" (ibid.).

Without this critical restoration of leisure, non-worktime remains characteristically empty. Non-work time is 'time to be killed,' 'time to be passed'. It is 'free time'. These orientations feed back into the dominant conception of leisure as *not-work*. Rojek (1985) reminds us that the freedom characterizing "free time" is one constructed by virtue of *un*-freedom otherwise. To liken leisure to free time and freedom, even metaphorically (p. 16), he warns, is dangerous for how it depoliticizes leisure. He writes:

> "The word *leisure* derives from the Latin word *licere,* meaning to be lawful or to be allowed. This implies that leisure activity is not 'free' but, on the contrary, subject to some form of constraint. The sociological importance of this lies in the following idea: **leisure is not free time, but an effect of systems of legitimation**." (Rojek, 1985, p. 16) [emphasis mine]

Leisure, it must be understood, is shaped and reshaped by the sociohistorical, economic structures under which it is situated. Rojek (1985; 2010) is keen to remind leisure theorists operating out of the social formalist tradition that leisure does not exist in a vacuum. In other words, there is no "leisure without society" (Rojek, 1985, p.3). The scope of what is considered *reasonable* within leisure is contextualized by these structures. The extent of our capacity to think outside of and imagine an alternative leisure, too, is truncated by these structures.

Hence, leisure cannot be studied independently of the "context of the history and general power structure of capitalist society" (ibid.). In this vein, I turn to considering the nature of time under capitalism as it comes to shape our experience of leisure.

2.2 TIME x CAPITALISM

I will now turn to how capitalism shapes time and subsequently, leisure – a way in which time is experienced under capitalism. The critical implication of capitalism's shaping time, as the following section will develop, is the subsumption of all "doing" into *necessity* (Marx, 1894). Under capitalism, the prevailing orientation toward time – as abstract time (Holloway, 2010) – can be understood as an expression of an insatiable compulsion toward producing surplus value for capital (Marx, 1894). The valuation of time that enables this compulsion is one requiring that time be fungible – exchangeable and interchangeable unit to unit – and thereby, *homogenous*.

The abstraction of time into value – which enables its fungibility – begins with its commodification. While Marx's labour theory of value questioned why value becomes expressed in terms of money/capital/wages under capitalism, Martineau (2015) provides a reading of Marx that highlights the centrality of *time* to the argument (Martineau, 2015, p. 19). Despite money and time being synonymized and equated under capitalism, the question of '*why time?'* instead

of '*why money?'* enables defamiliarization with the concept of a wage – a speedbump or hiccup in the otherwise immediate translation of time into money. Here, we can reconsider Benjamin Franklin's aphorism, "*time is money"*. To defamiliarize the concept of a wage and the concept of abstract time is to occupy the interstitial "*is"* of this statement, to question this translation and interrogate its origin.

Any discussion of time and capitalism must begin with the obvious yet necessary acknowledgment there was time before capitalism. Just as time was not invented with capitalism, humans do not possess an innate, *a priori* sense of time (Martineau, 2015: 35). It is our social tendency toward cohesion that has facilitated the emergence of concepts of time – concepts historically and culturally specific to the *timing practices* of social groups (ibid.). As discussed in the previous chapter, task-oriented societies offer an example of alternative, pre-industrial concepts of time. It was through their alignment with sociohistorical, culturally situated activity that these concepts of time held meaning. Time is rooted in the "time making activities" (Thompson, 1967, p. 24) of a given society. A dialectical interplay follows. Society mediates the production and reproduction of time. Time mediates the production and reproduction of society.

Acknowledging this constructivist character of time, we can consider the sociohistorical conditions and time-making activities of industrial capitalism as they lent to the entrenchment of hegemonic, abstract clock time. "What appears as the 'immediate' reality of time in capitalism," Martineau (2015) argues, "is thus, in fact, the expression of a series of mediations in which time has become alienated and reified" (p. 19). I will consider these now.

The commodification of time stems, in part, from the literal installation of clocks onto factory floors during industrialization. However, essential to clock time being *valued* was the invention of the wage. The insertion of a wage relationship between the buyer and seller of time

(Simmel, 1978) meant that time – abstracted into labour – could be sold by the worker in exchange for money (Marx, 1894; Holloway, 2010; Weeks, 2011).

The translation of time into money via the wage relationship meant that the value of a commodity becomes an expression of the "socially necessary labour time" (Marx, 1984) – of time sold by the worker – to produce it (Booth, 1991). Labour time is thus *embodied* in what is produced, rendering "embodied labour time as the substance of value" (ibid., p. 8). In this way, all time becomes imbued with the potential of value for capital. Humans are conceived of as value-latent vessels which, therefore, must require regulation and control/discipline to extract their embodied labour power/time/capital. Economists have called this "human capital" (Becker, 1962)—the economization of human knowledge, skills, and other intangible capacities, and their subsequent treatment as assets that contribute to productivity and economic growth (ibid.; Hanushek & Woessmann, 2020)

The profit made by the capitalist over and above the wage paid to the worker (assuming ownership of the means of production)– what Marx (1894) called *surplus value* – defines productivity under capitalism. As that which enables the production of surplus value, commodified *time* becomes the enabler of value creation for capital. The abstraction of time into labour and its commodification necessitates its regulation. Under industrial capitalism, the introduction of timekeepers/time clerks on factory floors, time sheets, and the requirement for workers to "clock-in" and "-out" of work served as means of measuring and regulating the exchange of time (Thompson, 1967, p. 83).

The capitalist imperative of growth – as per the compulsion toward producing surplus value (Marx 1894) – meant that technological advancements toward increased efficiency mattered. If time is the source of value for capital, then the worker's time bought by the capitalist must be

capitalized on, that is, maximized. Thus, the rationale of scientific management and efficiency (i.e., Taylorism) informed the increasing implementation of "labour-saving" technologies to increase workers' rates of production, enabling the owners of the means of production to produce more units per hour – and therefore, greater surplus value. Meanwhile, the hourly wage of the worker remained the same (Marx, 1894). This implementation, in turn, necessitated greater synchronization of workers and greater precision in the measurement and regulation of time (Martineau, 2015) – heightening its reification.

The assembly line (or line of production), for example, intensified production by breaking down the necessary labour power to produce one commodity into its constituent bites, each performed in consequence and unison by multiple workers across a line (Marx, 1984; Harney, 2015). The production line's division of labour, writes Booth (1991):

> "…creates such a leveling of skills that the movements of the clock's pendulum, marking out its identical passing moments, are an accurate measure of the relative activity of different labor powers. […] labor power has been so homogenized that its various forms are distinguishable one from the other only by the purely quantitative yardstick of hours expended." (Booth, 1991, p. 9)

The abstraction of *concrete doing* (Holloway, 2010) into labour, or *abstract doing, "*is the homogenization of time" (p. 135). "When the doing becomes labour, when the activity becomes external to the doer and imposed," writes Holloway (2010), "then time itself becomes external and imposed. Time no longer arises from the doing" as it did within task-orientation, for

example. Rather, time "…must be imposed upon the doing to ensure that the doing gets done" (p. 136). Labour turns concrete time, or, *doing time* as Holloway calls it, into abstract time.

The homogenous character of abstract time enables us to conceive of time as discrete, fungible units of equal value (Holloway, 2010). Imparted by the abstraction of doing into labour (via conditions of necessity) (ibid.) – of labour-power into a commodity (Marx, 1894) – time and money are synonymized. In other words, abstract labour produces abstract time (ibid.). Abstract time "renders its varied expressions homogeneous and comparable from the point of view of the market" (Booth, 1991, p. 8). Units of time – regardless of their quality – can thus be weighed equally. They become distinguishable only by how "sovereign" individuals – or consumers – choose to fill them. This will be developed further in the following chapter.

Abstract time is alien, reified. It appears to exist over and above society, running its course independently of human input (Martineau, 2015, p. 41). Despite its human invention and employment, individuals must attune their conduct to the clock – keep up with time so as not to fall behind. Abstract time is rendered an objective, universal fact of life (ibid., 42).

This conceptualization and experience of time – abstract time – is the time of deferred gratification. It is the time of work *now* so that we might have leisure *later* (Holloway, 2010, p. 238). In the perpetual meantime, "we must [have-to] sacrifice our desires" (ibid., p. 140). They await us on the horizon, in Marx's (1894) "realm of freedom." Abstract time extends outward linearly, homogenous unit by homogenous unit, creating the experience of perpetuity and duration, where each moment is instrumental to the next (Holloway, 2010, p. 236). Josef Pieper (1952), too, describes time as horizontal, as a pattern of *forward leaning* labour time (p. 49) not dissimilar from a line of production.

Stefano Harney (2015) describes the making and remaking of ourselves into a line, extending the rhythm of production and assembly across our lives:

> "Today ours is primarily the labour of adapting and translating, being commensurate and flexible, being a conduit and a receptacle, a port for information but also a conductor of information, a wire, a travel plug. We channel affect towards new connections. We do not just keep the flow of meaning information, attention, taste, desire, and fear moving, we improve this flow continuously. We must remain open and attuned to the rhythm of the line, to its merciless variances in rhythm. This is primarily a neurological labour, a *synaptic labour of making contact to keep the line flowing*, and creating innovations that help it flow in new directions and at new speeds. The worker operates like a synapse, sparkling new lines of assembly in life. And she does so anywhere and everywhere because the rhythm of the line is anywhere and everywhere." (Harney, 2015, p. 176) [emphasis mine]

This image of a line is extremely useful for thinking about abstract time, as it extends outward from us linearly. The line of abstract time is entwined with the line of assembly – the two, intrinsically connected and mutually reinforcing. If the making and remaking of ourselves into the line endures uninhibitedly into the future – as the experience of abstract time allows – freedom (the opposite of necessity) continues to be pushed away, to the perpetual horizon. Deferred gratification never arrives. It is beyond the line, "…beyond the clock, over the rainbow, **pie to be eaten in the sky."** (Holloway, 2010, p. 140) [emphasis mine].

2.2.1 The Realm of Necessity and Social Reproduction

"*Nothing stands in the realm of pure necessity except what my hands can hold.*" – *Adrienne Rich*

Having established how capitalism creates abstract time – the result of our doing's abstraction into labour (Holloway, 2010) – I will now consider the theoretical parameters of abstract time. In theory, the production of surplus value ends at the close of the formal working day, when the exchange of time for a wage ceases. Under industrial capitalism, which divides social life into two distinct spheres – *work* and not-work – the temporal boundaries of the working day represented the theoretical cessation of surplus value production. What is necessary both for the establishment of time as a commodity and for the separation between work and not-work, is the spatiotemporal boundary associated with Fordist iteration of work during industrialization (Spracklen, 2015, p 27). In theory, leisure could commence, uninhibited, outside those bounds.

Marx (1894) reminds us, however, that value production for capital extends into non-work time in the form of "reproductive labour". This is the basis of social reproduction theory. What political economists have called the 'sphere of production' – where labour power is expended to produce surplus value (Frayssé, 2013) – is necessarily complemented by the 'sphere of reproduction' – where that expended labour power can be reproduced (ibid).

For Marx, the time allocated to the reproductive sphere included all activities necessary for "the growth, the development, and healthy maintenance of the body ... for consumption of fresh air and sunshine […] meal time […] and healthy sleep for the collection, renewal, and refreshment of the vital powers" (Marx, 1894, p. 269). Some of these things may very well be

considered leisure today. For Marx, however, these reproductive activities are not leisure as they are instrumental to working; undertaken out of necessity by labouring subjects.

For Marx then, the productive sphere and the reproductive sphere, taken together, constitute the "*realm of necessity"* (Marx, 1894) as they are tied by a relationship of mutual and reciprocal dependence. This relationship is depicted in **Figure 1.0,** where the productive sphere is alternatively labelled 'paid work,' the reproductive sphere labelled 'rest/recuperation' (ibid.). Importantly to note, this depicts the "formal" or *male* working day under capitalism.

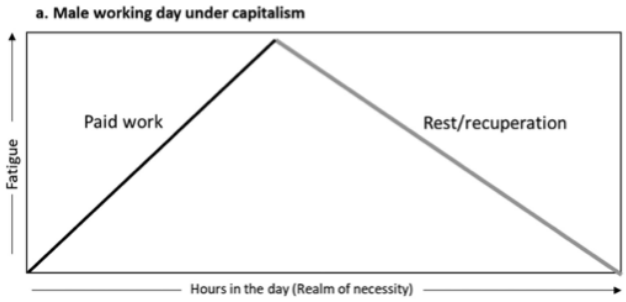

Figure 1.0 The male working day under capitalism (Veal, 2020)

By effect of bifurcating social life in this way, all things 'not work' are relegated to the sphere of reproduction. Hence, this sphere – within which workers must recover from work and reproduce their labour power – is also the domain of '*what we will*[3]*'* that workers' unions advocated for and won in the Eight Hours Movement of the late nineteenth century (Frayssé, 2017, p. 8; Veal, 2022, p. 2; Weeks, 2011, p. 161). In other words, should we find ourselves with excess of leftover time within the sphere of reproduction, we might have leisure.

[3] An extract from the 1886 May Day workers' union rally cry, '*eight hours for work, eight hours for rest, eight hours for what we will*.'

Marxist feminists remind us, however, that this possibility of leisure within the sphere of reproduction is not experienced equally. The bifurcation of life into "work" (production) and "not-work" (reproduction) systemically invisibilizes the necessary labour of the reproductive sphere. Historically, this has been the predominant work of women (Hochschild, 1989, 1997; Weeks, 2011; Jarrett. 2015) – work that facilitates leisure for others. In 2023, within heterosexual marriages, for example, women continued to be engaged in more domestic and caregiving labour than their male partners despite the number of women earning equivalent or more than their partner tripling in the last fifty years (Pew Research Center, 2023). This trend persists even when women are the primary earners (ibid.).

Despite capitalism's neglect to formally value reproductive labour, it no less produces value for capital as the "precondition for production" (Weinberg, 2019, para 2), enabling the capitalist cycle toward the creation of surplus value (Frayssé, 2015, p. 3). In this way, the undertaking of reproductive labour can be regarded as an extension of the working day (Hochschild, 1989, 1997; Weeks, 2011; 2017). Hence, the sphere of reproduction cannot truly be regarded as free. Rather, capitalism exhibits a degree of control over this sphere.

"The realm of freedom," Marx (1894) writes, "*actually begins only where labour which is determined by necessity and mundane considerations ceases*; thus in the very nature of things it lies beyond the sphere of actual material production" (p. 820) [emphasis mine]. Importantly, in locating the realm of freedom beyond "labour determined by necessity," Marx implicates both productive and reproductive labour. Social reproduction theory underscores the interdependence of these two forms of labour. Leisure—what is undertaken as an end in itself — then awaits us in the realm of freedom, beyond necessity. One must simply finish the stuff of necessity, then the realm of freedom may follow.

Social reproduction theory will be revisited at the close of this chapter in relation to digital capitalism. First, however, I will extend Marx's theorization of the realm of necessity to further conceptualize abstract time as it characterizes necessity. The internalization of abstract time, as the next section will advance, comes to be a source of governance over the individual, which has evolved across iterations of capitalist society.

*

In summary, a cumulative finding of over a century of social theory is that capitalism – through a series of mediations – creates abstract time. In short, "the abstraction of doing into labour is the homogenization of time," (Holloway, 2010, p. 135). Abstract time ensures that each moment is distinct and instrumental to the next – like an assembly line. Time extends linearly into perpetuity. In a similar vein, the foregoing material showed that Marx's realm of necessity is characterized by the cyclical outpouring and reproduction of labour-power, by social reproduction. The mutually dependent relationship between production and reproduction – which can be mapped into two theoretically distinct spheres – characterizes time in service of each as necessity. This condition of time follows from its contents, its doing, being abstracted into labour. In this way, the realm of necessity is enabled and characterized by abstract time and its experience. However, the abstraction of time alone cannot sufficiently explain our compliance to and reification of this form of time. To explain this, we now turn toward theories of governmentality.

2.3 SELF GOVERNANCE

2.3.1 The internalization of abstract time

There is a thread of sociological thinking on time discipline that runs from Weber (1930) to Foucault (1978-79). Generally speaking, time discipline can be conceptualized as any tactic of governance over time-use, whether its origin be exogenous or endogenous to the individual. Of particular interest to this thesis are Weber's theorization of the Protestant work ethic and the spirit of capitalism, alongside Foucault's concepts of biopolitics and governmentality. These theories offer valuable insight into the source of time discipline and the morality of time-use under distinct iterations of capitalism: industrial and neoliberal/late-stage.

Useful for considering each of these sociohistorical instances and their implications for time conscientiousness is Engels and Marx's (1859) theory of dialectical materialism. In particular, the idea of a "material base" and a "moral superstructure" (ibid.; Eagleton, 2000). Here, time discipline and the morality of time-use can be conceived of as components of capitalism's superstructure, extending out of its base consisting of the material conditions and subsequent social relations inherent to capitalism. Base and superstructure communicate, with the superstructure reflecting and reproducing the base iteratively in response to its changing conditions (Marx, 1859). The conditions of both industrial and neoliberal capitalism as they have lent to time conscientiousness and time discipline will be considered in this way, as two critical sites at which the internalization of abstract time has been encouraged.

Beyond the tendency toward maximizing time that comes with the acknowledgment of mortality are exogenous sources of time conscientiousness. One such source, identified by Weber (1930) was the religious discourse of Protestantism, influenced by Calvinist thought. A critical figure of the Protestant Reformation, John Calvin (1845), advanced the doctrine of predestination, which posited that the fate of each individual – whether for eternal salvation or damnation – was predetermined by God. This belief fostered a profound existential tension

among Protestants, who could not know for certain whether they were among the elect (predetermined for eternal salvation) or the reprobate (predetermined for eternal damnation) (Calvin, 1536). In response to this uncertainty, an unwavering commitment to the Protestant idea of a God-willed "calling" (Latin, *vocatio*, translating to vocation) – work – followed (Weber, 1930, p. 17).

Prosperity, resulting from hard work and adherence to one's calling, was interpreted as a possible sign of being among the elect and having God's favour in the afterlife (ibid., p. 51; Calvin, 1536). As such, work itself became imbued with virtue and duty. Devotion to work was virtuous and thus, the devotion of time toward work was virtuous. The conscientious management of time became a way to demonstrate one's commitment to their faith and, potentially, a sign of their moral standing in the afterlife (Thompson, 1967, p. 87; Weber, 1930, p. 60). The squandering of time, alternatively, was seen "not [as] foolishness, but forgetfulness of duty" (Weber, 1930, p. 17). For Weber (1930), this prevalence of Protestant discourse in eighteenth century England combined with the conditions of budding industrialization were conducive to producing a distinct work ethic.

While the religious discourse behind this work ethic explains early sources of time-use morality and discipline, the enduring influence of the work ethic comes from its embeddedness in "the spirit of capitalism" (Weber, 1930). Increasing secularization and disenchantment in the late eighteenth century meant that the potency of a work ethic grounded in religious discourse waned, giving way to its replacement by the scientific discourse of rationality (Weber, 1930). Emphasis on efficiency, productivity, and the systematic pursuit of accumulation (as the capitalist idea of success) followed as part of a secular capitalist ethos (ibid.).

Drained of its previously religious rationale and "absorbed into the secular culture of capitalism" (p. 46), the work ethic becomes something more mysterious (ibid., p. 46). Weeks writes:

> "Haunted by the work ethic, our commitments remain difficult to defend; attempts to explain them often exhibit more the qualities of post hoc rationalizations than sufficient accounts of our motives. Yet the puzzle of our motivations would seem to be of little practical concern; when we have no memory or little imagination of an alternative to a life lived centered on work, there are few incentives to reflect on why we work as we do and what we might wish to do instead." (Weeks, 2011, p. 47)

The rational work ethic normalizes and justifies our continued and extensive commitment to work. Under the guise of the work ethic, the organization of human life around work *is rational*. As an extension and representation of science – the authority of a disenchanted society, preceding any moral sentiments we might have about its promulgations – rationality is deemed inherently *good*. Attempts to re-consider or interrogate the assumptions of the work ethic, from within the ideological hegemony of scientific rationality thus merely deliver us back to the "iron cage" of rationality (Weber, 1930).

Hence, the work ethic serves an ideological and moral function (Weeks, 2011). It perpetuates the notion of work as virtuous and valuable – since to work is rational, and rationality is the rule. To return to Marx's dialectical materialism, this ideology – the work ethic and its rationality – can be understood as a moral superstructure to the base of postmodern capitalism. It serves to bolster and reinforce the existing hegemony of work and capitalist political economy. At the

same time, the elements of the material base – under late-stage capitalism, feed and influence the superstructural manifestations.

The abstraction of doing into labour – work – is thus rationalized as an unquestioned, organizing principle of human life. Under capitalism, the value and centrality of work are "stubbornly naturalized and apparently *self-evident*" (Weeks, 2011, p. 42) [emphasis mine]. Not only does the ethic promote work as necessary for survival, but further, as a vital source of identity, moral worth, and fulfillment (Weeks, 2017).

The implication of the rational work ethic on time-use is critical here. Necessarily, the centering of work is the centering of, or default to, abstract time. Recalling Holloway's (2010) point that "the abstraction of doing into labour is the homogenization of time" (p. 135), or the creation of abstract time, it follows that if life is organized around work, and if work requires us to operate out of abstract time, we can consider the potential of this alienated relationship to time within work time to extend into non-work time.

Weeks (2011) argues that the work ethic does follow us beyond the workplace, influencing the way we think about and use time outside of work. The commodification of time within one sphere begs the question of its valuation within the other sphere. Non-worktime becomes imbued with a value latency, which *could* be capitalized on. Non-worktime too then, should be managed toward the same tenets of efficiency, productivity, and accumulation. The internalization of the rational work ethic and thus, the internalization of abstract time, produces a distinct *responsibilization* of time-use.

Beyond some generic rationality that we struggle to think outside of, however, what mechanisms are at play to ensure our adherence to the work ethic, our re-creation of abstract time within time which might be otherwise? Here, I turn to Foucault's theorization of biopolitics

and neoliberalism to consider the ideas underpinning these "mechanisms of control" (Foucault, 1975) – or "techniques of power" (Foucault, 1978-79) and their implications. Namely, governmentality of the self and of one's time.

