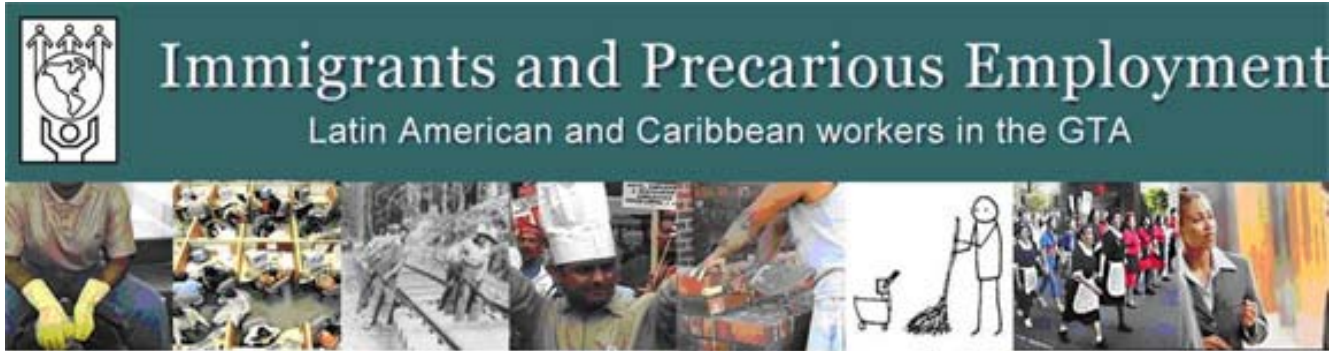


APPENDIX A:



Immigrants and Precarious Employment

A Popular Education Workshop

Spring 2009

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1. AGENDA

1. Welcome and Introductions
2. Agenda / Objectives
3. Teeter Totter Park Talk: Power Play – Act I
4. Our History of Work
5. Overview of Precarious Work Research
6. Break
7. The Precarious Work Wheel or How Precarious is this Job?
8. Teeter Totter Park Talk: Power Play – Act II
9. What's Needed to Reduce or Eliminate Precarious Work?
10. Evaluation & Wrap-up

2. QUOTES ABOUT EMPLOYMENT AND WORK

"The lousy thing about the LCBO is you're guaranteed no hours," says Rain Loftus, a part-time liquor store worker in London. "You can work anywhere from 40 hours to zero."

By any measure, the Liquor Control Board of Ontario is a big, rich employer. The LCBO pours \$1 billion a year in profits into government coffers, not counting the taxes drinkers pay on booze. But all that cash doesn't stop the LCBO from trying to keep its workers poor. Of the 5,400 OPSEU members at the LCBO, at least 56 per cent are casual employees. They have no health benefits and no guarantee of hours.

"Whenever there's a crunch in the budget, it's always the casual hours they come after," Loftus says. "It creates an atmosphere of fear. People won't fight things that come along for fear of being transferred or seeing their hours reduced."

Part-time workers, full-time fighters! Grassroots activists stand up for precarious workers by Randy Robinson, *Our Ontario, OPSEU 2006*

Grace Mungal, president of Local 251, works eight hours a week. "I'm seeing a tremendous growth in the number of parttimers, but they're being treated as second-class citizens," Mungal says. "What really concerns me is that they are new immigrants, they are women of colour, they are victimized. "Half of them work two to three jobs. A lot of my members live below the poverty line."

Part-time workers, full-time fighters! Grassroots activists stand up for precarious workers by Randy Robinson, *Our Ontario, OPSEU 2006*

Candy Lindsay: "A lot of women are affected by the whole issue of parttime work. For example, they can't afford childcare. This is a big women's issue, and it needs to be put on the government's agenda."

Part-time workers, full-time fighters! Grassroots activists stand up for precarious workers by Randy Robinson, *Our Ontario, OPSEU 2006*

The first duty of a human being is to assume the right functional relationship to

society -- more briefly, to find your real job, and do it.

Charlotte Perkins Gilman

When it comes to getting things done, we need fewer architects and more bricklayers.

Colleen C. Barrett

People might not get all they work for in this world, but they must certainly work for all they get.