2.3.2 Neoliberal Governmentality

Michel Foucault's (1978-1979) lectures at the Collège de France, in particular "The Birth of Biopolitics," is useful for understanding neoliberalism as a distinct form of governmentality – one in departure from that which extends from traditional sovereign power (Foucault, 1975). Foucault put forward an analysis of neoliberalism that sources its power to govern in how it extends market logic into all aspects of human life.

Paradoxically, neoliberalism seems to govern without governing. Its power touches down at the level of the individual – the governed – in such a way that the individual comes to be the source of governance over themselves. Foucault analogized the internalization of surveillance under neoliberalism to Bentham's *panopticon* prison structure (Foucault, 1975), the etymology of which roughly means, *all-seeing*. Prisoners within a panopticon, uncertain of whether they are being watched by the prison guard in the center (whom they cannot see nor confirm the existence of) come to govern themselves according to a perceived omnipresent surveillance. As the possibility of surveillance permeates each moment, individuals come to govern themselves too in each moment.

Extending his reflection on this structure to a critique of larger society, Foucault argues that neoliberalism fosters a similar disciplinary surveillance and governmentality of the self through its emphasis on personal accountability and self-regulation. With its subjects having internalized a disciplinary surveilling gaze, neoliberalism governs without governing (Read, 2009, p. 29). Neoliberal subjects' affective experience of this governance is then one of freedom and the

ability to choose. However, this individual freedom is a conditional one, a pseudo-sovereignty. Individuals are free to the extent that they are consumers, and the extent to which they are consumers is truncated by the confines of the market.

By importing market logic across social life, the neoliberal subject comes to orient toward themselves, their time, their social relations as explicit expressions of their *rational, sovereign, individual* choices. Thus, the *individual* is central to the experience of freedom. Freedom is enacted through the responsibilized choices of the individual. The scope of this choice, however, as Foucault's analysis reminds us, is governed by neoliberal economics, shaping what choices are possible and desirable. Read (2009) explains:

> "…the freedoms of the market are not the outside of politics, of governmentality, as its limit, but rather are an integral element of its strategy. As a mode of governmentality, neoliberalism operates on interests, desires, and aspirations rather than through rights and obligations; it does not directly mark the body, as sovereign power, or even curtail actions, as disciplinary power; rather, *it acts on the conditions of actions*. […] as power becomes less restrictive, less corporeal, it also becomes more intense, saturating the field of actions, and possible actions." (Read, 2009, p. 29) [emphasis mine]

The potency of neoliberal governmentality relies on the condition that its subjects affectively experience the freedom/power to act/choose between competing options (ibid. p. 29). In rendering its subjects and their choices comparable from the vantage point of the market – as rational self-interested subjects within a free market – neoliberalism fosters a distinct

individualism (Reichardt, 2018). This atomism simultaneously fosters competition between individuals – a condition vital to its perpetuity.

Under neoliberal capitalism then, individual success (a construct in itself) is understood to be an expression of vigilance. It is a sign of having rationally regulated and managed one's resources (time/money), of having effectively weighed costs against benefits, of having calculated interests within a competitive free market (Dilts, 2011, p. 131; Naulin & Jordin, 2019, p. 33). The individual becomes an 'entrepreneur of the self' (Dilts, 2011, p. 131), embodying the concept of *e economicus* as theorized by Foucault, where the self is understood to be an economic matter. Competitive individuals are *"…for himself his own capital, being for himself his own producer, being for himself the source of his earnings"* (Foucault, 1978-79) [sic].

Neoliberalism thus alters how "human beings make themselves and are made subjects" (Read, 2009, p. 28): through a new lens of *human capital* (ibid.). The self becomes a site of optimization, a locus of potential value to be extracted and actualized (Reichardt, 2018). Let us not forget that the creation of value within neoliberal capitalism is contingent upon the exchange of *time*. Each individual governs themselves as an entrepreneur of the self. Each individual is responsible for managing, advancing, actualizing their human capital. And abstract time is the arena in which they can do so. **Essential to the argument that abstract time corrodes leisure is this condition: that in creating abstract time, capitalism imbues *each moment* with latent exchange value. Hence, the actualization of human capital embodied "within" each individual is understood to be a direct expression of *time-use*.** The condition of *choice* is thus applicable in each distinct, value-latent moment.

The result is the deepening of abstract time. Time must be monitored, surveilled, managed across any domain of human life which could potentially advance the market value of the self – a domain which extends into non-work time. As Holloway (2010) might put it, as the domain of human doing that can be abstracted into labour expands, so too does the homogenization of time into non-work time (p. 135). In response to perpetually operating within what is essentially the time of the market – the source of value – responsibilized individuals thus *surveil* their time and choose what it contains accordingly. Next, I will further consider the centrality of *choice* under neoliberalism as it is bound up with consumption, in order to understand how the structure of consumerism contributes to the experience of abstract time.

2.4 CRITICAL CONSUMPTION THEORY

"...we seem to have missed the fact that the motivating proletarian hope for a better world, formerly defined by maximizing free time and leisure, has been increasingly replaced by a vision of ever-expanding personal consumption." (Swidler, 2016, p. 30)

As the previous section developed, the individual experience of choice is fundamental to neoliberalism's governance. Moment to moment, rational, self-interested individuals are empowered to autonomously choose between competing strategies within a free market. What I wish to develop here is the scope of that choice under neoliberal capitalism.

To do so I will lean on Jean Baudrillard (1968; 1970; 1972) for his theorization of the consumer society. For Baudrillard, individuals are free within neoliberal capitalism to the extent that they are consumers. Neoliberalism represented a critical shift for Baudrillard from a

production-oriented capitalism to a consumption-oriented one (ibid., p. 33). The implication of this shift for leisure was its commercialization and commodification. Hunnicutt (1988) traces this shift to the mid-twentieth century.

A "new gospel of consumption," Hunnicutt (ibid.) explains, acted as a critical stimulus toward realization of greater surplus value (p. 42). A heightened demand for discretionary goods and services, fueled by the advertising industry's manufacturing of 'want' (p. 33), created a consumption sphere embedded in what was perceived as passive entertainment during leisure time (Surdam, 2015). Emphasis on consumption not only stimulated consumer demand but also tied workers more closely to their jobs, as earning a wage enabled buying power (Hunnicutt, 1996). Consequently, the pressure to consume, coupled with the increasing aspiration for affluence and accumulation over shorter work hours, contributed to workers' giving up the fight for shorter working days (ibid.). A thriving "consumption sphere" (Frayssé, 2013) took hold within non-work time, or the reproductive sphere.

In terms of how and where consumption 'fits' into the sphere of reproduction, it is essential to recognize that it does not merely vie for time against leisure (Frayssé, 2013). Instead, the boundaries between the two become blurred as leisure is increasingly commercialized (Plumb, 1982; Rojek, 2010; Blackshaw, 2010). The leisure we experience today, shaped by commercialization and commodification, bears little resemblance to the Aristotelian or Marxist ideals of leisure undertaken for its own sake (Marx, 1894).

As Blackshaw (2010) and others have argued, contemporary leisure is predominantly defined by consumer capitalism (p. 17; Rojek, 2010; Swidler, 2016). Carr (2017) goes so far as to dissolve the category of leisure all together, arguing that what is considered contemporary "leisure" under consumer capitalism would be more accurately called "consumerist recreation"

(p. 137). Leisure time is injected with "the representational system of capitalist consumer culture" (Rojek, 1993), directing it toward the consumption of signs and symbols (Baudrillard, 1970; 1972).

2.4.1 Consumption as structure, individual as consumer

For Baudrillard, the traditional conceptual distinction between production and consumption was ill-fitting for an advanced capitalist society. He theorized, rather, that under consumer capitalism, consumption becomes a distinct form of production as individuals come to produce selfhood via consumption choices (Baudrillard, 1982; Bauman, 1998). Here, concepts of prosumption – the merging of consumption with production (Frayssé, 2013) – and conspicuous consumption (Veblen, 1899) resonate. Rather than conceiving of consumption as the endpoint of a capitalist production cycle, Baudrillard suggested that consumption served as a mechanism for the further production and reinforcement of social meaning (Baudrillard, 1970; 1972).

Under neoliberalism, the individual is the source of consumption. Allow the rephrasing of the previously used sentence having replaced the word "individuals" with "consumers": 'Moment to moment, consumers are empowered to autonomously choose between competing strategies within a free market' (mine, above). The basis of one's individuality, one's citizenship under neoliberalism, is one's ability to consume (Harvey, 2005). Consider notions of responsibilized purchasing and "voting with your dollar" characteristic of neoliberal discourse. Importantly, robust welfare states remind us that this is not the only means of exercising citizenship. We can consider, alternatively, how comprehensive social safety nets mitigate the extent to which citizenship is a function of purchasing power (ibid.).

The freedom neoliberalism purports to offer, however, *is* curtailed by the confines of consumer capitalism (Harvey, 2005). As the expression of this purported freedom, individuality

is limited to being expressed through one's consumption choices and what those choices *communicate* to others (Baudrillard, 1972):

> "Objects, their syntax, and their rhetoric refer to social objectives and to a social logic. They speak to us… of social pretension and resignation, of social mobility and inertia, of accumulation and enculturation, of stratification and of social classification. Through objects, each individual and each group searches out his-her place in an order, all the while trying to jostle this order according to a personal trajectory" *(*Baudrillard, 1972, p. 12-13).

Central to Baudrillard's (1972) theory of consumption's communicative and therefore productive power within neoliberalism is the concept of *sign value*. This idea suggests that under consumer capitalism, the value of an object (or commodity for Marx) is beyond what can be measured in terms of use value or exchange value (Marx, 1894). Beyond these valuations, sign value is what attributes an object valuable social meaning (Baudrillard, 1972). The consumption of certain objects thus communicates something to others (ibid.; Veblen, 1899).

In this way, consumption assumes a mediating role between individuals, "an active mode of *relation* (not only to objects but to the collective and to the world" (Baudrillard, 1968/1996, p. 21) [emphasis mine]. In the prelude to Baudrillard's 1970 text, Ritzer (1970) writes, "Consumption is not […] something that individuals *do* and through which they find enjoyment, satisfaction and fulfillment. Rather, consumption *is* a structure that is external to and coercive over individuals" (p. 15). The structure of consumerism "…is above all a coded system of signs […] individuals are coerced into using" (ibid.). It alters how we relate to ourselves and others –

as sites of consumption (Dilts, 2011; Pugh, 2013). The imperative for neoliberal subjects to increase their market value through their rational, responsibilized choice is thus restricted to being enacted *from within* the structure of consumption.

Individuals' subsequent conduct (consumption) within this structure becomes a means to construct and communicate identity, as under neoliberal capitalism, "identities just like consumer goods are to be appropriated and possessed" (Bauman, 1998, p. 24). Consequently, consumption choices are directed toward the construction of *the self as a site of value production* (Baudrillard, 1970; Bourdieu, 1984; Bauman, 1998).

The construction and re-construction of the neoliberal individual, the self, is achieved through calculated consumption choices, which come to reflect and communicate identity to others via sign value (Baudrillard, 1972). Recall that under neoliberal capitalism, the individual is the source of value production. Consequently, if individual consumption constructs and shapes the apparent value of the individual, then consumption toward the construction of the self is inherently *productive* (ibid.; Frayssé, 2013). Consumption becomes a form of production (and reproduction) for the self, drawing this conduct, too, into the realm of necessity (Marx, 1892).

The self is commodified, then. It is conceptualized through the internalized lens of human capital, as a value-latent vessel of *time* which should therefore be directed toward the greatest possible value production. The production of the self in this way is undertaken under the consensus that *the self is something to be consumed by others*. Necessarily, it is its consumption by others that actualizes its value. The self is a perpetual project to be improved and consumption is the domain in which the project can be undertaken. Within the attention economy of late-stage capitalism, to consume other people/other people's lives is simply to have looked, to

have given your attention, to have been on the receiving end of communicated sign value (Baurdillard, 1972).

The idea that our consumption creates selfhood alters what and how we consume. The perceived ability of free, rational, self-interested neoliberal subjects to construct selfhood via consumption within a free market should not be confused, however, for a mere matter of preference or autonomous self-expression. Rather, the construction of self via consumption under imperialist white-supremacist capitalist patriarchy (hooks, 2004, p. 17) is bound up with the internalization of systems of power (Foucault, 1972) – systems of legitimation (Rojek, 2010) which alter what and how we consume. These systems of power are embedded within the structure of consumption. Particular forms of consumption and subsequently, particular manifestations of selfhood are thus systematically rewarded within this system.

Critically, the *structure* of consumerism commodifies and thus encapsulates not just objects/commodities but human services, relationships, experiences, and culture (Baudrillard, 1972). Critical leisure theorists remind us that the commodification of leisure – of human experiences – means more of our free time can be lent to consumption (Rojek, 1993; Hemmingway, 1996; Rojek, 2010; Frayssé, 2013; Carr, 2017). Beyond being used to consume goods, leisure experiences themselves becomes something to be consumed. *Immaterial* social goods – experiences (Hunnicutt, 2020) – are thus "…marketed and sold as any other commodity, and subject to the same demands for novelty and innovation" (Hemmingway, 1996, p. 34). The transformation of desirable human experiences into commodities has, amongst other things, rendered a multibillion-dollar tourism industry, for example. Much of today's travel engagement can be likened to the curated consumption of people, places, and culture. In having commodified a diverse range of experiences, the travel/tourism industry comes to alter how individuals engage

with and relate to those experiences. The idea that an experience is something *to be consumed* elicits a peculiar sense of *ownership*, of entitlement over the quality and the delivery or execution of an experience. Particularly for the consumer who has made an "informed choice" and whose possible display of their consumption can reflect on them, it is imperative to get one's "money worth" from the experience[4].

Susan Sontag wrote in 1977 how the proliferation of cameras altered how people confirmed and enhanced their experiences – through "an aesthetic consumerism to which everyone is now addicted" (1977/2011, p. 15). In the face of something novel or remarkable, Sontag writes, the compulsion of tourists – especially of those "handicapped by a ruthless work ethic" (p. 10) is to put a camera between themselves and what they are encountering. In doing so, the uncertainty of their engagement is lessened, and something which can be accumulated is produced (ibid.). The experience is consumed – which is often where it ends.

Nearly fifty years later, social media has exacerbated the consumptive nature of contemporary experiential leisure. Experiences in the leisure and tourism industry are commodified (Hunnicutt, 2020), with their value expressed via the social capital they produce (Jaworski & Thurlow, 2010; Smith, 2021). The actualization of this value is contingent on it being subsequently consumed by others. Thus, producing and sharing ("posting") evidence of the consumed experience is necessary. Social media enables the widespread display of consumption,

[4] Consider the following reviews left by "consumers' of American national parks (see **Appendix A**). Pictured: 1) A photo from Arches National Park accompanied by a one-star review from Michael S. that reads: *"Not enough arches. You would think if it was called Arches National Park there would be more arches. There were like five*."; 2) A second photo from Arches National Park accompanied by a one-star review from Ricky S. that reads: *"Just a bunch of holes in the rocks. Not impressed. Also way too hot with no swimming pools."* [Paul Hempstead via Atmos, Climate and culture magazine (@atmos)]

bolstering conspicuous leisure consumption (Veblen, 1899). Smith (2021) writes, “Ever increasingly… the social media platform works to embed the logics of late capitalist consumerism into the very rudiments of how the self is imagined and positioned in relation to ‘others’” (p. 620). Here, ‘other’—whether person, place, or nature—becomes a site of consumption for self-aggrandization (Jaworski, 2010; Pugh, 2013; Smith, 2021).

Underscoring this entire discussion of consumption is the essential understanding that **all conduct within the structure of consumer capitalism is an expression of *time-use*.** Let us not forget that the value “embodied” within a commodity – “embodied” within a human being, too, through the notion of human capital – to be consumed, is at its most basic level, *time*. Specifically, a particular kind of time that contains a particular type of doing – that which is valuable for capital, that which is abstracted affectively into labour. What Holloway (2010) calls “abstract doing”. “The abstraction of doing into labour is the homogenization of time” (ibid., p. 135). This is the source of abstract time.

"Leisure is organized and consumed as a productive force and hence as a force of social control, perpetuating the very logic of production and consumption it supposedly opposes,” writes Baudrillard (1970, p. 154). Capital exhibits control over both the sphere of production and reproduction (Frayssé, 2013) as production is enabled across all time. The time of capital – abstract time – proliferates.

All (abstract) time is conceived of as value-latent for capital. Individual conduct across all time, then, (including ‘non-work’ time) is a site for advancing the self as a marketable subject within a competitive labour market – i.e., how does your time-use within non-work time make you a more valuable worker? (Farrugia, 2019). Individuals must therefore regulate the

commodity that is their time, in a market where their time-use and leisure consumption reflect value back onto them as workers.

Non-work time becomes suffused with a vague sense of anxiety as individuals are responsibilized to adopt this instrumental orientation to their time-use and thus, leisure pursuits (Frayne, 2015; Batchelor et al, 2020, p. 96). How individuals "choose" to use their non-worktime, then becomes a site for scrutiny and comparison against a generic standard of "productivity" and against the choices of others. The scope of our choices (and our desire) expands via this comparison, producing "the distressing feeling of permanently missing out in our leisure, of not making the most of our time" (Rojek, 1995, p. 158).

Under this extension of abstract time – and its creation of abstract doing (Holloway, 2010) – individuals must "accumulate, monitor, and refine considerable emotional intelligence and expend significant emotional labour" in constructing themselves as reflective, enterprising "choice"-makers (Rojek, 2010). *Choice*, as it is fundamental to the free neoliberal subject (consumer), becomes the enabler or inhibiter of one's ability to produce value via their resource of time – hence the distinct governmentality and surveillance over this resource (Foucault, 1972).

Time-use, then, as what underpins consumption, enables the communication of sign value. *"Being for [herself her] own capital, being for [herself her] own producer, being for [herself] the source of [her] earnings"* (Foucault, 1978-79), the free, rational individual is incentivized to regulate and direct her time-use in ways which communicates *value* to others. This alters the mode of her engagement with time and thus with leisure, framing both through a lens of instrumentality and strategic production (Hemmingway, 1996) directed by necessity and permeated by "discourses of economic rationality" (Banks, 2009, p. 668).

2.5 SOCIAL REPRODUCTION UNDER DIGITAL CAPITALISM

At the beginning of this chapter, I developed the basis of social reproduction. There, social reproduction was conceptualized as it extends from an arrangement of the working day where work and 'not work' are distinct. Here, I will consider the implications for social reproduction when the two become blurred, and in particular, how this blurring is mediated by information and communications technology. Following the previous section's argument – that consumer capitalism turns consumption into a form of production – this section advances similarly.

The information and communications technology (ICT) industry increasingly enables industriousness in spare time, lowing the cost of access to markets and providing the infrastructure and digital platforms for new iterations of gig work, side hustles and monetized hobbies (Vallas & Schor, 2022). This makes it essentially "possible for anyone with an internet connection to become a market supplier or offer an online service (Naulin & Jourdain, 2019, p. 29; Shonkwiler, 2020).

Praised by economists and journalists alike for the flexibility, autonomy, and creative fulfillment they allow, side hustles have been embraced as the 'new normal' (Allen & Finn, 2023, p. 2). Generation Z – or 'generation hustle' as it has been called (ibid.)—has been praised for its 'entrepreneurial spirit' (Holdsworth & Medonçam, 2020) with young people spearheading the evolving side hustle industry. The monetization of hobbies and side hustles reflects a broader trend where activities that were once solely recreational become integrated into the economy (Polyani, 1944), extending market relations into personal and leisure activities. The resulting dissolution between work and not-work makes it challenging to distinguish between work time

and personal time. The onus is thus on individuals to consciously create non-work time for themselves.

While "the commodification of domestic and leisure activities can be explained in part by the new opportunities opened up by the development of ICTs [information and communications technology], it can also be linked to the global economic situation," (Naulin & Jourdain, 2019, p. 6) prompting new further income-generating activities in people's free time. Beyond some generic propensity for more work, the increasing emphasis on side hustles and gig work can be understood as an expression of "longer term transformations under neoliberalism, including the rise of precarious and insecure work, falling wages, and declining state protections for the low paid and unemployed" (Allen & Finn, 2023, p. 2). Against the backdrop of the current cost of living crisis (Allen & Finn, 2023), for most working people, potential income generated via a side hustle produces necessary, **not** surplus, income.

Critically, we can consider the implications of this 'new normal' for social reproduction. Increasingly, reproductive labor becomes intertwined with these digital platforms, altering how it is managed and performed (ibid.; Standing, 2014; Van Doorn, 2017). Consider the rise of remote work and its associated platforms. While enabling supplementary gig work/side hustles, the expansion of potentially *paid* work into the reproductive sphere has critical implications for the necessary reproductive labour that also resides there.

Gender matters here, as we recall that women continue to bear a disproportionate burden of domestic labour (Weeks, 2011; Jarrett, 2015; Stefanova et al., 2021; Pew Research Center, 2023). The implication of the ICT industry enabling further paid work in 'non-work' time is the displacement and therefore condensation/intensification of *unpaid* labour – falling predominantly on women – in the sphere of reproduction. The expectation to balance both paid and unpaid work

persists despite a lack of recognition for how becomes further complicated by the dissolution of boundaries between the two.

2.5.1 Prosumption under digital capitalism

To further dimensionalize this 'new normal', I will examine *prosumption* – the merging of consumption and production (Frayssé, 2013) – as it is enabled by digital capitalism.-Beyond forms of leisure consciously undertaken toward production (like the side hustle), we can also consider the less deliberate ways that the information and communications technology industry shifts our leisure engagement into a form of production for the commodified self, further complicating boundaries between work and leisure.

While prosumer engagement within the information and communications technology industry drives its profitability, users benefit too. Prosumption entails that users gain from the commodification of what they share online (produced output of the commodified self) as well as from what they consume (input consumed toward the reproduction of the commodified self) (Ritzer, 2010; 2018). Recall that within the neoliberal free market, the individual is an 'entrepreneur of the self,' (Foucault, 1978-79) assimilated into a 'brand' (Beck, 2000; Dilts, 2011; Kelly, 2020; Farrugia, 2019; Naulin & Jourdin, 2020, p. 33). Leisure – what is commonly the content of social media – is consumed accordingly, "providing the consumer […] a particular and desired identity, making the consumption of leisure a 'status-positioning activity" (Rojek, 2000, p. 3).

Undercutting this curation of self are distinctly classed, racialized, and gendered notions about what makes a desirable, marketable self. The question becomes, *what does my leisure say about me? How does it advance me?* These questions summon Veblen's (1918) theory of leisure

where consumption is undertaken conspicuously (Veblen, 1899), here, as a means of enhancing the marketability and value of the self as a labouring subject.

Analyzing the processes which shape young people into labouring subjects, Farrugia (2019) regards that more and more dimensions of the self are deemed productive within today's labour market. The practices through which this takes place, and the idealized self these practices purport to render, constitute new aspects of classed subjectivity both within the labour force and outside work" (p. 60). Time-use becomes stratified into productive and unproductive categories according to this idealized self, categories which transcend any barrier between work and leisure, incorporating the whole of life (Adkins, 2005).

"The affective experiences, relational styles and personal 'authenticity' of the self [thus] become the basis for labour market engagement and for working," Farrugia writes (p. 60.) The romanticized desire for work that gives us meaning, is self-expressive, purposeful and *authentic* (Pugh, 2013; Weeks, 2017; Farrugia, 2019) entails that the working self is not distinct from the non-working self. The goal becomes engagement which affirms and reproduces a self in a unified "project of personal development and self-realisation" (Farrugia, 2019, p. 52). In this way, work is made leisurely, and leisure is made work-like. The two become blurred by a homogenous instrumental, economic rationality which comes to be spread across them, altering the way people make sense and coherence of their activity to themselves and to others (Hemmingway, 1996, p. 29).

The ubiquity of this rationality is complemented structurally and digitally by the dissolution of previously distinct spatial and temporal boundaries between work and leisure (Adkins, 2005; Wajcman, 2009; Standing, 2011; Farrugia, 2019). We witness how previously distinct and conceptual arenas of conduct – the spheres of reproduction and production/home and

work, the concepts of leisure and consumption, consumption and production, and thus, leisure and work – dissolve, complicating ideas about what time belongs to us versus what time is a means to production (Swidler, 2016); what time is subsumed by necessity versus what time is *free.*

2.6 PREFIGURATIVE ACTION AGAINST THE PERPETUAL HORIZON

Marx wrote, "the realm of freedom begins only where labour determined by necessity and external expediency ends" (Marx, 1894, p. 959-960). As was evident long before post-Fordist iterations of work, time remaining outside the realm of necessity was scant, the arrival of the 'realm of freedom' non-existent (Veal, 2020, p. 90). As this review has shown, today the quality of the realm of necessity has changed. No longer is it cleanly divided into a sphere of production and sphere of reproduction (Frayssé, 2013; Veal, 2020). Rather, post-Fordist iterations of work in combination with modern technology entail that these spheres are chopped up and sprinkled throughout each other. Despite early twentieth century predictions for a future (our present) characterized by greatly reduced work and proliferate leisure (Hunnicutt, 1996), the societal shift toward this has not materialized for working people.

The outcome is the same: the 'realm of freedom' does not arrive. Time that has been "freed" as 'non-work time' is subject to new iterations of usurpation, new forms of production. "Rather like the concept of utopia, leisure seems to be one place on the map of the human world where we are constantly trying to land but which perpetually evades our reach" (Rojek, 1995, p. 2). Marx (1894) knew this pre-emptively in his theorization of the real of necessity, understanding the voracity of capitalism.

As such, Marx advanced that the arrival of the realm of freedom could only actualize with the shortening of the working day. Given what has been established about capitalism's usurpation of non-worktime, the communist society was the means to achieving a true reduction in work. The re-configuration of the working day that would follow would facilitate the actualization of leisure in the realm of freedom (ibid., p. 807). Veal (2020) depicts the theoretical male working day, or 'formal' working day, under a socialism/communist arrangement:

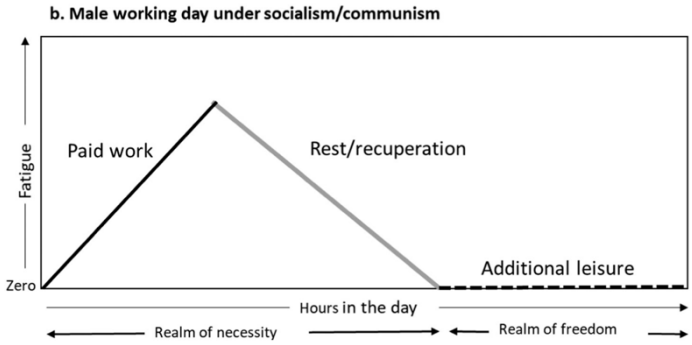

Figure 2.0 The male working day under socialism/communism *(*Veal 2020)

This alternate configuration of the working day would require an acceptance of a ceiling to profit on a daily basis, of parameters to the market, that non-worktime be emptied of its current homogenously value-latent character (Holloway, 2010; Harney, 2015), that the capitalist logic of growth and accumulation be supplanted by one of degrowth (Banerjee et al., 2021), and thus, that the rational work ethic that justifies boundless work be confronted (Weeks, 2011, p. 38). Though daunting, leisure becomes a "materialist confrontation we can and should make" (Rose, 2021, p. 1). Toward this end, this research asserts leisure – in particular, *chosen doing* – as one such critical, materialist confrontation that moves us, interstitially (Holloway, 2010), toward the creation of a different society.

It is tempting to conceptualize and orient to a post-capitalist reality similarly to leisure, as something awaiting us on the perpetual horizon, arriving in some future-to-come. Here I wish to invoke post-capitalist visionaries who argue, instead, that capitalism and post-capitalism are not necessarily distinct. As Chatterton & Pusey (2020), put it, they are "not absolute and mutually exclusive conditions." (p. 28). Or rather, they do not have to be. Capitalism and post-capitalism can be oriented to instead as "dynamic and shifting tendencies, understood as much in relation to each other as separate entities" (ibid.). As such, post-capitalism can be engaged prefiguratively in the present (Springer, 2014) through our conscious enacting of "future", desired, alternative ways of doing *now.* In alignment with Holloway (2010), the making of post-capitalism, of an alternate world, can happen iteratively *in the present.* It happens simultaneously "in, against, and beyond the present condition" (ibid.).

In opposition to capitalist tenets of "enclosure, commodification, and alienation" (Chatterton & Pusey, 2020), we can assert "a parallel set of postcapitalist tendencies around the common, social production and useful doing" (p. 28). We can see examples of prefigurative action toward these alternative tendencies in the likes of worker cooperatives (Wright, 2010; Cheney et al., 2014), community land trusts (DeFillipis, 2001; Davis, 2010), community economies and currencies such as time banks (North, 2010; Baiocchi, 2011; Gibson-Graham, 2006), the open sourcing of software (Weber, 2004; Bollier, 2008), and other efforts toward the restoration of the Commons (Hardt & Negri, 2009; Foster & Iaione, 2016). Each of these, at their basis, asserts a desire for a different way of doing than the default under capitalism.

Immaterial or not-yet actualized ideas, too, can be regarded as representing parallel instances of desire for other ways of doing, being and relating. Critical here, is our seeing these seemingly disparate, disconnected ideas, movements and desires as instead, connected. Holloway

(2010) argues we must pay attention to their commonality, which is simply their oppositional position, their *struggling-against* (p. 261). "Their unity is negative, anti-capitalist" (ibid.).

Among these, we can regard, for example, the notion of a universal basic income (UBI), a state-provided payment that is "unconditional, sufficient [to cover basic living], and regular" (Nieswandt, 2020, p. 4). UBI has been identified by scholars as, essentially, a radical first step towards a post-work society (Snape, 2017, p. 190; Weeks, 2011; Mutasov, 2020; Nieswandt, 2020). It provides an alternative means to arriving at the activity otherwise trapped in the never-arriving realm of freedom (Marx, 1894). Thus, the current research regards the idea of UBI in particular as a transformational stimulus toward the actualization of true leisure – toward chosen doing – in how it unburdens individuals from necessity, enabling the autonomous refusal of work (Weeks, 2011) and the possibility to create something else.

2.7 SUMMARY OF THEORETICAL ARGUMENT

Capitalism alters how we perceive and utilize time through its abstraction of doing into labour (Marx, 1894; Thompson 1967; Booth, 1991; Holloway, 2010; Martineau, 2015). Abstract time thus becomes the source of value for capital. The result is that time is commodified and abstract, its units homogenous and fungible. This relationship to time comes to be extended into non-worktime, directed by a rationality and work ethic that promises self-realization and fulfillment through our commitment to work (Weeks, 2011, p. 8) and which aligns our conduct with valorized capitalist principles of a neoliberal free market.

Within that free market, sovereign, rational individuals can *choose* how to best fill their value-latent time. Being the entrepreneur of their time; the source of their own capital (Foucault, 1972), individuals come to govern themselves. Neoliberalism governmentality touches down at

the level of the individual, responsibilizing its subjects to govern over themselves through their responsibilized choices.

Foucault (1972) argues that the scope of this choice – and thus the scope of freedom – however, is governed by neoliberal economics, which shapes what choices are desirable and possible. Under consumer capitalism – concomitant to neoliberalism – individuals are free to the extent that they are consumers (Baudrillard, 1970). Critically, the structure of consumerism comes to encapsulate and thus commodify not just objects/commodities but human services, relationships, experiences and culture (Baudrillard, 1972).

The self is constructed via individuals' consumption of these "commodities," – consumption which communicates value and thus, self, to others (i.e., sign value [Baudrillard, 1970]). This communicated value is realized when other people consume the commodified self, which in turn perpetuates the self as a site of ongoing production through consumption. In essence, consumption itself becomes a form of production (Baudrillard, 1972; Hemmingway, 1996; Frayssé, 2013).

At the foundation of the commodification which enables consumer capitalism is the acknowledgment that a capitalist political economy is a political economy of *time*. Time remains the source of potential value embodied within commodities and human beings – if only actualized. Thus, "non-work" time, thus leisure, thus all forms of time-use contend against the hegemony of capitalist value creation and its intensification, and against the subordination of doing to the requirements of socially necessary time (Holloway, 2010, p. 250).

The extent to which all time-use feeds into the valorization cycle of capital (Marx, 1867) – either directly (sphere of production) or indirectly (sphere of reproduction) – is the extent to which we reside perpetually in Marx's (1894) realm of *necessity*. Within it, all energy, all "vital

life force" (ibid.), becomes directed toward activity which creates value for capital. All doing becomes abstracted into labour (Holloway, 2010), subsumed by the cycle of production and reproduction. All time is thus abstract, homogenized, linear, enabling the embedding of the same market principles of expansion and accumulation applicable to capital. Here, one of capitalism's paradoxes is exposed: that *capitalism frees time to appropriate it for itself* (Booth, 1991, p. 14; Rojek, 2010; Frayssé, 2013). The rhythm of production and assembly (Harney, 2015) is extended across all of life, rendering more and more of it potentially productive.

When we return, then, to our original conception of leisure – as *not-work* (Roberts, 1999; Rojek, 2010; Surdam, 2015; Stebbins, 2018) – we find that it has been almost completely emptied of meaning. The dissolution of boundaries between work and not-work entails that increasingly, production bleeds into leisure, as does reproduction. At the same time, leisure bleeds into production and reproduction. Non-work time – the potential site of the original leisure – is increasingly co-opted by new labour regimes – out of conditions which both encourage and necessitate it.

In having colonized time, capitalism has largely denied us the autonomy necessary for the Aristotelian pursuit of the "good life" and in the Marxian concept of the "realm of freedom" (Shippen, 2014). "Rather like the concept of utopia, leisure seems to be one place on the map of the human world where we are constantly trying to land but which perpetually evades our reach" (Rojek, 1995, p. 2). The implications of non-worktime's tendency to be usurped by necessity is the diminishment of our capacity to *do otherwise.*

2.8 CONCLUSION

This review's exploration of how capitalism, abstract time, neoliberal governmentality, and consumerism shape 'non-work' time is critical because it advances an understanding of the contemporary landscape within which young working women navigate leisure. As this review has shown, capitalism increasingly usurps non-worktime, appropriating it for itself (Marx, 1894). Non-work time becomes increasingly lent to further iterations of value production for capital, absorbed into the valorization cycle of capital and thus subsumed necessity.

Considering how capitalism alters perceptions of time and time-use through the abstraction of doing into labor, which commodifies time and aligns it with capitalist values (Marx, 1894; Thompson, 1967; Booth, 1991; Holloway, 2010), has deepened our understanding of how abstract time extends into non-work time. The rational work ethic promises self-realization through more work (Weeks, 2011). Neoliberal market principles come to be extended into conceptions of self.

Individuals as sovereign, rational choice-makers under neoliberal capitalism experience freedom within the constraints of consumer capitalism, where personal success is understood to be an expression of having properly managed one's time and resources. Digital capitalism increasingly encroaches on non-work time, introducing new labor regimes that dissolve boundaries between work and leisure. This encroachment diminishes our capacity to choose and do otherwise in our non-worktime.

As the research findings presented in this thesis will show, YWW's non-worktime is dominantly characterized by conditions of necessity which inhibit their ability to evoke chosen doing. In alignment with the theoretical argument advanced throughout this review, capitalism alters time-use and the experience of time, tying it to a necessary role within the cycle of capital.

In response to this reality of non-worktime, the breaking of abstract time through the evocation of chosen doing is more important than ever. Chosen doing as interstitial revolution (Holloway, 2010) allows us to regard our non-work time as a site of critical transformation, a materialist confrontation to the capitalist hegemony of work and abstract time.

> "[Our doing] exists as struggle, as the struggle to escape from its abstraction. Its moments of freedom are often both contradictory and evanescent, *sandcastles built on the ocean shore*. […] – however evanescent, these overflowings of concrete doing may be, let us be clear that that is where we live, what is where we stand, that is the point from which we must think the possibility of creating a different world." (Holloway, 2010, p. 177)

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY & METHOD

"Research is a ceremony for building closer relationship with an idea."

– Shawn Wilson (*Research is Ceremony*, 2008)

3.1 METHODOLOGY

This qualitative research employed an open, exploratory approach to investigating time-use and experiences of time within young working women's (YWW) non-worktime. In particular, it attended to leisure as a form of time-use within non-worktime. As established, women's leisure is of particular interest due to its historical yet persistent subjugation. Because of this reality, centering women was essential to mitigate how the quality of one's "non-worktime" in and of itself might present a barrier to research participation. Therefore, for both theoretical and methodological reasons, women's leisure was of particular sociological interest.

More specifically, the leisure experiences of *young*[5] working women were centered to acutely investigate how changing parameters of the contemporary economy under digital capitalism alter time-use and experiences of same within non-worktime. YWW provide an important entry point into this investigation for several reasons: 1) they entered the workforce within these conditions (Hardt & Negri, 2009; Furlong, 2016; Batchelor et al, 2020), relatedly, 2) they are the inheriting generation of the current economy (Standing, 2011), and, 3) loneliness is endemic to their demographic (Cigna Loneliness Index Report, 2018; Cacioppo & Cacioppo, 2018; Barreto et al., 2020; Eccles & Qualter, 2021; Fardghassem & Joffe, 2022; Goodfellow et al., 2022;). This research regards each of these conditions as critical to a contemporary

[5] In using the word 'young,' I acknowledge its relativity and therefore, at times, arbitrary demarcation. However, here, 'young' refers to the age demographic of my cohort (age 18-30; inclusive). I further acknowledge the complex intersection of 'youth' and womanhood considering how ageism implicates social visibility and power.

investigation of leisure. YWW's positionality within these conditions warrants their imaginative visions for a new economy and leisure's place within it.

Conceptually, I have been less concerned with trying to determine what "counts" or "doesn't count" as leisure, or in producing something like an emerging paradigm of YWW's contemporary leisure. Rather, I am concerned with the qualities (i.e., context, intention, underpinning conditions) of YWW's contemporary leisure experiences – regardless of whether those experiences may be truly regarded as leisure when measured up against its "ideal". We can keep these idealist notions of leisure in mind when considering its contemporary manifestations and, critically, pay attention to the differences between what we *want* leisure to be and what it is today.

Maintaining this open orientation to the concept of leisure is important for several reasons. Epistemologically and methodologically, it asks participants to bring their conceptualizations of leisure along with them rather than attempting to fit their experiences into its preconception. Theoretically, this open orientation is a response to volatile, shifting, even vanishing discursive boundaries between leisure and work.

To be certain, leisure studies today face novel challenges in separating out leisure as its own distinct experience. Increasingly, leisure is co-opted by consumerism, the attention economy and new labour regimes (Frayssé, 2013). To consider each of these challenges to leisure is to witness its systematic displacement to the point where the category threatens to collapse into itself and disappear altogether, becoming something else (Rojek, 2010).

Despite this vanishing tendency, I have persisted in using the term leisure, employing it in the broadest sense. What has been of central concern is the experience of time. In thinking about *leisure as one way in which we experience time*, we can consider if and how it pushes

against the experience of hegemonic time/abstract time (Holloway), which constrains our ability to experience time (maybe leisure) differently. By offering the idea of leisure to my participants, I was able to listen for hints of a particular experience (more often, desired experience) of time; an alternative experience of time (Marx, 1894; Pieper, 1952; Holloway, 2010, ETC.) – one in which alternative, chosen forms of *doing* (Holloway, 2010) are made possible.

3.2 METHOD

Toward this end, a general inductive approach/method (hereafter, GIM) [Thomas, 2006] was employed to facilitate the materialization of contemporary accounts of YWW's experiences of non-worktime, aiming to uncover the discourse, narratives, and meaning being attributed to leisure and non-worktime. Ultimately, this research was directed toward answering the question, ***how do young working women in Halifax think about and experience non-worktime?***

In pursuit of this question, the following research objectives were delineated:

- To determine the condition(s) of YWW's experiences of non-worktime and how YWW relate to non-worktime
- To determine how YWW experience leisure within their non-worktime and their relationship to leisure
- To facilitate YWW's reconnection with desire through conscious reflection on *chosen doing* in their lives
- To facilitate YWW's envisioning of alternative social and economic relations which might be conducive to *chosen doing*

As will be further detailed in what follows, at the outset of the study, the data collection strategy was aligned with grounded theory (GT) methodology; in particular, Strauss & Corbin's (1990; 1997; 2008) grounded theory approach, whereby a phenomenon or issue of study was predetermined to entering the field (Bakir & Bakir, 2006, p. 155). Due to the extant literature on YWW's experiences of non-work time and leisure being limited, GT presented to be a suitable method to produce "conceptually dense and well-integrated theory" (Strauss and Corbin, 1990, p. 42) grounded in YWW's experiences (Hennink & Kaiser, 2022) of time-use.

However, over the course of the interviews, the approach evolved into GIM—specifically during the analysis subsequent to open coding. At this point in the research, rather than adhering to GT's progressive stages of axial and selective coding, analysis aligned with that of a general inductive approach. While the outcome GT analysis is a theory which integrates and explains the themes and categories which emerged in the data (Thomas, 2006, p. 241), the outcome of GIM is the identification of "themes and categories most relevant to the research objectives identified" (ibid.). Ultimately, a GIM allowed the findings of this research to "to emerge from the frequent, dominant, or significant themes inherent in raw data, without the restraints imposed by structured methodologies" (ibid., p. 238).

This pivot occurred for several reasons. Firstly, it was in response to the increasing quality of the data being generated as interviews progressed. In particular, GT's goal of achieving theoretical saturation – the point at which no new or significant insights are surfacing (Conlon et al., 2020, p. 948) – via the induction that theoretical sampling facilitates, was proving to be illusive as the scope of data was becoming increasingly broad – the opposite of theoretical sampling's indented effect. Speculatively, this may have been an expression of the research topic being too broad. Alternatively, it may have been an expression of the sample size being too small

to elicit theoretical saturation. In either case, the practical and logistical constraints of the study associated with time and degree requirements informed a pivot to GIM. This pivot allowed analysis to be reflexive and complementary to the data at hand.

3.2.1 Data Collection

Purposive sampling

Inclusion criteria for the purposive sample included being 1) without children or dependents; 2) aged 18-30 (inclusive); 3) working full-time or the equivalent of full-time at the time of the study (FTE = ≥40 hours/week); and 4) residing in the Halifax Peninsula region. These criteria were introduced to "identif[y] and strategic[ally] select information-rich cases related to the topic of interest […] as broadly defined at the outset of the study" (Conlon et al., 2020, p. 947) – namely, young working women (YWW) as they are referred to herein.

Recruitment

Participants were recruited via posters appended in public, communal spaces in Halifax such as cafés and libraries between the months of December 2023 and April 2024. The recruitment poster was also advertised online via Threads[6], with availability to be re-shared by other users. Uptake from this source proved to be dismal. In total, thirty-three women expressed interest in participating. All retained participants were recruited via posters.

Preliminary screening of participants occurred via the QR code appended to the physical poster (or link in the case of the online post). Prospective participants were directed via the QR

[6] A recently launched sister app to Instagram which offers users the ability to post and share text with attached images or videos, as well as interact with other users' posts through replies, reposts, and likes ("Threads [social network]," n.d.). The platform can be likened to 'X' (formerly called Twitter)

code/link to a secure online questionnaire where they were screened for inclusion criteria and prompted to express interest in participating in a semi-structured in-depth interview.

Sample

Eleven women were interviewed (n = 11). The mean age of the women was 26.5, with ages ranging from 23–30. All participants were white women. Education levels spanned from having studied at the undergraduate to doctorate level, with eight women having studied at the undergraduate level, one at the graduate level, and two at the doctoral level.

Interviews

Interviews were conducted in public places such as libraries and cafés on Peninsular Halifax. Interview sites were chosen by participants to align data collection, whenever possible, with sites identified by participants as meaningful to their leisure engagement. Interviews were audio-recorded for the purpose of transcription. During and after each interview, theoretical memoing was used to capture contextual details, reflections, and questions extending from the interview (Corbin & Strauss, 2008).

As review of the literature and the use of several conceptual frameworks to orient to my research question(s) informed tentative domains of inquiry, semi-structured interviews were suitable (Conlon et al., 2015; Foley et al., 2021). Despite the semi-structured basis of interviews at the outset of data collection, all efforts were made to maintain maximum openness within interviews. Given the purpose of GT—to which I was adhering during early data collection—to generate theory "from the ground up" (Foley et al., 2021, p. 2), this semi-structure remained open to evolution as interviews offered greater insight and guidance into further data collection.

As early data collection occurred iteratively with analysis, the interview semi-structure evolved in response to questions and theoretical concepts that emerged during data collection. Here, it was important to practice theoretical sensitivity (Corbin & Strauss, 1990; Chun Tie et al., 2019) by paying close attention to what Foley et al. (2021) describes as "the push" and "the pull" when interviewing (p. 4). Attuning to instances during interviews when there was an impulse to "push" – to follow a line of inquiry – meant resisting the urge to ask leading questions (ibid.). At other times, attuning to instances of "pull" during interviews meant assuming a passivity to allow data to veer "in novel directions not reflected in prior research" (Foley et al., 2021, p. 4).

Theoretical memoing

Following each interview, theoretical memoing was used to note emerging concepts, potential connections between them, and new questions that surfaced during the interview. Theoretical memos served as the building blocks or premises of emergent concepts, atop of which theoretical sampling decisions could guide further data collection (Birks & Mills, 2015). Conlon et al. (2020) describes the iterative relationship between theoretical memoing and theory building:

> "Theoretical or conceptual memos are the repositories for the elements of a grounded theory study that work with data. In other words, memos are the designated space in a grounded theory project for the analytical and creative work that the method requires to strive toward novel theory building. Memoing is where the cycling back and forth between data, extant theories, and emergent concepts can take place and where hypothesizing about what might deepen,

> confirm, disrupt, or close out the conceptual category or theory building underway is articulated." (Conlon et al., 2020, p. 956).

As such, the use of theoretical memos was essential for theoretical sampling. Memoing occurred iteratively with analysis, facilitating reflection on what I was seeing in the data and what was coming up in the interviews (e.g., **Appendix B**).

As per GT, analysis began at the outset of the first interview. The interview audio recording was transcribed, listened to, and the transcript was read in entirety. This allowed for early tentative theorizing, gathered from a sense of "what [wa]s going on" in the data (Conlon et al., 2020, p. 954). Here, "the freedom and creativity permitted by the grounded theory method for theorizing about central or meaningful processes early on," (Timonen et al., 2018 via Conlon et al., 2020, p. 954) allowed for the "discern[ment] of potential theoretical categories" (ibid.) or concepts. This was facilitated by theoretical memoing. For example, the first participant revealed a conceptual distinction between time spent 'producing' versus 'consuming' – each of which became functional codes.

3.2.2 Analysis

Open coding

Inside the NVivo software, transcripts were re-read, this time while paying attention to discrete segments of data, or text, comprised of 'words, phrases, or large blocks of data" (Foley & Timonen, 2015, p. 1202), which Williams & Moser (2019) calls "units of meaning" (p. 48). These segments were then coded using open coding. Corbin & Strauss (1990) define this stage of analysis as "the analytic process through which concepts are identified and their properties and

dimensions are discovered in the data" (p. 101). In other words, in open coding, codes are derived inductively from the data. Despite this approach to coding often being associated as a distinct analytical stage of GT, open coding is employed broadly and independently as an approach to coding across qualitative methods.

When open coding, close attention was paid to "what participants described themselves doing, feeling, and being." (ibid.) Some codes were thus labelled using *gerunds*, the verb form that functions as a noun (Charmaz, 2006). For example, *envisioning.* Most codes, however, were labelled according to analytical concepts directed by the operational phrase, 'this datum is about *x*.' For example, "*…right now it definitely feels like I don't have the capacity to invest in relationships with other people, so I do end up doing a lot of things that are solitary because that feels like all I have the energy for*." This segment from Elise was coded as "capacity," representing the core meaning of her expression. This approach to coding is characteristic of GIM. Codes were labelled, whenever possible, using participants' wording – also called 'in vivo' coding (Thomas, 2006, p. 241).

Care was taken to employ the constant comparison method (Corbin & Strauss, 1990; Walker & Myrick, 2006) when coding. The use of constant comparison, essentially, was iteratively asking the question of whether new data fit a pre-existing code, or if it presented a differentiation in meaning, i.e., *does this datum, if coded according to X pre-existing code, cause the code to expand or evolve*? Comparing the datum in question with data coded similarly helped to answer this question (Williams & Moser, 2019, p. 48). In instances where new data described a related yet qualitatively distinct phenomenon or meaning, a sub-code was created to indicate this differentiation. In this way, a clustering effect followed as categories of codes began to form.

Theoretical sampling and theoretical saturation

In accordance with the GT method, the continuation of iterative data collection and analysis was facilitated by theoretical sampling, whereby data collection could become increasingly focused and therefore generative a growing theory (Charmaz, 2014; Corbin & Strauss, 2015; Morse & Clark, 2019). Theoretical sampling entailed sampling for the presence of emerging concepts (i.e., the codes derived from open coding of the initial interviews) (Corbin & Strauss, 2008) to generate richer data in support of the emerging theory. For example, early emerging themes of "scheduling and planning," and, connectedly, "spontaneity," as drawn from the first few interviews, were integrated into the interview guideline as elements to probe for. Hence, new concepts and questions about existing concepts directed further data collection.

As data collection and immersion in the data increased, so did theoretical sensitivity (Birks & Mills, 2015) – "the ability to give meaning to data and to understand what has relevance to the inquiry" (Foley et al., 2021, p. 6]). This sensitivity, in theory, should have enabled an increasing "analytical focus" (Birks & Mills, 2015, p. 12) which, in turn, would informed increasingly focused theoretical sampling within data collection. Further, the persistent use of theoretical sampling, in theory, should have directed data collection increasingly toward theoretical saturation; whereby new or significant insights could better "describe, dimensionalize, or contextualize the categories that ha[d] emerged" (Conlon et al., 2020, p. 948). However, as prefaced at the beginning of this chapter, this stage of data collection and analysis marked the critical point of departure from GT.

Contrary to its intended effect, theoretical sampling further dimensionalized pre-existing categories while also producing new ones, increasingly broadening the scope of the data. As noted earlier, this could reflect the research's overly broad scope or the need for a larger sample.

Either way, the pivot to GIM for the remainder of the analysis can be understood as both a practical and epistemological decision: practically, as a response to the study's time constraints, and epistemologically, as a reflexive effort to align the methodology with the nature of the data being collected.

General Inductive Method Approach to Analysis

The general inductive method approach to analysis was suitable at this point for several reasons. GIM allowed the condensation of "varied and raw text into brief, summary format" (Thomas, 2006, p. 238), enabled the establishment of "clear links between the research objectives and the data" (ibid.), and it facilitated the development of "a model or theory about the underlying structure of experiences or processes […] evident in the data" (ibid.). Further, GIM facilitated the above in a way that enabled me to make important decisions about what data was critically important given the research objectives (ibid., p. 241).

At this point, data collection had ceased. Robust pre-existing clusters of codes, or categories, that had formed within the data were considered against the research objectives. This consideration, augmented by re-visiting the insights gained from theoretical memos, facilitated new ways of clustering/categorizing codes. Core codes or "upper-level codes" were identified and conceptualized with relation to research objective aims, whereas "lower-level codes" were more representative of emergent themes within the data. (Thomas, 2006, p. 242). A theoretical argument was then constructed from these core categories (ibid.), which will be presented and discussed in the 'Findings and Discussion' chapter to follow.

CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS & DISCUSSION

The presentation of findings in this chapter mirrors the format of participant interviews. Following an introduction of each participant, it begins with an account of their experiences of necessity. As this chapter will demonstrate, persistent conditions of real and 'perceived' necessity within all participants' non-worktime entailed that leisure came to be a function of necessity. Meaning, the experiences of leisure YWW *did* have were reliably linked to conditions of necessity that enabled them to have leisure or barred them from it within non-worktime. Consistently, YWW expressed not having the 'capacity' for the kinds of leisure they desired, often defaulting to passive forms of media consumption as a result.

Secondly, in accordance with the interview structure, the consideration of YWW's *chosen doing* (Holloway, 2010) – what they might do if everything was taken care of (i.e., the previously parsed out 'stuff' of necessity) – follows. I attend to participants' envisioning of an alternative leisure grounded in *desire*. As this chapter will go on to show, many YWW grappled with separating out what they truly desired in their non-worktime from what they felt like they should do or should desire. Probing deeper (i.e., asking participants to center themselves, or "think big") elicited expressions of desire rooted in the resurrection of chosen doing from childhood, forms of creating, and experiences of freedom and spontaneity.

Finally, just as participants did in the interviews, the chapter turns to their envisioning of an alternative society conducive to greater leisure. Their consideration of the supports, structures and practices that might enable these alternate realities are discussed – most prominently, the core theme of *community*, and within it, sub-themes of *connection and reliance on others*. The implications of evoking chosen doing and arenas which might enable it are discussed in relation to abstract time as it characterizes the realm of necessity. Following Holloway's (2010) lead, if

"the abstraction of doing into labour is the homogenization of time" (p. 135), then the evocation of non-abstracted or non-alienated doing – chosen doing – breaks it.

The discussion closes with a consideration of universal basic income (UBI). This idea was prompted at the close of participant interviews, unless otherwise brought forward by the participant. The consideration of UBI, as this research regards it, offers a possible and critical means toward freeing us from chronic necessity and actualizing greater chosen doing.

4.1 THE PARTICIPANTS

Elise

Elise is a 24-year-old program coordinator at a not-for-profit. Atop working full-time, she is finishing her master's in fine arts. She writes speculative fiction about utopias. In addition to her creative work as a speculative fiction writer, Elise sometimes does commission and free-lance work as a graphic designer and illustrator. Elise struggled with mental illness in her youth and as a result, tries to be gentler with herself and take things less seriously now. She loves her cat.

Maya

Maya is a 30-year-old working as a fundraising coordinator at a medical society. She also picks up shifts as a receptionist at a local clinic. Maya is grieving the loss of her grandmother and worries about the realities of retirement for her generation. She wants to join a dance class.

Holly

Holly is a 25-year-old elementary school teacher and experimental crafter. She admits to spending too much time on TikTok. Holly misses when she felt like she and her friends had new,

spontaneous experiences together. Now, she feels as though they're always having to schedule their time together and merely "catching up" on each other's lives.

Beth

Beth is a 25-year-old working in communications and marketing at a post-secondary institution in Halifax. She is adjusting to living on her own for the first time. She dreams about starting a podcast some day and is working towards acquiring her permanent residency in Canada.

Frida

Frida is a 23-year-old physics student who loves math. They work at a local bakery. Frida misses playing sports. They admit to being too hard on themselves at times. As a queer person, Frida is working on prioritizing pleasure activism and self-compassion.

Zoe

Zoe is a 30-year-old self-employed small business owner. On top of running her business, she works part time as an academic coach at a local high school, part time as an online tutor, and part-time as a sponsored track and field athlete. Zoe has decision fatigue about what to make for supper and runs her gluten-free baking business in her spare time.

Emily

Emily is a 23-year-old RCMP and 911 police dispatcher. When she moved to Halifax after finishing university, she joined a run club to try and meet new friends. She hates running. Emily misses the way she felt surrounded by friends at university.

Lily

Lily is a 26-year-old national sales manager for an electric vehicle charging solutions company. She is training for a marathon. She loves to paint but hasn't in a long time. Lily admits not feeling understood by any one of her friends right now.

Lisa

Lisa is a 27-year-old PhD psychology candidate in her clinical residency. She worries about the impact of social media on our brains. Outside of her residency and dissertation writing, Lisa trains as an endurance athlete and cyclist. She mostly trains on a stationary bike trainer now, but wishes she had the time to do to longer outdoor rides. Similarly to Holly, Lisa craves more spontaneity in her day to day.

Sabrina

Sabrina is a 27-year-old clinical research assistant at a hospital. She is passionate about solo travelling and craft beer. Sabrina moved around a lot in her youth. As a result, she admits to being afraid of becoming close with others in case she leaves, or they leave. She's working toward creating a career for herself that allows her to travel more.

Chris

Chris is a 30-year-old psychologist. She loves to climb and attend aerial hoop classes. Chris is preparing to live in a van for a year with her husband during her upcoming sabbatical.

Similarly to Maya, Chris worries about the precarity of pensions today compared to past generations.

4.2 PIE TO BE EATEN IN THE SKY

4.2.1 Parsing Out Necessity

In alignment with Research Objective #1 (to determine the conditions of YWW's experiences of non-worktime and how YWW relate to non-worktime), Section 1 of the interviews (**Appendix C** for interview structure) asked participants about their typical working day. This allowed me to orient to participants' work time (and often, working conditions), then arrive at their theoretical non-work time outside of it (Section 2 of the interview). In then listening to how YWW related to that time, I was able to begin sorting through what I was hearing, considering antecedents of necessity versus choice.

Recall that, theoretically, non-work time is the site of reproduction and potentially, *leisure* in the time which is "leftover". Following this line of logic, I probed for reproduction in Section 1. Where some YWW accounted for their reproductive labour in their initial responses about non-worktime, others needed to be prompted to consider the place of reproductive labour within non-worktime. In both cases, however, once parsed out, reproductive labour occupied significant non-worktime. Beth described the persistence of reproductive labour well. "A lot of my life," she said, "feels like figuring out how I'm gonna do the next care task to like, keep myself going to do the next thing the next day."

Although extensive research confirms that the disproportionate burden of reproductive labor on women persists today (Hochschild, 1989, 1997; Weeks, 2011; Jarrett, 2015; Pew Research Center, 2023), this reality is not reflected strongly in the current findings. While the gendered nature of social reproduction was a key reason for centering women's leisure in this research, its absence within these findings may be a reflection the sample being composed of non-caregiving women (i.e., not being responsible for the care of children, elderly, or other dependents).

Reproductive labour for participants therefore included activities pertaining to the maintenance of the physical body (e.g., eating, sleeping, hygiene, etc.[7]) and domestic upkeep (e.g., cleaning, laundry, grocery shopping, cooking, etc.[8]) as they enabled participants to reproduce themselves for work the next day (Marx, 1984). Holly captured the essence of necessity that accompanies reproductive labour well:

> *"My dinners I would have thinking about what I'm going to eat the next day. Like, I have to prep my lunch the next day. That's also part of it. And I like to go to bed on time so that I'm ready to wake up early the next day. I don't know if I'm really obsessed with going to bed at 9:00 PM but like, I have to because otherwise I would die the next day waking up so early. Um, so I definitely have to do that. I have to make sure that [the apartment is]*

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[7] I wish to recognize that women face standards of reproduction influenced by Eurocentric beauty ideals, which demand more than what is merely 'necessary' for maintaining the physical body. Examples include complex skincare regimens, fitness programs focused on body sculpting and toning, beauty routines (i.e., "no makeup makeup"), cosmetic enhancements, and regular hair maintenance treatments

[8] Likewise, to be discussed in terms of 'perceived necessity'.

clean for me so the next day I don't wanna, sorry, this is, I was gonna say blow my brains out. I'm sorry. (laugh)"

Necessarily, reproductive labour also includes recovery from the formal working day. This was commonly cited by participants as "the decompress." Describing the necessity of decompressing atop the other reproductive labour that follows a workday, within the "five to nine" period, Elise said:

"*And one of the shitty things about the five to nine concept is that already […] that's only four hours, whereas a nine to five is eight and already in those four hours, that's also including* ***the decompress*** *and get[ting] home from work, which usually takes a significant amount of time for different people depending on what you're doing. That usually includes getting groceries, doing cleaning, making food, which just making and eating food takes a solid hour out of that. So, you can't even get that, it is only four hours! After spending eight hours doing something else, but it can't even be those full four hours because it's also cooking, cleaning, getting yourself ready, getting yourself home, getting yourself in a different mindset, in a different space. And that all takes time too, it always ends up being more of a 6 to 7:30 by the time I've actually finished work and actually got myself decompressed from it to until I have to make dinner. And then it's time to make dinner and clean and the decompress and then you have to get ready for bed and then it's already 10:00 PM and you're useless.* […] *So even if you do have like free quote-unquote free time after your workday and after your necessities, it's usually burdened by, you know, feeling the need to decompress, feeling like you need to do all*

these things."

When asked if she experienced a need to decompress from work, Maya launched immediately into her after-work routine:

> *"There are a few things. I saw a meme about this literally last night. It was like, the eldest daughter urge to, you know, just stand there staring at nothing, eating cheese at the kitchen counter after work. And it's true for some reason. I come home and I, I will pace. I do a lot of pacing. I find for some reason that helps me decompress. And my roommate and I are in a constant conversation. […] So, we're always, always bouncing ideas. So that's kind part of the decompression. We'll just sit down and talk, just let it flow to let it flow. Um, and then getting stoned for sure."*

To consider reproductive labour within "non-worktime" was to consider how the experience of non-worktime, too, was characterized to an extent by necessity. This attempt to parse out reproductive labour from within the larger category of non-worktime was important for how it allowed participants to reflect on this reality. Further, the consideration of reproductive labour acted as a tool which facilitated our theoretical arrival at time which might be "left over," at the potential of leisure after reproduction, via deduction.

This theoretical arrival at leisure – a kind of doing distinct from reproduction – however, was not so simple. Rather, as it became evident from participants, reproduction and leisure often bled into each other. Within a reproductive activity, for example, an attempt would be made at leisure, or to leisure-ify one's reproduction.

"So, I feel like my relationship with like housework has gotten a bit better. Like, I've been like listening to a lot of podcasts and stuff to try and like, make it more (laugh), make it more fun (laugh)." – Beth

"*The Sunday reset? All the TikTok-ers do it. It's just like, making sure that you're doing the big 'everything cleans'. So, laundry, bathroom, shower, wash sheets, all that, all on Sunday so that you're ready for the week. […] I love it. That's like, my passion. Not doing it, but like, the feeling after. Like last night, I went to the grocery store, prepped my salad, the whole house was clean. I was like (pretends to meditate), zen. I love that (laugh). Oh, and I did the everything shower."* – Holly

"*Okay, so showering is like, peak for me. Like, I don't know. It's something that I've recently actually enjoyed doing. Itt's not a chore anymore, but it's something that I really prioritize."* – Frida

Similarly, within a leisure activity, an attempt would be made reproduce oneself. In other words, leisure was responsibilized toward reproduction. Describing her everyday experience of non-worktime, Emily provided:

"I'm probably like, oh my God, I need to do something. I'd probably be like, I should probably go for a walk, need some fresh air. I would probably think, okay, now I need to make supper. And that's also another thing that I would say would be in the back of my

mind while I'm doing that, like, oh, I should go for a walk cause I guess that would be, maybe leisure? I don't know. But maybe that's also just me thinking, oh, I need to do that so I feel healthy for the next day. But I wouldn't say that I have anything that I like to do during that [non-work] time. And I feel like that's something I would feel guilty about. I'd be like, oh, I should probably do this. But you're so tired." – Emily

Beth, too, reflected on the enabling, reproductive nature of yoga undertaken as leisure:

"And if I don't do a little 'Yoga with Adriene' every day, I lose it (laugh). So, I don't know if that's like, I don't know. It is free time. It is leisure. But it's also like kind of mental health maintenance, I guess. But it feels much better than the sort of somatic freeze of not doing anything."

By effect, the line between reproduction and leisure becomes blurred. Reflecting on the reality of her non-worktime, Maya, explained:

"I feel like I get a lot of lists, you know, I got a lot of lists and I'm always writing lists in my little notebook. And those often include the things that I need to do, ***and*** *my leisure items, which kind of sucks. Like, go for a walk, paint your nails, take out the garbage, all in the same, you know, list of things that I need to do. So, self-care and leisure become something to check off so that you have all the elements in your life."*

The absence of a boundary between reproduction and leisure and its implication, affectively experiencing leisure as a "have-to" or "need-to," can be understood in terms of abstract time. To

be certain, this affective experience imparted by necessity should not be reduced to a bad attitude or mindset. The condition of "have-to" – of necessity imposing itself – can and should rather be understood as an expression of experiencing time in its abstracted form, as an expression of doing having been abstracted too, into labour. Beyond this, we can appreciate how, at its worst, the interpretation of all doing as affective "have-tos" – from a neurological standpoint, the interpretation of all stimuli as literal *threats* – extends from a nervous system residing in a chronic state of functional freeze (Roelofs et al., 2010; Kokorikou et al., 2023). Although substantiating the neurological impact of living in a system that defaults us to a survival state is beyond the scope of this research, its consideration is pertinent.

Reproduction as it feeds into production (and as it feeds into reproduction again) is what Harney (2015) describes as the making and re-making of *the line*. Leisure as reproduction, then, and reproduction as leisure, too, are part of this line, of forward-leaning, linear, homogenous time. Abstract time slips away from you, it marches forward leaving you behind, regardless of whether you've had time for leisure. Considering this, it is unsurprising that we find attempts at leisure bound up within reproductive activity.

This intersection of leisure and reproduction, particularly for women, is further complicated by the concern of now distinguishing between the reproduction of *necessity* and the reproduction standards marketed to women – what I will call the 'reproduction of *perceived necessity'* or 'excess reproduction'. The absence of this distinction means that boundaries between self-care, reproduction, and leisure dissipate or become arbitrary. The line of questioning goes like this: at what point does reproduction become self-care? And at what point does self-care become "leisure"? A similar line can be followed regarding reproductive domestic tasks. At what point does reproduction of the household become leisure? Is it when cleaning

feels cathartic or when the curation of space and homelife begins (i.e., "neohomesteading" [Shonkwiler, 2020]). Lisa described the dissolution between leisure, reproduction, and self-care when reflecting on the role of reproductive tasks in her day to day:

> "*It's Pomodoro method* [a time management method involving intervals of focused work (e.g., 25/50 minutes) followed by short breaks (e.g., 5/10 minutes)]] *and breaks to clean. Like, there'd be little bits of leisure almost embedded […]. This probably doesn't count as leisure. It probably counts more as self-care, but with the little bits of like cleaning, like that really is doing something for me. I don't know if it would qualify as leisure. It probably qualifies more as like, self-care. Yeah, I think the things I'm thinking of now are more self-care than leisure*."

This category of perceived necessity, subjectively defined by participants' perceived expectations for themselves in their non-worktime, contains all of that which is above and beyond what might be considered in "reasonable" or conservative accounts of necessity. Perceived necessity is where the excess of reproduction lives – excess as it stems from conventional beauty standards, homemaking, remembering birthdays, emotional labour, etc. In essence, the excess of unaccounted things women do – out of perceiving a necessity to do them – in their non-worktime. I wish to extend the concept of necessity in this way to capture this excess for the way these things often feel like "have-tos" for women. Beth reflects on an instance of excess reproduction in her day to day as it affects her basic coming and going:

*"And it doesn't feel like that at all for me. It feels like, oh, I would love to go to the grocery store and not feel like I **have to** do my hair first (laugh), but I'm gonna be thinking about it the whole time if I don't, so yeah. That, that definitely does eat into time or it just feels like another barrier to doing things. It's like, oh, I want to go out, but like, oh, I'll **have to** redo my makeup or whatever (laugh)."*

Whether the "have-tos" are "real" or perceived, they are important to capture for how they weigh on women and alter their experience of time which might be free otherwise. The consideration of excess reproduction, as it falls disproportionately on women, allows us to regard the expansion of reproduction within non-worktime – a greater extent to which women's doing is subsumed by necessity. When asked what leisure was to her, Elise's description was characterized by the absence of necessity, or "restraints" as she puts it:

"I think of leisure as freedom. Freedom to do what you would like to do, um, and that's freedom from the constraints of, or demands that come with other areas of your life where you are expected to or have to do certain things. Like, leisure is the remover of those expectations and requirements and just a time to... sort of pursue the things that, in my head, it's the things that make you happy, but it could be the things that bring you purpose or education, you know what I mean? Any of those things. The freedom from restraints to pursue something that brings you joy."

4.2.2 The Possibility of Leisure

Section two of the interview followed in accordance with the second research objective, to determine how YWW experience leisure within non-worktime and their relationship to leisure. The idea of leisure was offered to participants in the form of questions, such as: what came to mind when they thought of leisure, its idyllic forms, its lived realities/everyday forms, its expected forms, its desired forms. Four generic conceptual categories were constructed to dimensionalize the data generated from this section of the interview, each category a sub-code of the broader code, 'leisure': 1) *what I do*, 2) *what I should do*, 3) *what others do*, and 4) *what I want to do*.

The code, 'what I do,' broadly captured participants' leisure reality. Its contents ranged from quotidian instances such as, "really taking the time to enjoy my coffee in the morning (Liz) – what Gallant et al. (2024) call 'everyday moments of leisure' – to more irregular leisure instances, like vacation. Commonly cited leisure activities included reading, seeing friends, crafting, leaving the house to get a coffee or take a walk, going to the farmers market on the weekend, or getting outside for a hike. Several participants characterized these activities as things that brought them joy. Alternatively, Zoe described her leisure as "anything I do where I don't need to make money." In this way, Zoe characterized leisure by the absence of *necessity*.

Reliably, discussions about the leisure participants *did* have were inextricably linked to conditions of necessity (real and perceived) which either enabled their leisure or barred them from it within non-worktime. More commonly, conditions of necessity barred YWW from engaging in leisure within non-worktime. The cost of living factored largely into both what YWW could do with their non-worktime and the extent to which they have non-worktime. "*You always hear, especially as a young person trying to afford things*," said Frida, "*that people*

don't want to work. And it's like, not really, actually! Things are unaffordable." Regarding the impacts of the cost-of-living crisis on their non-worktime, Elise and Holly remarked:

> *"Even my hobbies, I feel I want to be producing art, I want to be doing these things, and I feel like I'm barred from doing those just based on the necessity of having to spend 40 hours a week doing something that I don't want to do so that I can afford to feed myself and not freeze to death."* – Elise

> *"…it's just ridiculous the price of everything right now. I could not –I'm a teacher. So, you'd think I'd be able to afford a used car! Nope. But I also have student loans and stuff. So, I guess, maybe to be able to afford doing things that are fun? Um, a car would be a big thing."* – Holly

In response to the cost-of-living crisis, Elise spoke about the pressure to monetize her hobbies. She reflects:

> *"I mean, okay, so, you have time for leisure. You might pick up a hobby or pursue something, but then there's such a drive to, how do you monetize that hobby? And when you start doing things, when you start monetizing a hobby… it's not, it's no longer leisure because you're not… you're not free of, you're not free to do what you would like. You are now doing what needs to make you money. You are now expected to do a certain amount of things. If you're doing commissions for customers or something like that, then like, your leisure time is now guided by what consumers want. Or, even if you're not*

guided by what consumers want and not taking commissions then I think that there's still, in your mind, there's still an influence from what you think a consumer would maybe buy. And it feels like (sigh), I dunno, it feels like you have to almost justify that expense by somehow profiting from the thing that you're making from somehow making that money back."

[…]

"...the other thing is with the survival piece, the couple times I've been like, holy shit, I literally can't eat this week unless I figure out a quick way to make a hundred bucks or something. Then in situations I have turned towards, how can I monetize this hobby?"

The extent to which non-worktime becomes subsumed by further iterations of production/labour regimes (Frayssé, 2013), and, by implication, their reproduction, is the extent to which our non-worktime feeds back into the "realm of necessity" (Marx, 1894). All our energy, our "vital life force"? (ibid.), becomes directed toward activity which creates value for capital. All "doing" becomes abstracted into labour (Holloway, 2010). To be clear, this tendency for non-worktime to become a site of further production should not be confused for an expression of some generic desire for overwork, but rather as a response to socioeconomic conditions which require it.

The implication of non-worktime's tendency to be usurped by necessity is the diminishment of our capacity *to do otherwise* with our time. Many participants used the language of "capacity," which can be thought of as *power-to-do* (i.e., entailing resources enough: money, time, energy) in reference to their non-worktime.

"When I'm really drained, I don't have the energy to make those decisions about how I'm spending my time. So, I end up putting I guess all my energy that I have into work and then coming home and having absolutely nothing left to like fold laundry or do dishes… or the amount of times that I was just like, I can't do that. I don't have anything left." – Beth

"There's this idyllic notion of going to the board game cafe with your friends and I just don't have the, the space to grab the people or do those things. Like, I could, but I just don't have the mental space or energy to like, get paints and the wine glass and take the time and sit down when I can be doing something else." – Maya

"Right now, I can maybe once every other week do a social thing. I'm very drained all the time. […] That has changed recently. I used to not be like that. I used to be a lot more social, a lot more fun, a lot more like bubbly and then like, I don't know, I just got tired. I dunno if it's just age. I don't know if it's I'm deficient in a nutrient. I don't know. So, I guess having the energy would help me bring more community into my life because I could give more of myself. Like, my bucket has to be full before I could pour into anyone else basically […] Like it's just, I don't know man. I'm just tired and… but I wanna reach out and do these things because I want to feel more full. […] That's something I've been struggling with the past four month, the social exhaustion." – Sabrina

*"I was really tired. Yeah. I was f*cking exhausted. And I always felt really bad because I wasn't doing a whole lot. I mean, I was, but I wasn't. […] there was always a bit of guilt*

and like, just a little, just a little bit of like, I should be doing something. But I just didn't really have capacity for it." – Frida

Participants' "capacities," their power-to-do within time "leftover" was often deemed insufficient to enable the pursuit of other, *chosen* doing. Elise explained:

"...even when I have a moment to myself, I don't feel like I'm free from the restraints of other things in my life. And I don't feel like at those times, like I don't even feel like I have the emotional capacity to actively pursue leisure […] because when the restraints are so ingrained, or when the necessities make you so... tired, overwhelmed, burnt out, whatever it is, that you're not able to pursue the things that bring you joy when you do have a moment… I think that's why I said that leisure escapes me because even if I don't necessarily have something pressing, or even say if it's like, 'Oh my gosh, look at this, it's 8:00 PM and I've done all the things that I need to do, I can have a moment of leisure,' I can't truly have that moment because I have used so much of my energy that I'm not at my full potential to actually do what I want to do. I'm just not in a space where I am free, even if I have a moment, if that makes sense."

"Even if I do have leisure, it feels like it should be spent doing something else. And there's always kind of that voice being like, well, you know, you could be doing your laundry or like, the things that you need to do." – Beth

Considering this, many participants described defaulting to passive forms of media consumption in their non-worktime (e.g., "rotting", "scrolling"). For Holly and others, this occurred in such a way that felt almost out of their control. As Holly described in reference to scrolling after work, "*I don't really think I do it like, consciously. I just do that. I just go home, sit on the couch, have a snack, zone out. And then like, I come to consciousness around suppertime*." For many participants, this kind of passive media consumption was simultaneously a means of recovering from work.

Emily reflected, "…*And it sucks that so much time is spent wasted, but then I feel like all of us are so tired and so burnt out that we need something mind numbing to do*." Despite the necessity of recovering from work, this particular time-use within non-worktime was often accompanied by sentiments of guilt or regret having not doing otherwise:

> *"I wanted to – I had a plan! I wanted to take a shower and do a full skincare routine. I wanted to stretch and read my book. But I didn't do any of those things. I just scrolled on TikTok for hours […] And I'm watching productivity videos. (pause) Now, that doesn't make any sense! I'm ending up feeling bad about myself instead of going and doing the things that will make me, you know, feel good, like finishing the dishes or whatever. I'm watching someone else do their dishes."* – Maya

> *"I always have it in my head. Like, oh, I'll read before bed, or I'll do this, I'll stretch. […] And yeah, that's another thing. I just feel guilty about it because I'm like, oh my god. There's so many more productive things that I could be doing to get a better sleep or, I dunno, improve my sense of self, but nope, on my phone."* – Emily

The above sentiments are simultaneously bound up with expressions of *desire* (i.e., 'what I want to do') and expressions of 'what I should do'. Passive media consumption usurps time that could have or "should have" been used otherwise – *if only you had chosen better*. Recognizing the constraining impact of passive consumption on her time and choice, Elise critically noted how: "… *on your phone you are constantly a consumer within your own home. Like, you're constantly being advertised at. You're not free from restraints*." Bound up in this expression is an example of how social reproduction is increasingly challenging under digital capitalism. The private sphere, permeated by advertisements and turned into a site of digital consumption, ceases to be a refuge from economic pressures and the market.

As established in Chapter 2, the self, too, under late capitalism becomes a site of production and subsequent consumption. This is particularly enabled by Web 2.0, which facilitates a curated visibility over the lives of other people. Thus, through social media, consumption is extended into the lives and leisure of other people. In this way, the conceptual category '*what others do*,' can largely be understood as being constructed out of what is *visible*; in other words, what is shared with others' consumption in mind. Several participants spoke about the implications of chronically perceiving others' leisure as well as the prospect of being perceived in their own via social media. Holly and Emily spoke of the social comparison that accompanied this:

> ***"…****and I'm like, oh my god, they're hanging out. She's going on this vacation. They just did this. And it can feel like you're the only person in the world. Obviously, I know you're*

not, but like, when you're on your phone, I feel like you're just like… because other people are also doing exactly what I'm doing! Like, at home on their phone. But it looks like they're not. So, you're thinking all the time, oh my god, I'm doing nothing. I'm not fulfilled. But everyone else is." – Holly

*"Everyone's in f*cking Europe! Like, how are we doing this!? […] Like, I want to be there. I want to be having all these experiences and seeing other cultures and trying other foods and all this. I don't know. I guess it's all about perspective."* – Emily

"So, I think that's a whole other big problem with these technologies. I think it's like, the promise that we're being offered and sold that we're going to get so much of our life back and then also be able to live this very luxurious Instagram-able leisurely time and have that be such a big part of our lives. But in fact, it's like the worst of both worlds and we're just exhausted and feel bad about ourselves all the time." – Lisa

Critically, that human activity which is displayed for others' consumption must be contextualized within the broader structure of consumer capitalism, within which, individuals employ consumerism toward the communication of sign value toward the responsibilized production of the self (Baudrillard, 1972; Foucault, 1970). This is the idea of prosumption applied to the self, where consumption and production bleed into one another (Frayssé, 2013; Ritzer, 2010; 2018). If what we consume produces us as neoliberal subjects, and if that consumption is available to us across *all* time (abstract time), then both work- and not-work time become suffused with a sense of anxiety as individuals are responsibilized to adopt a more

calculated, instrumental orientation to their consumption (Frayne, 2015; Batchelor et al, 2020). Amongst this consumption, let us not forget, is leisure – what Carr (2017) might more accurately call "consumerist recreation".

How social media facilitates the display of others' leisure increasingly enables comparison between others' leisure "choices" and our own. This expands both the quality and range of our desire, altering what we think we *should do* with our time, producing the "distressing feeling of permanently missing out in our leisure, of not making the most of our time" (Rojek, 1995, p. 158). Further, awareness of visibility over others' leisure entails an equal and opposite awareness of possible visibility over one's own. Reflecting on this, Beth shared:

> *"…and even directing some of the ways I've spent my leisure time is like, you know, I can't tell my, or I don't feel comfortable telling my employer I went to a feminist poetry reading. But I feel comfortable telling them I went on a hike. And it's like, I like doing both of those things, but does that subconsciously influence what I'm choosing to do? Probably a little bit."* – Beth

If the possibility or expectation that leisure would be perceived did not alter what was undertaken, it altered how participants thought about their leisure engagement, having imported the surveilling gaze of others (Foucault, 1972). For almost all participants, this experience was exacerbated by how social media enabled increased visibility over others' leisure.

> *"Then there's, what's expected? Like, what are we expected to do in our free time and how are we gonna be viewed by other people? And how are we gonna be judged? And*

are we supposed to document it? Like, are other people supposed to eat that up or is it just for you?" – Frida

"…then it's all about getting the photo more than experiencing other cultures or whatever other values there are in being there. […] Is it Margaret Atwood that has the male gaze quote, but it's almost like we're all through the like, camera-lens gaze. Like, we're observing our own lives as they would be documented to be uploaded, um… which seems like a problem..." – Lisa

The perceived necessity of producing the self via social media is important here as it draws non-worktime and leisure conduct into necessity via the cycle of production and reproduction. Lisa continues:

"I mean, yeah, I didn't expect to stumble into this, and I didn't think of it earlier, but the social media piece, I think, is really big, actually. Yeah. I think it's a problem in terms of like, that we're using consuming it [social media] as a form of leisure. And then I think it's a problem that we like, want our free time to be aesthetically pleasing. […] You know, even like, enjoying like, a winery day with some gal pals and half of it's just taking photos. It's not like that's the activity then, right? And I think we slip into it. Documenting the activity starts to become a big part of the activity." – Lisa

The bleak reality of being on social media – chronically consuming the "lives" (curated content) of other people as it was produced with consumption in mind – is that it alters how and why we

engage in human experiences. Social media's imposition of potential production, potential advancement of the self, into activities that might otherwise be leisure, activities that might transcend 'the line' (Harney, 2005), instead, pull us back into abstract time, imbuing the experience with necessity.

As a result of leisure's being made visible and consumable by others, the leisure category of 'what I should do' is bound up with what others do – an expression of chronically perceiving this online in addition to having inherited ideas and expectations about time-use within non-worktime. We see that considerable overlap existed, for example, between 'what I should do' and forms of self-optimization.

> *"And I do feel that pressure of like, 'Oh, you could be using your leisure time to like work out more or like um, you know… investing' (laugh). Um, so I do see that, not necessarily from like my peers that I spend time with but like, from other people. And especially for women, I think a lot of leisure activities are actually like, self-betterment in some way and not like, life-enriching, but tied to wellness (laugh) or tied to skill building. And not just because you want to or because you're interested in it, but because you're supposed to."* – Beth

> *"I think broadly we're expected to use our leisure time to have vocational support in some degree. Or even if it's not that, I think it, there's that emotional labor piece. Like, you should be like, bettering yourself or healing yourself in some way. Like, you could be using your free time to like, work on yourself to a pretty extreme degree, I think."* – Lisa

YWW's perceptions of what they *should do* in their non-worktime can be understood as representing secondary, exogenous sources of necessity – *perceived necessity*. Like the affective experience of "have-to," the affective experience of "should-do" implies the articulation of something external and imposed onto non-worktime. *'What I should do'* can be understood as a manifestation of a particular rationality (Weber, 1930); a mechanism of control (Foucault, 1975); a technique of power (ibid., 1979-79) informed by neoliberal patriarchal capitalism. Much of the kinds of doing this category contains then, unsurprisingly, feed back into the structure of capitalism: the development of the self in ways conducive to advancing human capital, the lending of non-worktime to responsibilized, "productive" forms of time-use. All can be conceptualized in terms of how they increase the marketability of the self, how they make and re-make the labouring subject.

4.2.3 Preliminary Analytical Summary

Our doing, our power-to-do within non-worktime is contextualized by conditions of necessity – real and perceived. On one hand, it is contextualized by conditions of material/real necessity which implicate access to true non-worktime, the need for resources, and by implication, available energy. Of pertinence here is the necessary yet unpaid role of reproductive labour within the cycle of capital. Beyond this, we find varying degrees at which remaining non-worktime is directed toward greater value production (i.e., monetization, further iterations of production) as an expression of material need.

On the other hand, our power-to-do is also contextualized by conditions of perceived necessity – the excess of reproduction, the extension of production into areas not previously commodified (Polyani, 1944). Non-work time as 1) a site of consumption, and 2) a site for

further iterations of production, alters how we engage and conceive of it– as a site for the subsequent production of the commodified self.

This is directed by a neoliberal capitalist rationality which ascribes *should* to non-worktime, making it a site of further extraction. The value-latent self too, when conceived of in terms of human capital, is a site of extraction, a site to be capitalized on. The imposition of this external rationality, one imparted by patriarchal capitalistic expectations and perpetuated by the neoliberal discourse surrounding it, impacts what individuals choose to do within surplus non-worktime – not forgetting that the scope of our choice, the conditions of possibility, are bound by structural conditions of necessity which limit what we *can* choose. In other words, we are *conditionally free* to choose what we do with our time. When our doing is so subsumed by necessity that it depletes us of our capacity to consciously choose other forms of doing in our non-worktime, can we really say, for example, that we are engaging in the attention economy freely?

The embeddedness of neoliberal discourse into non-worktime is apparent in the persistence of measuring one's doing up against other potential choices moment to moment. Choice, as it comes to characterize the sovereign individual – or consumer, rather – within liberal democracy, entails a responsibilized governmentality over time-use (Foucault 1979, p. 226), with forms of time-use in favour of self-optimization or productivity generically deemed rational and good uses of time. Each moment of our time and the doing they contain are *threatened* to be subsumed by necessity, abstracted, usurped by the voracious cycling of capital. The extent to which our doing within non-worktime is abstracted into labour is the extent to which our doing, our "leisure" is directed by and feeds back into necessity. This relationship is depicted in **Figure 3.0**.

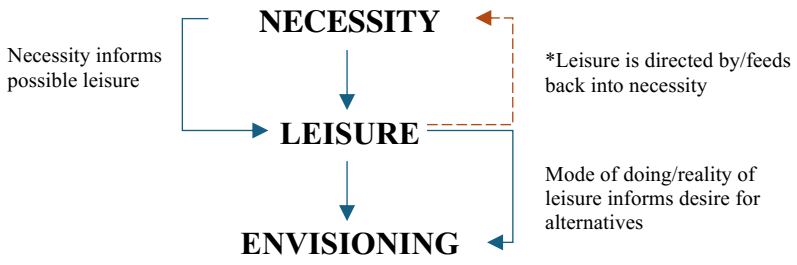


Figure 3.0 Necessity-Leisure-Envisioning interaction

Of central importance here is the homogenous character of abstract time which allows for it to be conceived of in this way – as discrete, fungible units of equal value (Holloway, 2010). Imparted by the abstraction of doing into labour (ibid.), of labour-power into a commodity (Marx, 1894), time and money are synonymized. Abstract labour (doing) produces abstract time (ibid.). Units of time – regardless of their quality – can thus be weighed equally, distinguishable only by how sovereign individuals choose to fill them. The "abstraction of doing into labour," Holloway writes, "is the homogenization of time" (ibid., p. 135). From this abstraction, necessity expands. Firstly, as needed, and secondly, as permitted.

The consideration of time not abstracted, not characterized by necessity, of desire not subjugated to necessity was thus essential. At this point in the interview began the attempt to arrive at *desire*, at the contemplation of non-worktime as it might contain *chosen doing*. True leisure, *chosen doing,* transcends abstract time, transcends "have-to" and "should-do" and is directed instead by "want-to" (*'what I want to do')*. Reflecting on recent experiences of having time for leisure, Beth describes her need to separate herself from her perceived *should*-do's and attempt to re-connect with what is, essentially, *chosen doing*.

"And that's something I'm working on – not making things that are supposed to be fun, feel like things that I have to do. Like, you can actually do what you want, not what you feel like you're supposed to be doing. So even that even definitely bleeds into my leisure time where it's like, oh, I want to play my game, but I'll be a better person if I read my book or go for a walk. That kind of, those thoughts definitely come into the mix and it's, sometimes actually hard to know like, what do I want to do right now? So that's a practice of figuring out how to know what I actually, actually wanna do. [...] Cause it's like, who's gonna tell me? (laugh) Like, what I'm supposed to do? And it's like, well, what do ***you*** *want? And* ***that*** *is the hardest."* – Beth

4.3 SANDCASTLES TO BE BUILT ON THE OCEAN SHORE

The final section of participant interviews turned to *envisioning*. Here, I probed for the idea of chosen doing by asking, simply, what YWW would like to do in their free time, what they wished they could do. To consider, to envision what we *want* in our non-worktime is to refamiliarize and reconnect ourselves with desire. When asking YWW what they wanted more of in their free time, what they might do if they had more time, more "capacity", the emotional trajectory of responses followed a reliably similar arc.

Initially, participants would either be, 1) immediately uncertain/"stumped", or 2) default to citing more of that which they already had pieces of in their day-to-day, or were already attempting to undertake. For example, "I'd probably read more" (Lisa, Liz, Elise, Holly, Emily), or "I'd probably do yoga" (Beth, Lily, Zoe). In these instances, following the recollection of these more quotidian instances was the arrival of uncertainty/being stumped. As Lisa expressed, "I'm like, what *would* I be doing more of? (long pause) It's hard to think outside of it," in reference to her day to day.

To "think outside of *it*," to consider alternative ways of doing – *chosen doing* – within an alternative kind of time – *doing time* (Holloway, 2010) – *is* difficult. This is the function of hegemony (Gramsci, 1980; Crehan, 2015). When asked what she might do given *more time*, Lily provided:

> "*Oh my god it's so bad… because I feel like at the end of the workday, I just wish there was more time – to work! Which is so bad. I definitely feel like, a heavy amount of work to do. It's literally never ending. We're growing a business. […] There's no end to it.*"

Upon probing further (i.e., “think big”), responses began to shift. The experience of coming into touch with desire, with the prospect of chosen doing, was evident in Frida’s response:

> *“I don't know... (long pause) Like, these are things that I… literally, all I can think of is, I'd learn how to drive! I'd learn how to swim! (laugh). Uh… I've always wanted to like, make a basket. Oh! I wanna make a lamp! I wanna make a lamp. I want to like, get the wiring stuff, find some old thing and like, put some lamp shit in there. I would do that. I would paint all of the –oh my God! I have so many projects that I have not finished or have cracked. And I would, I would sand the shit down and I would paint them and then I would send them off to my friends who I've been meaning to send them to for so (clap) long (clap). But I just haven't finished them because I get distracted or get busy. Um, which I guess is still tying up loose ends… but it's something I* ***want****! Oh my God. You know what I would do? I would make […] a recipe book. I don't know! I get recipes that I actually like to eat and then put it all in one place!? Maybe I’d draw on it, maybe I wouldn't. I don't know! And you know what I'd do!? I'd get my driver's license. I have so many ideas! I would get a driver's license and I'd drive down south to where there's deep sky, like dark, no light pollution. Maybe I'd just sit there.”*

4.3.1 To Create, To Be Free

Of YWW's individual desires for non-worktime, the most common evoked ***creating*** and ***spontaneity/freedom.*** Consider the following excerpts from Elise, Beth, Chris, and Lily on the desire to create:

> *"But I think if I had more unburdened time, I'd be thinking of creating. Whether that be writing short stories, working on my manuscript, writing poetry or creating art, knitting, making jewelry, just random things […] I feel like my hobbies right now are very consumption based on kind of the creative capacity that I have leftover at the end of the day. […] It takes a lot of energy to produce something, to create something. I've noticed too, that I have such a limited amount of creativity, which is something I didn't necessarily quantify before, but now one of the reasons that my job bothers me so much is because I need to use a lot of creative power in it. […] So then when it comes to being creative at the end of the day on my own time, I feel like I've already used that energy."*
> – Elise

> *"Oh! I would, I would be creating things. I would be writing, I hope (laugh)! But I would, if I had both the time and I wasn't in that recovery mode, um, I would be, I would be making things and learning things (laugh). I keep going back to those two things."* –Beth

> *"There are some things that I did a lot as a kid that I don't do anymore. Like I took piano lessons throughout being a kid. And I'd love to get back to that. I've held onto my instruments. I still have a flute, I have a violin – I would love (laugh). I was actually*

thinking this other day, like, why don't I start playing violin!? So maybe it's something that I keep telling myself to get into. […] But I think there are more things that I'm interested in that I'd get into. Like I said, I've had this violin forever. I actually have never learned to play the violin or the fiddle. But it's my grandfather's fiddle and I grew up with bluegrass music and I want to learn it. So, maybe I would do that! Or maybe I would actually try harder at climbing or (laugh). Yeah, I think there's just things I've been interested in that I keep telling myself I don't have time to do… Or maybe not! Cause like, if I pick up another hobby, then it's just another thing to juggle. Like, maybe I would lean further into the things I already do, not spread myself so thin." – Chris

"Oh god, I would like to think that I would start doing art more again. I haven't done anything artistic in forever. I have this wanting to do that, but I don't have time or there's always something to do for work" – Lily

The pull to create, as expressed by participants, is interesting in how it can be understood both in terms of alienation (Marx, 1844), and heteronomous labour (Illich, 1975). To create is to express oneself autonomously through that creation – autonomous labour (ibid.), or simply, *doing* – and to have creative ownership over what is created (ibid.). Creation that resists commodification, then, can be understood as the remedy to consumption, which is a false means towards expression and ownership. Creation, then, is the antidote to alienation (ibid.) as it re-connects us with an autonomous form of expression. To create, fundamentally, is to evoke *chosen doing*.

The central desire for spontaneity can be understood similarly, as a desire for time which belongs to us, for time over which we have ownership and therefore can *choose* how to fill. This

necessitates the absence of obligation, of agenda, and of someone else's "owning" your time. The alternative, of owning your time, is the affective experience of freedom. Spontaneity is the ability to exercise that freedom at one's whim. Holly and Lisa describe the experience of having spaciousness enough in their time to enact spontaneity:

> *"I would just hang out and do random things. […] I just like doing things spontaneously. I used to have a roommate that was really into crafts and we would just come up with stuff together. I can't even think of an example. Like we would just like decorate the house for like a party and it would take us like the whole day. That was like, my passion. I don't know. That's a really random example, but like I said before, living your life with your friends instead of catching up. I feel like you would just do things together naturally. You wouldn't even plan it or organize it. It would just like happen. You'd do the activity. But like, hanging out would be the thing that propels the activity, do you know what I mean? You're like, okay, we did this. And then you get another idea like, wait, should we do this? Instead of being like, okay, schedule, meet you at 7:00 PM you bring the dip, I'll bring the chips. You know? Does that make sense?"* –Holly

> *"But then within that activity there's the spontaneity, right […] I think about being able to climb multiple times a week and like stay later if I want to. Or grab a beer with friends after. Slower Saturday mornings to go to the farmer's market and grab a coffee with friends and like not have to, yeah, have everything so rigidly planned, um, to be able to make it all fit in. […] …my current busyness affects my relationships in that I am, there's like less room for spontaneity, which I think is an important part of human relationships*

and community. Like, to be able to like shoot the shit to some degree, right. Whereas most of my interactions, even in my romantic relationship are like, more planned to some degree. Or even if I'm staying later than I intended at a friend's place and we're all hanging out, I feel more tension with that cause I know I have to wake up early to get going the next day, right. […] I think the biggest lack of capacity I feel would probably be the spontaneity." – Lisa

Desire for spontaneity within non-worktime was also captured by the extent to that scheduling and planning – the opposite, or absence, of spontaneity – was spoken about for how it got in the way of chosen doing.

"I love the feeling of just going about my day and I don't need to be anywhere. I don't need to do anything. I have my things, like if it's my run or whatever I have to do. I like being able to make breakfast in the morning, make my coffee, and not have to respond to anyone. I think about that feeling of not having a schedule at all." – Lily

Beth described it as "being moved by your spirit and not by your schedule." In other words, being moved by desire rather than necessity. The desire for, and envisioning of, spontaneity – and the spaciousness within our time that allows it – is interesting in how it evokes the very essence of *doing-time* (Holloway, 2010) – time directed by desire instead of necessity. Doing time interrupts "the line" (Harney, 2015), it "run[s] at right angles to work" (Pieper, 1952). Doing time pushes back against its abstraction, against planning and scheduling, against its confining and enclosure within one of many homogenous units. This kind of time is the seat of

desire. The desire for spontaneity then, can be understood essentially as the desire *for desire*; to be in contact with and directed by desire.

For other YWW, however, coming into touch with desire was inhibited by internalized ways of thinking about our time and our doing. The encroachment or importing of "should-do" into YWW's' thinking and doing meant that the possibility of centering desire and asserting chosen doing contended with responsibilized ways of thinking and doing. Lily and Beth animate this tension:

> *"I cannot… like… there's things I feel like I want to do. I want to do yoga more, I want, but even then, am I doing that to improve on something in my life? I don't know. I want to do art. I want to feel creative. I want to feel free and flowing, but I don't ever allow this space or time for myself to do that. So, I don't know."* – Lily

> *"One of the most formative memories I have was like, my Mom took me to this park at night on the ocean and I was looking out at the ocean with this cliff and I was just like, not thinking about anything. I was just thinking about where I was in space and like, how small I felt, but in a good way. And I felt alone. And that felt like, so precious. Like, that felt like what I wanted in the world, to have that space. And it's so funny how hard that is to get now (laugh) even when you are alone. Even when you have a car and a driver's license and you drive yourself to the cliff and you stand there and you're like, okay, I wanna feel it. And then it's like… the thoughts, the thoughts come […] like, what am I*

supposed to be doing? Who's watching me? […] Um, yeah. Like, I think there's steps I'm taking in my life to try and work towards a life where that feels possible again." – Beth

To be able to consider what one might *choose* to do, as Beth later described it, requires *"being free from the mental prison […] and that's hard. You can't schedule that. That's a pattern that has to be broken."*

The struggle against 'what I should do' begins with the assertion of an alternative – chosen doing. This requires refamiliarizing ourselves with desire, tending to it and maintaining contact with it. "In capitalism," writes Holloway (2010), "our power-to-do separates itself from us and appears as something alien, as the power of capital" (p. 246). Meaning, our very capacity to *do* as human beings becomes framed first and foremost as a means toward producing and acquiring capital. This is alienated doing. To orient to our doing differently – as an expression of desire rather than utility, as an end in and of itself (i.e., because I *want to*) – requires emptying time of its capital-latent character and beginning to value it differently. To orient to time in this alternative way, and then fill it accordingly, would be to assert non-alienated doing – doing grounded in connectivity, autonomy, and *desire*.

When asked about the experience of *having time* after everything was "taken care of" (i.e., the stuff of necessity), Chris, a 30-year-old psychologist, provided:

"This is a fun experience – which I really only got about two years ago when I finished grad school. I was like, oh wait, what do I do now? And the other shift was that, was stopping to make lists. And then I would feel like, oh! I can pick what I want to do! Which is fun. […] I used to make big, long lists and then I would always feel like I'm behind

because you look at the list and you're like, oh, I need to get home and I need to do all these things. And then you have this sense of like, you're trying to schedule your time before, it's like, ***you've already given away your time before you've had it****. Um, and so I stopped doing that and then I would have more moments of like, oh, what do I want to do right now? Which was really nice. It made me drop the things that didn't matter as much. It's like, I don't need to do the laundry. It's fine. It can be done later. […]* ***It makes you think, what do I want to do with my time? What matters to me?"*** – Chris (emphasis mine)

4.3.2 Chosen Doing as Community

The opportunity to re-envision one's individual leisure elicited important descriptions of desire. However, this re-envisioning from the standpoint of the individual generally did not evoke responses that transcended the same structural conditions which place the burden of choice on the individual. When invited, theoretically, to step outside of those conditions and re-envision non-worktime for the *collective*, however, more evocative descriptions of alternative, chosen doing were elicited.

Prompted by the question, '*Can you imagine what a society that values leisure might look like?; What it might feel like?'* participant responses shifted from imagining more insular, specific instances of doing (i.e., particular activities) to imagining alternative *modes of doing* and the arenas which might be conducive to them. Central to these responses was the theme of ***community.*** Within that core theme emerged sub-themes of *connection* and *reliance on others*.

Cooperation and thus, reliance on others, as it was reflected within participant responses, represents an important part of what it means to be in community. In envisioning what this might look like, some participants spoke about the idea of living more communally as it might foster greater inter-reliance. For Holly, this meant living in closer proximity to friends and family and being able to cooks meals and commute together. For Frida, living more communally meant cultivating cooperative, relational modes of production and consumption that could sustain us in dependable ways. She used the example of growing food together in robust community gardens. Toward these ends, Chris reflected on the need for more cultural acceptance of help and reliance on others:

> *"I think there would be, there more this community aspect. People operate in their bubbles and don't lean on each other in the way they necessarily could, I think. Like, even thinking of having offered this friend of ours to make them dinner. They really pushed back and said, 'Oh no, you don't have to! It's okay, it's fine'. I'm like, I know it's fine, but we* ***want to*** *make you dinner! Like, get over here! And so maybe a bit more of an acceptance of this. And I think this does exist in other cultures, where you really do raise your kids in the village and everyone looks after them together, you know. And I think North America is focused more on individualism versus this collectivism, or at least it generally seems. I think we could pull a little bit more collectivism in. That would be nice."*

As an alternative mode of doing – a chosen mode of doing – community and the reliance on others it fosters pushes back against the hyper individualism inherent to neoliberal consumer

capitalism. In doing so, community simultaneously pushes back against abstract time, asserting that our time does not just belong to us as resource toward self-advancement, but rather, that it is imbued with obligation to others and reciprocity.

When asked if they could envision a society valuing leisure, many participants evoked the ideas of community, reliance on others, and connection through recalling instances from their own lives which hinted at what they desired more of, instances which gestured toward alternative modes of doing and relating. For Maya and Frida, this question conjured alternative ideas about sharing and giving:

> *"So, I do tend to give money to people that are doing mutual aid online when I can't afford it, at all. Um, because I know that I have the resources. Like, my parents are three blocks down. Oh, they went to Costco!? Let me grab some chickpeas from them. I'll give you the chickpeas I have. Um... yeah. I think it would be nice if everyone had that, so we didn't feel like we have to take… like, what if we just took care of each other? You know? Instead of having to give your last dollar to the guy 'cause he doesn't have anything while the other guy has enough money to give a million dollars to every person."* – Maya

> *"I'll tell you about my yesterday and the day before. So, as I've mentioned, I work at [company] and as I've mentioned, maybe I haven't mentioned they like to, they just wanna make as much money as they can. So, a lot of the time they'll make way more [baked goods] than what we actually sell. And we donate them and we compost them. But my friend is doing, I had two friends, one who […] is doing, she did a bake sale, um, for her like, engineer people. And my other friend who's doing a trivia night the next day.*

And so I gave the waste… I got my friend who was working, he like drove them over and gave the [cookies] to them and I gave him a little crystal (laugh) and then I gave the [cookies], yeah, to them [Bob], who like only took a couple, it was just like a prize for the guy who won trivia. And then it was a way to like make money to fund her [bakesale]. I don't know. And she gave me crystals and it was great! It was lovely and it was awesome. And I think like… ahhh, I mean, this is so… I don't have the answers. I wish I did. But, being able to… it's hard to think about because I can only imagine it would feel good to not be needing other people owning everything, not needing to work for them to get so little, you know. And having that like, oh, I have this. And you are in need of this! And I can give that to you. And you know what I get in return? I get some cake pops from the bake sale for free, thank you very much. And they get a cute little rock. It just seems like a win-win." – Frida

For Beth, this question of envisioning an alternative society which valued leisure conjured recollection of, [*a*] an instance where she felt unable to accept help from another person, and [*b*], an instance of healing through experiencing the expression of collective rage and mourning, both of which led her to reflect on what it means for us to care for ourselves and others:

a) *"That impulse to – and I even experience that sometimes with my neighbors, I think. Like, it can feel actually really uncomfortable when my older neighbors engage with me and I'm like, why are you talking to me? (laugh) And that's such – like, I want to have a relationship, but it feels hard to do that. And I don't know why. Like, I know why. But, yeah, it was funny, even the other day I was backing out of my driveway and I don't have*

my snow tires on. And it was super snowy, obviously. And my really cool neighbor that just moved in downstairs who I obviously googled (laugh), and is like, a really cool, queer researcher, like, oh god, we would have so much to talk about. Like, you're so cool, but like, there's no social script. I mean, I left, at Christmas or the holidays, I put a bag on their mailbox with some cookies and was like, here's my phone number if you ever need anything. And we had like a nice text exchange. We haven't talked.

And I was trying to back out of my driveway, and they came out and I was like, oh my god. They're looking at me and they can see that I can't back out of my driveway. And I felt awful. Like, I felt… so embarrassed and like… ashamed. Which is just so crazy but that's how it felt. And they were standing there saying roll down my window. I was like, 'hi', like, and I felt this need to like… and they were like, 'oh, I just wanted to know if you needed to push'. Like, they were there, they wanted to help me. And my immediate reaction was like, I can't let anyone see me struggling. And I was like, 'no, I'm fine, just, I was like, I'll figure it out. Thank you'. When absolutely I could have used that community care from my neighbor. But my immediate reaction was like… I can't let anybody see me slip…

*And I wonder about that because that's not how… like, previously the tenant who lived there was a 95-year-old man who was so nice. And we were starting to have a little bit of a relationship, but um, he passed away. I was devastated and my roommate was not. He was like, what the f*ck is wrong with you? But there were all these ways that Al, the old man that lived there, he, one time he left us a typewritten note on our mailboxes that was like, 'I'm very sorry I won't be able to contribute to efforts to take out the green bin. I have injured my arm and have to have surgery. I'll get back to it as soon as I can'.*

And I was like, Al, like, why didn't you tell us? You're 95! We'll move the green bin. Even he felt like he had to, I don't know, like he had to apologize for needing help."

b) *"I think about how self-care narratives are so individualistic. And it actually is making me think a lot about Palestine. I was thinking about going to a protest. Of course, the anxiety about workplace perceptions, whatever. But there's also this feeling of like… oh, I'm really anxious and stressed out right now. I can't go. It's gonna be so overwhelming. And then it's like, oh my God. First of all, that's nothing compared to with these families are experiencing.*

But I did it anyway. Like, I went to the protest with my friend. We were kind of each other's accountability partners. And when I was there, when I was chanting and when I was crying and I was with other people who were feeling the same rage and pain, it was overwhelming. But it was also the best self-care I could have done. There was no alone time or bath or whatever that was going to help me work through those feelings as much as being around other people who were grieving, and angry and fighting for a better world.

And so, I think it's ***reimagining what it means to care for ourselves****. Like, knowing that. Caring for other people. And that's complicated as a woman cause there is this pressure to care for others in this way. But what does it mean to participate in care? In reciprocal community care? Like, that's… that moment when I was at that rally, it was like the first time in a long time that I felt that feeling of being part of something bigger than myself. And of course it didn't fix everything. Like, everything is still horrible. But I felt better. Or, better isn't even the right word. When I left that rally, I didn't feel happy*

(laugh). I felt devastated. But I felt healed. I felt… not alone. To be in community with other people in pain and grieving and angry like that, still, was an amazing experience that I need, actually. And I don't think I realized until I'm talking this out with you, how much I need that and how much I do feel like that is what's missing from a lot of my life."

Reflecting on these instances enabled Beth to notice alienation in her life. From this place, she was able to envision alternative modes of doing, alternative modes of caring. Concluding her sentiment, she offered:

"And why does it feel like we, why can't we? […] Why can't we give money to people? And why can't we invite people into our homes? And why are those things so taboo? And how many of those things that I can't name are ingrained in me? Like, that fear of taking care of other people or engaging with other people…"

The central desire for community– for connection, reliance on others – within non-worktime, asks us to reconsider the notion of "capacity" developed in the previous chapter. Despite having expressed desire for greater community in her life, Elise expressed feeling as though she did not have the capacity to enter into community or relationships in her non-worktime:

"I feel like it would just be more of putting myself out there in and finding people with shared interests and doing shared interests in community with other people. Right now, it's something that I want to do but don't necessarily feel I have the energy for. And I do enjoy being part of groups and being part of community, but I'm very aware that those

things take time and commitment and capacity, and I feel like I haven't had those things to offer, but I would like to."

Lily, too, grappled with this:

"I enjoy spending time with people, but for some reason I'm just so focused on whatever it is that I'm working on that the only time, free time that I have, I feel like I want to be alone. […] I do not really have, to be honest with you, that much of a desire to spend time with other people. Although when I do, I enjoy it and I do value my relationships with people. It's just… yeah […] I definitely want *relationships, and I* want *community, and I want to feel that connection with people. […] I think I use that [busyness, working] as an excuse. Partly I'm like, I don't have time, or I need to just chill tonight or something. I don't know. I feel like I've had a hard time connecting with people, like, on a deep level for a while now. Any relationship or friendship that I have now I would say is not fully understood on a deep level from person to person. I don't feel very understood by any one of my friends right now. So, I feel like I just avoid relationships. Yeah, I don't know. That's like, my own thing that I need to deal with. But yeah… it's hard."*

Time scarcity and necessity collapse us into ourselves and convince us that we do not have capacity for others – perhaps even alienating us from our desire to be in relationship with others – forgetting that it is through community that we gain capacity and through relationship that we produce meaning.

Despite the apparent desire for community and greater reliance on others – which are capacity-*giving* – community was often oriented to as something to be indulged, something conditional upon necessities being met and the central self having been reproduced. This orientation stands in stark departure to historical, egalitarian conceptualizations of community, instead, as the basis from which necessity and the self can blossom (Aristotle, 1905*;* Marx, 1844; Putnam, 2000; Fraser, 2013). This reversal – estrangement from the capacity-giving nature of community and reliance on others – fundamentally alters our experience of time and by extension, leisure. Can we be surprised, then, by resounding sentiments of time scarcity, of not-enough-ness, when we insist on "achieving" free time and leisure in isolation from other people?

Hunter-gatherer societies understood the capacity-giving nature of community (Sahlins, 1972). And because of their interdependence, resource sharing, and communal structuring, they experienced abundant free time and leisure (i.e., the original affluent society). The current findings affirm Sahlins' (1972) thesis: that Western "advancement" has not delivered on its its promise of greater free time and leisure. Instead, our decline into individualism and construction of a culture of scarcity (Xenos, 2021) – which must be attributed to neoliberal consumer capitalism – has alienated us from this innate way of being and relating (Sahlins, 1972) As a result, we understand scarcity as something that must be overcome individually and, predominantly through our commitment to work (Kaplan, 2000; Weeks, 2011; Xenos, 2021). As made clear by participants' envisioning, community and the increased connection and reliance on others it fosters, are critical to the cultivation of a society which might value and be conducive to greater leisure. Through our conscious imagination, then prefigurative creation of that society to come, we can begin to cultivate and inhabit alternative ideas of what abundance means (Sahlins, 1972).

How do we get there? It is one thing to desire and envision community, relation, and connection, yet another to enact it, to consciously cross over into the lives of others. Doing so requires unlearning that reliance on others makes us deficient in some way, and thus requires the critical de-construction of the self, the mighty individual, as the sole means toward fulfillment and meaning. To envision and center community as vital to our non-worktime, to our doing, requires that we first, regain contact with our basic need for and reliance on other people.

4.3.3 Something Else

To envision is to question. *What if, something else?* The closing of the interview asked participants to imagine structural changes as they might facilitate more chosen modes of doing and the chosen doing desired.

Here, some responses were related to logistical or infrastructural changes in everyday operations in Halifax. Several participants (Elise, Holly, Zoe, Chris) cited improved public transit, for example, as a change which would benefit their ability to engage in broader activity in their non-worktime. In a similar vein, Elise identified alternative business hours as something which would improve her ability to engage more in public life. Other participants (Maya, Lisa, Emily, Holly) identified the increasing loss of third places (Oldenburg, 1999) as a barrier to leisure. In expressing desire for, and envisioning spaces like this, several participants invoked their time at university for how it facilitated the community, proximity, and "drop-in" nature characteristic of third places (ibid.).

When unprompted, these responses did not evoke concrete policy-related nor legislative changes. Maya was the exception, tabling the idea of universal basic income (UBI) as "the answer" to the conundrum of non-worktime: "*I mean, that's what would, that's what would do it,*

right? Because it would remove like, this necessary hustle culture that's weighing upon us. Um... yeah, that's it!"

When asked what UBI might change, Maya offered:

> *"Oh! What would it change!? I would get rid of my second job. Um, which would be fantastic. I would... have the funds to join a dance class. Like how cool would that be? Um... yeah. I would be able to pay down debt instead of accumulate it. Um... and I think it's funny how these things - I would tailor the clothes I already had to make them fit me. You know what I mean? Like, there's all kinds of little things that would make your life... […] and just like a, a sense of relief in a way."*

In the nine interviews which followed Maya's, if the idea of a UBI (or a similar social support) was not evoked by the participant, it was offered to them at the close of the interview. The idea of UBI was thus prompted in the remaining nine interviews. Responses to this prompt ranged from initial skepticism to varying degrees of endorsement (from hesitant, logistical questioning to absolute endorsement).

Of those in support, Lisa offered, *"I think the threat of homelessness should not be what keeps people coming into work every Monday morning."* It seems, however, that a fundamental challenge to advancing a UBI agenda is how it requires the uncoupling of time and money – the sourcing of value independently from the exchange of time (the wage). As several participants' sentiments followed from this idea, "*how would that even work?"* Until such a time when the

idea of a wage can be defamiliarized, the notion of people being "deserving" of money enough for basic survival remains contingent upon that exchange.

Relatedly, in Lily's consideration of a four-day work week, her commentary suggests the necessity within work reduction proposals to address, fundamentally, the growth imperative of inherent to a capitalist economy (i.e., grow or die).

> *"At the point where we are at with our business, just in the market, and… ahh… everyone would have to have the same mindset. Like right now, if we didn't grow, we would get bought or we would not grow, but we would also go down the other way because so many other people would be gaining market share, like… it's competition. And I don't know, we just wouldn't last… but if everyone wasn't growing, then it would be a different story. […] For me, it would have to be a whole industry-wide change. There's no change, I don't think, that I could see in our day-to-day business that would help me… because it doesn't change anything else. The whole, on that point of competition, if no one else changes, then it doesn't change for us. But… I don't know what I would need to see. Yeah, I would love to work less, but in a world where that's realistic, it would need to be acceptable. Like, it would need to, yeah... I don't know how to describe that, but… That's so hard to envision."* – Lily

Further, as Lily expressed, a reduction in work at the individual level would need to be *acceptable*. An attempt to envision an alternative society not centered and organized around work *is* difficult. Again, this is the functioning of hegemony (Gramsci, 1980; Crehan, 2015). Here, we can witness the extent to which the tendency to think inside of necessity directs

envisioning. What comes to be envisioned then, in many instances, is necessity. Frida and Lily provide:

> *"I mean, hopefully I won't be scared to buy good food (laugh). I think that would be really cool. […] God, know what I would have? I would have a therapist. I would have a f*cking therapist.'* – Frida

> "*I would do the things that I said I wanted to do to make me feel more connected to myself. Which, yeah, it's like I yoga practice, just moving my body, stretching, journaling. But then I also just feel like that's me trying to recover from all of this… of not doing that… It's such not a daily part of my life right now or my daily routine and I want it to be, but if I just have one day that I can't work, I'm like, well, I might as well get all of this in, which is not the way I need to think about it."* – Lily

This idea of envisioning being directed by necessity and necessity directing envisioning in a cyclical manner is represented in **Figure 3.1***:*

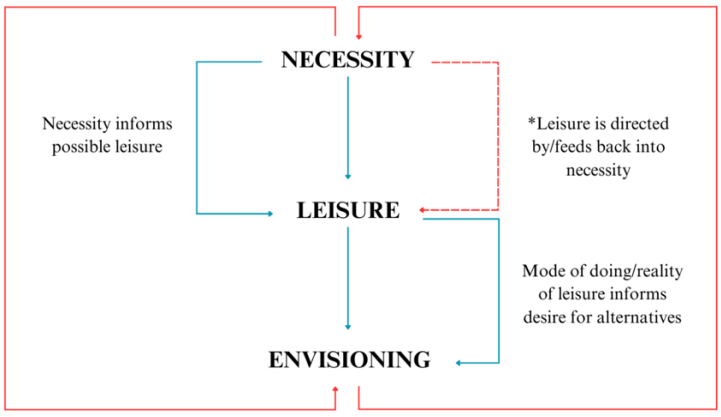


Figure 3.1 Necessity-Leisure-Envisioning feedback loop

The extent to which our lives are directed by necessity, and thus by scarcity, is the extent to which our doing remains tethered to the cycle of capital. Given capitalism's manufacturing of scarcity, it is unsurprising that we witness the tendency toward accumulation and wealth hoarding as a form of protectionism for the individual. Elise reflects:

> *"I feel like it's so absurd and ridiculous that, you know, we're looking at climate change right now, for example, we're looking at literally the end of humanity unless we can invest so-and-so, like this and this dollar amount into saving ourselves. The idea that the human species might go extinct because there's not enough of a made-up resource that we literally created and assigned a value to is actually insane. Like, I'm almost laughing right now, but it's actually a terrifying thought and I feel like part of it's just like, understanding that, and the finance bros are gonna hate me probably, but money is fake and I feel like part of it is just understanding that economics, money, those things are relatively new in the structuring of society, and I feel like there's such an idea of, or anytime you say this, or anytime you go against capitalism, there's always going to be somebody in the comments that's like, oh, and you're writing this from an iPhone, and assigning different inventions as basically saying that like, things wouldn't exist without capitalism.*
>
> *And that, I think, is so sad to me. Like, it's very sad. Because if somebody's only inventing something or doing something for economic gain, then it's probably not worth doing or creating... Like, even without capitalism, I want to think that we would have*

toilets! That we would have these, you know what I mean? It's like people make things because they're good inventions or to connect with society in some way or to create art. Like, things that are only made to have economic gain just aren't very good things. Like, I honestly think that even like – I don't know Steve Jobs personally but like (laugh) – I don't know that every invention is because of its moneymaking ability. I think there is something to be said about creating things to be a benefit to society, um… and I'm going off the rails a little bit here and losing the plot, but I think just taking economics out of it, I think, realizing that there are enough resources in the world to fix all the problems and like, ***actually*** *using those resources.*

So, I think part of my ideal societal structure without economics looks like… like, it doesn't mean that work doesn't exist, for example. It means, hey, the idea of automation taking certain jobs might not be so scary because people don't need to do those jobs. If a robot can take my job, that's fantastic. I don't want to be doing it anyway. So, I think there's a way that automation might be able to provide that sort of relief for free time, but only if like, the structure that we currently have is able to be sort of rewritten so that people's value as humans doesn't depend on their ability to produce. I'm not providing a very good structure right now."

Elise's reflection offers an instance of thinking outside of structure, of grounding her envisioning of an alternative political economy as it might extend from different ways of doing – useful and autonomous (Illich, 1975) doing – and relating.

What is necessary then, to direct prefigurative action (Springer, 2014), is our critical envisioning of that which transcends the material conditions of the present and allows us to

consider what we might want in an alternative society (ibid.). For instance, the consideration of, alternative to necessity and scarcity, freedom and abundance. Here, the idea of a UBI is important for how it facilitates envisioning toward these ends.

> *"Cause if I absolutely, absolutely needed to, I could probably live off the [UBI]. It'd be a lot of beans, but, a lot of beans, a lot of rice, but it wouldn't be so scary as, you know, zero. […] it would definitely give me more freedom, even if I did want to just take on a part-time job. Right now, to be honest I'd love to work at a bookstore. I can't make what I need to make to survive right now doing that, so it'd even allow me to take that sort of position."* – Elise

The consideration of a UBI facilitates breaking down, even if just for the moment of its consideration, the idea that money must be earned via the exchange of time. It offers, alternatively, that people might just be deserving of money that ensures their basic living. This would be the de-coupling of the fundamental relationship between time and money, the deconstruction of the wage.

Toward the cultivation of an appetite for this kind of decoupling, ultimately, is the confrontation of work – the abstraction of doing into labour. What is required then is a materialist confrontation to work: our doing. Non-alienated, chosen doing (Holloway, 2010). This doing is directed not by the alien, abstracted idea of value but rather by a basic connection to desire. Each time we center this chosen doing over abstract doing (labour), we begin to deconstruct the idea that the value of a human being lies in their ability to produce (Hardt & Negroni, 2009).

These instances of alternative modes of doing and relating – "moments of otherness […] that walk in the opposite direction, that do not fit in" (Holloway, 2010, p. 261) – or even instances of noticing our *appetite* for alternative modes of doing and relating, "…make holes in our own reiterative creating of capitalism." (Holloway, 2010, p. 261). Considering chosen doing, envisioning it, then maybe choosing it, edges towards *something else*.

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION

5.1 DOING TIME

"In mind's special processes, a ten-mile run takes far longer than the sixty minutes reported by a grandfather clock. Such time, in fact, hardly exists at all in the real world; it is all out on the trail somewhere, and you only go back to it when you are out there."

– John L. Parker Jr., *Once a Runner* (1978)

How, then, might we arrive at leisure? How might we arrive at *doing* which transcends necessity and interrupts the cyclical re-making of capitalism? Considering the predicament in which YWW find themselves – the proliferation of abstract time – I turn now to John Holloway (2010), who argues that this critical interruption lies in our *doing*. Specifically, doing which happens outside of and beyond abstract time, in what Holloway calls "doing time" (ibid.). Pieper (1952) characterized it similarly as "vertical time" (p. 49). This is time which interrupts the making and remaking of *the line* (Harney, 2015). It is "no longer on the same plane; *it runs at right angles to work* […] cut[ting] across it vertically (Pieper, 1952, p. 49) [emphasis mine]. This kind of time does not march or lean forward (Pieper, 1952). Rather, "doing time meanders" (Holloway, 2010, p. 240). It imposes its own rhythm. As Holloway goes on to argue, this transformation of time is fundamental to the creation of an alternative social reality (p. 236).

Doing time is concrete. It is an expression of what is "contained," yet its parameters are fluid, contracting or expanding in response to its contents. Units of concrete time are thus *heterogenous*. They are incomparable one to the next and therefore, non-fungible. In opposition to the enclosure of time, concrete time/doing time *"opens up the particularity of each moment"* (ibid., p. 234), breaking the perpetuity and duration of abstract time. Chosen doing – the contents

of doing time – makes each moment distinct and full of possibility, dissolving the homogenization of abstract time (ibid., p. 227). "The realization of these possibilities" Holloway writes, "drive[s] each moment beyond its limits, beyond all limits, to the point where it sheds time itself and blends with eternity […] break[ing] the instrumentalization of time" (ibid., p. 236).

What shifts us out of abstract time and into concrete time is our *doing*. We move from abstracted doing (labour) to doing which is concrete – doing which denies abstraction and the further creation of capital. While abstract time is characterized by necessity, doing time is characterized by desire. It is the site of non-alienated, *chosen doing*. For Holloway, this makes *doing* the site of revolution.

Doing – abstract or concrete, alien or organic – is the basis for our iterative un-making or re-making of society. Our choice to occupy *doing time*, to evoke concrete, chosen doing, pushes back against the abstraction of time and doing. It forms "cracks" in capitalism, as Holloway (2010) puts it. This is an iterative, interstitial revolution, the gradual and persistent reclaiming of time. Each time we occupy doing time, what we experience can be likened to the conditional, circumstantial arrival of Marx's realm of freedom, even if only transient and evanescent.

For Marx, the arrival of the realm of freedom was contingent upon the seizure of the state – the taking of political *space.* Due to capitalism's inherent incapability to *free* time from the valorization cycle of capital (Marx, 1867), the realm of freedom could theoretically, only actualize within a communist state (ibid., 1984). Recall Marx's description of the realm of freedom, a site of great human endeavour and productive action (Kandiyali, 2014, p. 108), which could "…begin only where labour determined by necessity and external expediency ends" (ibid.):

> "[…] Beyond [the realm of necessity] begins *that development of human energy which is an end in itself*, the true realm of freedom, which, however, can blossom forth only with the realm of necessity as its basis. The shortening of the working day is its basic prerequisite." (Marx, 1892, p. 820) [emphasis mine]

As the previous chapters have advanced, the theoretical shortening of the working day is ineffective under capitalism. The "working day," as time which produces value for capital (as abstract doing within abstract time), ceases to end. "Non-work time" is not free from labour, Marxist feminists remind us. Surplus time becomes increasingly usurped by capital. Thus, theoretical "work" time expands not shrinks under capitalism. The realm of freedom does not arrives. As Marx (1892) theorized, only within a communist political economy can time truly be freed from the grip of capital.

This necessitates revolution from within capitalism – an historical "non-event," a "conundrum" that Rojek (2010) argues neo-Marxists must explain (Rojek, 2010, p. 106). Ultimately, under consumer capitalism, doing which could be directed toward this aim is, instead, re-absorbed by its structure, constraining the possibility of radical opposition (ibid.) This constraint on doing (on leisure, for Rojek) acts as a potent mechanism of control over workers' time and thus, over such a revolution.

In response to this, Holloway (2010) argues that the critical reclaiming of time necessitates an "interstitial revolution" (ibid.). This alternative kind of revolution, as theorized by Holloway, is centered "…not just [on] taking a space (state, town, or social center) and transforming the relations within it, but rather (or also) of taking a *time* and transforming the

relations within it" (p. 236). Contrary to the view which demands capitalism must be overthrown all at once (ibid., p. 11), Holloway argues that the only possible and desirable revolutionary replacement of one system by another is through "a multiplicity of interstitial movements running from the particular" (ibid., p. 11) – from our *doing*. He writes:

> "The argument that the only way of conceiving of anti-capitalist revolution is as an interstitial process should be uncontroversial. In traditional revolutionary theory, the issue is *obscured by the identification of the state with the totality of social relations*. But once it is recognized that there are many states supporting one capitalist society, then it becomes clear that state-centered revolutions are also interstitial. The question is then not whether revolution should be understood as interstitial (for it must be), but what is the appropriate form of interstice. [This] leads us to conclude that the state is not an adequate interstitial form simply because, as a form of social relations, *it is part of the social synthesis we are rejecting*: the state is part of the cohesive suction of capital. The only answer then is to think in terms of no-state interstitial forms: cracks." (Holloway, 2010, p. 63) [emphasis mine]

Each time doing-time pushes back against abstract time, each time we assert chosen doing instead of alienated doing, we form cracks in capitalism (ibid.). These instances break abstract time. They are the critical interstices between what would otherwise be the perpetual duration of one homogenous unit after the other. Chosen doing "[opens] up the distinct particularity of each moment" (ibid., p. 234). Without these critical interruptions, abstract time proliferates, extending uninhibitedly into the future, closing off the *possibility*. Holloway writes:

> "Duration closes each moment, tells us that each moment is a mere continuation of the last, and our time revolts, opens each moment as a moment of possibility, as a moment of possible fulfilment, possible disaster. Instead of building patiently for the future, the non-revolt of revolutionary parties, our revolt is a rebellion against time itself which lifts each moment from the continuity of duration and turns it around, makes it *a moment of doing rather than a frame for doing*." (Holloway, p. 234) [emphasis mine].

This centering of *doing* in the theorization of a new society re-empowers the autonomous individual, opening up – or breaking the enclosure of – their scope of choice, reminding them of their "power-to-do (and therefore, [their] power-not-to-do, and [their] power to do differently)" (p. 85). Instances of chosen doing are the essential interstices to this revolution.

Therefore, our struggle to assert alternative, chosen forms of doing is at the center. It touches down on and is bound up with everything, "our lives, our passions, the way we relate to friends…" (ibid., p. 227). It is this critical reclaiming and redefining of our social relations *through our doing* that makes a different world. This makes things quite simple. Do differently. Stop making and recreating capitalism with your doing (Holloway, 2010). Make something else.

The simplicity of this argument tempts us into essentializing and romanticizing our doing. "Certainly it is tempting," writes Holloway, "to think that our spaces-moments of other-doing exist outside capital, that when we sit with our friends in the garden, or dance all night with those we love, we are living outside capital. The spaces of otherness *appear* as differences, rather than contradictions" (p. 177). However, if and when we experience instances of chosen doing within doing-time (ibid.), instances of Pieper's (1958) vertical time, instances which can

be understood as breaks in *the line* (Harney, 2015), we must remember that they do not exist outside of capitalism nor are they immune to the processes of abstraction and alienation. They are always threatened by the encroachment of capital.

> "[Our doing] exists as struggle, as the struggle to escape from its abstraction. Its moments of freedom are often both contradictory and evanescent, ***sandcastles built on the ocean shore.*** […] However evanescent these overflowings of concrete-creative doing may be, let us be clear that that is where we live, that is where we stand, that is the point from which we must think the possibility of creating a different world." (Holloway, 2010, p. 177) [emphasis mine]

These moments' *otherness* – their being contradictory to capitalism – makes them critical, not inadequate (ibid.). The conscious creation of these spaces and moments of otherness, the refusal (when at all possible) of work (Weeks, 2011), the persistent re-claiming of time, works us toward a different reality. These variegated efforts are connected by their essential *struggling-against* – which should be regarded as sacrosanct to the creation of a post-capitalist world. "Their unity is negative, anti-capitalist," writes Holloway (2010, p. 177). Our desires to live and do differently, and then our honorable pursuit of them through our doing, interstitially, moment to moment, is at the center.

*

> *"I'm getting into stars and things, but I've started just like, doing things that I like, cause I like them! It was a clear night the other night. The moon was out. I have binoculars. I went and looked at the moon! Amazing. I went up to my top neighbours. I was like, can I*

*use your deck to look at the moon? Amazing. […] I'm doing things that I **want** to do, and I feel very empowered in that."* – Frida

There is power in directing our lives by desire and by pleasure. Even if it is only an attempt, an intention. As Frida said in reference to their pleasure activism, "*We should prioritize figuring out what we like in ways that are in our time and not because of anybody else*." Each time we center our desire for a different way of being and enact it through our doing – chosen doing – we form cracks in capitalism (Holloway, 2010).

Centring desire begins, first and foremost, with the identification of what it is that we want, imagining and dreaming about it, and then, aiming our time-use as best we can, whenever and however we can, at it. In redirecting and reclaiming our time in this way – *through our doing* – we break the duration and homogeneity of abstract time (p. 229).

Toward this end, this research has uncovered YWW's desires for alternate ways of doing, being, and relating. Orienting to non-worktime as a critical site of possible transformation, YWW's experiences and perceptions of non-worktime and leisure have offered important insight into the condition of our doing under late capitalism: chronic subjugation of desire in favour of necessity.

In response to this reality, YWW's central desires for *creating* and *spontaneity/freedom* within non-worktime can and should be understood through a lens of alienation. The desire to create autonomously and the desire to direct one's doing freely from a place of desire can both be understood as manifestations of alienation. The actualization of these desires promises to restore the locus of expression, of choice, and of ownership – the antitheses of alienation – to our doing.

The subjugation of autonomous expression, of choice, and of ownership over one's time, however, is chronic to residing within time characterized by necessity. As this research has shown, non-worktime is chronically usurped by necessity, inhibiting the extent to which we have 'non-worktime,' let alone leisure, and the conditions under which we have it, when and if we do.

In response to conditions of alienation and commodification within our non-worktime, the assertion of *chosen doing* emerges as a materialist confrontation to the hegemony of work. By critically centering desire, chosen doing disrupts the instrumentalization and homogenization of time. Our engagement in chosen doing – in all its variegated forms – is unified in how each contributes to an interstitial revolution. Each contributes to our iterative un-making and re-making of a new world.

To regard chosen doing in this way and then to center and value it accordingly asks that, as we go about the business of making a living, that we consciously and simultaneously seek out, cultivate, and choose moments of otherness. This requires conscious and active participation in the world. It requires noticing how we might limit our experience, deny ourselves connection, or employ exogenous sources of governmentality. Then, interrogating those sources. "Becom[ing] aware of [our] self-imposed cages, and of the possibility of a different life," as Illich (1978, p. 20) puts it. This means noticing the presence of desire and learning to honor and be guided by it. To regard these capacities as critical sites for potential transformation restores power to our non-work time, suffusing it with agency.

Toward this end, YWW's envisioning of means by which we might move, as a collective, toward greater chosen doing are critical findings. Their envisioning of greater *community***,** and with it, increased *connection* and *reliance on others*, represents a larger desire for alternative

modes of doing and relating which re-connect us and imbue our relations with interdependence, reciprocity, and obligation.

These findings—expressions of participants' radical imagining (Khasnabish & Haiven, 2014)—highlight the vital role that research can play in facilitating and engaging with radical imagination (ibid.). Furthermore, they emphasize the importance of valuing imaginative data as it extends from and is grounded in participants' lived experiences. Envisioning, as this research has regarded it, offers a critical means toward inspiring greater prefigurative action (Springer, 2014). By first envisioning alternative and desired modes of doing and relating, and then learning to consciously enact them in the present, we take up prefigurative action—making and residing in a desired future world *now*, through our doing. Again, our doing is at the center.

5.2 RECOMMENDED FUTURE RESEARCH PATHWAYS

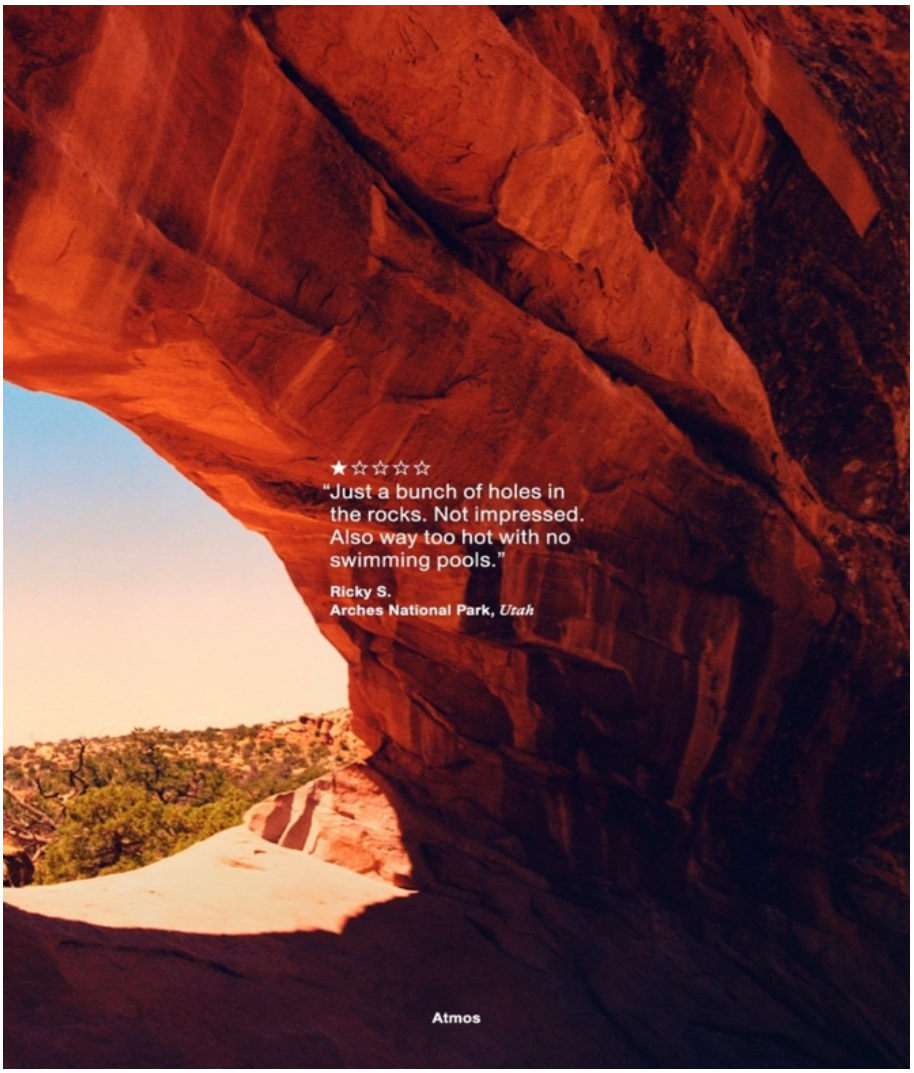
As advanced in Chapter 1 as well as within the previous Findings chapter, a body of literature confirms the persistently gendered nature of social reproduction today (Hochschild, 1997; Weeks, 2011; Jarrett, 2015; Pew Research Center, 2023). Speculatively, the absence of this reality in the current findings may stem from the decision to focus on the experiences of non-caregiving women. Hence, further research on the prospect of chosen doing for care-giving women is of especial interest. The adjacent experiences of young working men – should they be subject to the same self-reproductive, regulatory imperatives – in smilar contexts are also of interest. Relatedly, the influence of therapeutic culture discourse on time-use and leisure is of interest. Beyond this, further consideration of how particular working conditions (i.e., remote work, hybrid work, place-based work) might impact the subjective experience of chosen doing

could be promising. Finally, as this study has underscored, further research on post-capitalist envisioning is an important impetus for future inquiry.

APPENDICES

Appendix A: Consumer reviews of American National Parks

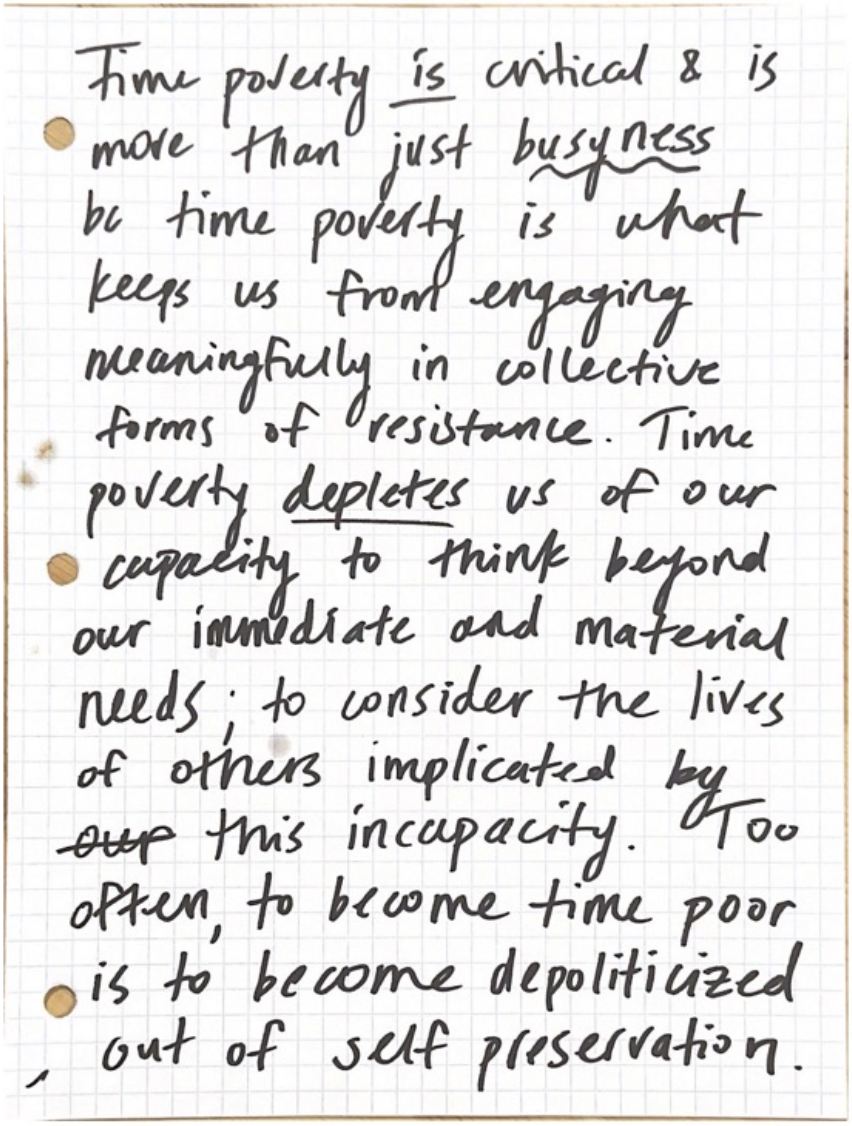
Pictured: A photo from Arches National Park accompanied by a one-star review from Michael S. that reads*: "Not enough arches. You would think if it was called Arches National Park there would be more arches. There were like five."* [Paul Hempstead via Atmos, Climate and culture magazine (@atmos)]



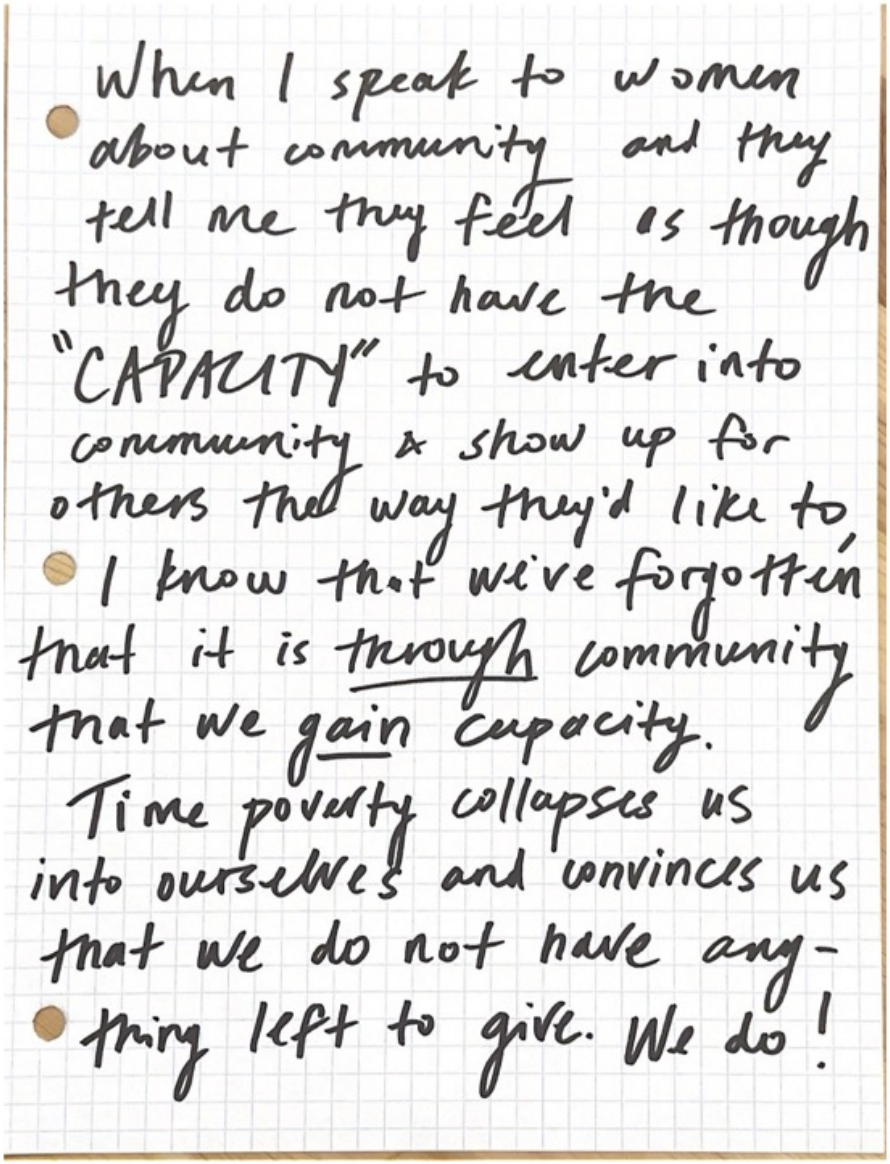
Pictured: A second photo from Arches National Park accompanied by a one-star review from Ricky S. that reads: *"Just a bunch of holes in the rocks. Not impressed. Also way too hot with no swimming pools."* [Paul Hempstead via Atmos, Climate and culture magazine (@atmos)]

Appendix B: Theoretical Memo

Memo date: March 19, 2024
Context: Following my interview with Beth



Page 1/2


When I speak to women about community and they tell me they feel as though they do not have the "CAPACITY" to enter into community & show up for others the way they'd like to, I know that we've forgotten that it is through community that we gain capacity.
Time poverty collapses us into ourselves and convinces us that we do not have anything left to give. We do!

Appendix C: General Interview Structure

Section 1. Parsing out necessity

- Work
- Reproductive labour

Section 2. Considering what's left-over

- What you do in your 'free time'
- Considering the idea of leisure
- What is leisure in your life?

Section 3. Considering alternatives

- Re-imagining free time/leisure
- Re-imagining the conditions for leisure

Appendix D: REB Letter of Approval

REB # 2023-6712 Amendment Approval

do-not-reply-DAL@researchservicesoffice.com <do-not-reply-DAL@researchservicesoffice.com>
Thu 11/23/2023 9:44 AM

To:Catherine Kennedy <ct464317@dal.ca>
Cc:Karen (Sociology) Foster <kmacalpi@dal.ca>;Research Ethics <ethics@dal.ca>

To respond to this message, click "**Reply All**" and adjust recipient list as required. Do **NOT** click "Reply".

DALHOUSIE UNIVERSITY

Social Sciences & Humanities Research Ethics Board
Amendment Approval

November 23, 2023

Catherine Kennedy
Arts & Social Sciences\Sociology and Social Anthropology

Dear Catherine,

REB #: 2023-6712
Project Title: The prospect of community: investigating the leisure of young workers toward shared meaning and belonging

The Social Sciences & Humanities Research Ethics Board has reviewed your amendment request and has approved this amendment request effective today, November 23, 2023.

Sincerely,

[redacted]

Dr. John Cameron
Chair, Social Sciences and Humanities Research Ethics Board
Dalhousie University

ethics@dal.ca

Appendix E: Consent Form

CONSENT FORM

Project title: *The prospect of community: investigating the leisure of young working women toward shared meaning and belonging*

Lead researcher:

Catherine Kennedy

Department of Sociology and Social Anthropology, Dalhousie University

Email: ck@dal.ca | Phone: (902) 318-4580

Other researchers

Dr. Karen Foster (Supervisor)

Introduction

We invite you to take part in a research study being conducted by Catherine Kennedy, who is a Masters student at Dalhousie University. Your participation in this research is completely voluntary.

The following information explains what your participation in this research would entail, including any benefits, risks, inconveniences or discomfort which might be associated with participation.

Please address any questions you have about this study with Catherine. Ask as many questions as you like. If you have questions following your participation, you can email Catherine at ck@dal.ca or her supervisor, Dr. Karen Foster, at karen.foster@dal.ca.

Purpose and Outline of the Research Study

This study is investigating the *leisure* – what we choose to do with our free time for enjoyment – of young working women. By speaking with young working women in Halifax, this research aims to produce insight into questions such as: How are young working women spending their free time?; What meaning(s) are made through their leisure/free-time engagement?; Are young working women experiencing community and belonging through their leisure engagement?; How might young working women imagine a future economy conducive to community and belonging through leisure?

These questions follow from recent research on what scholars have called the 'loneliness epidemic'[9]. Critically, young adults (ages 18-24) have been identified as reporting the highest rates of loneliness[10]. Despite today's hyper-connected online world, young adults report feeling increasingly disconnected[11]. A 2021 review of loneliness interventions concluded that strategies which focused on *community* had greater success, with clear evidence for interventions being targeted at group activities that involved learning, training and social activities[12]. Considering

[9] Cacioppo & Cacioppo, 2018; Goodfellow, 2022; Fardghassemi & Joffe, 2022
[10] Barreto et al., 2020; Eccles & Qualter, 2021
[11] Alberti, 2019
[12] Eccles & Qualter, 2021

these findings, this study regards the community fostering potential of *leisure* as a viable and promising means of loneliness prevention and intervention in young adults. Leisure invites the opportunity to cultivate alternate community and meaning outside of work. However, leisure can only be experienced "if we free ourselves, to some degree, from our most efficient and transactional forms of existing and relating"[13]. The cultivation of community through leisure has the potential to open social worlds of connection and belonging which do just this.

Feminist scholars remind us, however, that access to leisure is not experienced equally. This research centers the experiences of women as a demographic whose access to leisure has been historically and persistently inhibited by a capitalist patriarchal system which relies on their free labour[14]. Given this gendered reality of leisure and free time, this research aims to produce insight into gender specific challenges and dynamics young working women navigate in accessing leisure and in experiencing community and belonging through leisure.

Who Can Take Part in the Research Study

You may participate in this study if you are a woman (aged 18-30, inclusive) working full-time or the equivalent of full-time (greater than or equal to 40 hours per week), childless, and living within the Halifax Peninsula region (i.e., Convoy Place, Downtown, Hydrostone, Mulgrave Park, North End, Quinpool, South End, Spring Garden, West End and Westmount neighbourhoods; or residences associated with postal codes B3H, B3J, B3K or B3L).

[13] Glover & Sharpe, 2021
[14] Marx, 1894; Hochschild, 1989; Weeks, 2011; Waring, 2016

What You Will Be Asked to Do

Should you wish to participate in this research, your commitment entails one in-person in-depth interview. Interviews will be conducted in public, common spaces and will take between 60 to 90 minutes. Interviews will be audio-recorded for the purpose of transcription and analysis. You will be asked to choose a pseudonym (an alternate name) which will be associated with your interview data, unless you explicitly wish for your name to be used throughout this study and in the research findings.

The interview will follow a semi-structured, open-ended question guide. You will be asked questions regarding your work life; your day-to-day busy-ness and its impact on personal aspects of your life; what you do with your free time (leisure); the meaning of leisure in your life; whether you experience a sense of community through your leisure engagement; and how you might imagine enhanced leisure and community in your life and society. You may refuse to answer any questions you wish.

Your data will be coded with your pseudonym for your privacy and confidentiality. Only Catherine and Dr. Foster will have access to the key code which links your pseudonym to your identity. This key code will be destroyed five years following the completion of this study. Your de-identified data will be retained indefinitely by Catherine for continued analysis and research.

Possible Benefits, Risks and Discomforts

Benefits: Although no direct benefits can be guaranteed from your participation in this research, potential benefits of your participation in this study include greater reflection on the state of leisure in your life, your relationships, and community, as well as the role of work in your life. More altruistic benefits include contributing to research which might advance considerations of leisure and community in social determinants of mental health. Further, although participating in the study might not directly benefit you, the research findings might benefit others.

Risks: The risks associated with this study are minimal. A potential risk is being identified as a participant. Every effort will be made to remove directly and indirectly identifying information from the study. Your interview data will be associated with a pseudonym (an alternate, chosen name). Information which could be indirectly identifying (for example, your membership of a named sports team or a community club) will be excluded or altered by using an alternate, chosen name for the associated membership. You will be consulted on this during the interview. Beyond this, the only reasonably anticipated risk includes becoming bored or fatigued. You may take breaks during the interview at any time. You will be offered a break midway through the interview.

Compensation

To thank you for your time, you will be given a $10 gift card to the Halifax Seaport Farmer's Market for your engagement in an interview.

How your information will be protected:

Privacy: Interviews will take place in common, public spaces. However, your participation in this research process will not be shared outside of the direct research team (myself, Dr. Foster, and Dr. Gambold).

A pseudonym (an alternate name) chosen by you will be used for privacy and confidentiality purposes, unless you explicitly wish for your name to be used in the research. Should you wish to remain identifiable by your name and the data which will be associated with your name, you assume greater privacy and confidentiality risks.

Confidentiality: The information that you provide to us will be held in confidentiality. Only Catherine and Dr. Foster will have access to this information. Your name and contact information will be securely stored separately from your research information. Pseudonyms (an alternative, chosen name) chosen by participants will be used for confidentiality purposes unless you explicitly wish for your name to be used in the research. Otherwise, pseudonyms will be used in all written and computer records, as well as in the final research findings. All electronic records will be kept secure in an encrypted file on Catherine's password-protected computer.

Data retention: Once this research is complete, your de-identified electronic data will be stored indefinitely in a secure, encrypted file on Catherine's password-protected computer. In addition to the keycode which links your pseudonym to your identity, your identifying information (name and contact information associated with your de-identified data), which was saved

separately from the research information, will be destroyed five years after the completion of this study.

If You Decide to Stop Participating

You are free to leave the study at any time. Should you decide to terminate your participation during the interview, you can decide whether you want any of the information that you have provided up until that point to be deleted, or if you will allow us to use that information. After participating in the interview, you can decide for up to three (3) weeks if you would like to withdraw your data from the study. After three weeks, your data will no longer be eligible for withdrawal as it will have been analyzed and informed further data collection. Your deadline to withdraw will be noted on the following signature page of your Consent Form, an electronic copy of which will be emailed to you following the interview.

How to Obtain Results

The final research product will be shared with you, should you wish. You can obtain a copy of the final research product by including your contact information at the end of the following signature page.

Questions

We would be happy to speak with you about any questions or concerns you may have regarding your participation in this research study. Please contact Catherine (ck@dal.ca) at any time with questions, comments, or concerns about the research study.

Should you have any ethical concerns about your participation in this research, you may also contact Research Ethics, Dalhousie University at (902) 494-3423, or email ethics@dal.ca and reference REB file # 2023-6712.

Signature Page

Project Title: *The prospect of community: investigating the leisure of young working women toward shared meaning and belonging*

Lead Researcher: Catherine Kennedy, Dalhousie University (ck@dal.ca)

I have read the explanation about this study. I have been given the opportunity to discuss it, and my questions have been answered to my satisfaction. I understand that I have been asked to take part in an interview that will occur at a location acceptable to me, and that that interview will be recorded. I understand direct quotes of things I say may be used without identifying me. I agree to take part in this study. My participation is voluntary, and I understand that I am free to withdraw from the study at any time, up until three weeks after the date of this interview (date provided below*).

_____ _____ _____

Name (print) Signature Date

*Deadline to withdraw from study: _____.

Should you to receive a copy of the results of this study, please provide your email address below:

Email address: _____

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