Frederick Douglass

Always be smarter than the people who hire you.

Lena Horne

I am somehow less interested in the weight and convolutions of Einstein's brain than in the near certainty that people of equal talent have lived and died in cotton fields and sweatshops.

Stephen Jay Gould

(1) Everyone has the right to work, to free choice of employment, to just and favourable conditions of work and to protection against unemployment.

(2) Everyone, without any discrimination, has the right to equal pay for equal work.

(3) Everyone who works has the right to just and favourable remuneration ensuring for himself and his family an existence worthy of human dignity, and supplemented, if necessary, by other means of social protection.

(4) Everyone has the right to form and to join trade unions for the protection of his interests.

Article 23 of the UDHR

Everyone has the right to rest and leisure, including reasonable limitation of working hours and periodic holidays with pay.

Article 24 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights

God respects me when I work but He loves me when I sing.

Rabindranath Tagore

The phrase 'work-life balance' tells us that people think that work is the opposite of

life. We should be talking about life-life balance.

Patrick Dixon, in Building a Better Business (2005) p. 182

Everything in this world depends on work.

Louis Pasteur

If work were so pleasant, the rich would keep it for themselves.

Mark Twain

My grandfather once told me that there were two kinds of people: those who do the work and those who take the credit. He told me to try to be in the first group; there was much less competition.

Indira Gandhi

Experience is an asset of which no worker can be cheated, no matter how selfish or greedy his immediate employer may be.

Napoleon Hill

When a man tells you that he got rich through hard work, ask him: 'Whose?'

Don Marquis

If you don't want to work you have to work to earn enough money so that you won't have to work.

Ogden Nash

The phrase "working mother" is redundant.

Jane Sellman

Poverty is the worst form of violence.

Mahatma Gandhi

If there is no struggle, there is no progress - Those who profess to favor freedom and yet renounce controversy are people who want crops without plowing the ground.

Frederick Douglass, Abolitionist Leader 1817 - 1895

Solidarity is not an act of charity, but mutual aid between forces fighting for the same objective.

Samora Machel

3. TEETER TOTTER PARK TALK: A PLAY OF PRECARIOUSNESS

A POWER PLAY ABOUT PRECARIOUS WORK

ACT I

Scene:

The scene is a playground beside a community centre. Children are running around playing and calling to each other. Three adults sit on a bench each watching the children play and keeping an eye on those for whom they are responsible. One is a nanny (an immigrant-worker from The Philippines); one is a temp worker from Mexico; and one is a self-employed consultant in the communications industry. The nanny, the temp worker and the self-employed worker all experience different forms of precariousness.

[Bold text are quotes or adapted from quotes from interviews conducted during the research]

Characters: Nanny (from overseas; working to earn immigration points)
Temp (a worker who is relying on day-to-day temporary labour)
Self-employed (a worker who works from home on piece work)

Temp: I'm glad to see them playing with so much energy. I hope they wear themselves out so they sleep good and hard tonight.

Nanny: I know what you mean!

SE: Your kids sure seem to be pretty energetic. How long have you been their nanny?

Nanny: Only a few months. This is all very new for me.

SE: You've never taken care of kids before?

Nanny: No, no, I mean being in Canada. I have a son and a daughter back home.

SE: That must be hard. How old are they?

Nanny: The same age as these two – ages two and six.

Temp: I miss my kids when I'm working, but I feel lucky to spend today with them since I didn't get called in for work. Of course that means I'm not getting paid either.

- Nanny: Now *that* seems hard to me – you either get work or you get to spend time with your kids.
- SE: Yeah, but there’s always the evenings, right?
- Temp: **Not exactly, even when I get day work they also want you to work that night. And they just spring it on you – they know you work from 9-7 but then they say, “can you work late tonight”; like we don’t have a life. You know what I’m saying?**
- SE: Well, that’s one of the things I like about working from home – I get to see my kids more; but it’s trickier than I thought it would be. If I’m working I’m working and if I’m not working I’m not getting paid. And concentrating with kids around is hard. Still working from home is nice.
- Temp: There isn’t any kind of “work-from-home” job available for someone like me.
- SE: What do you mean?
- Temp: Well, I’m an immigrant and it’s hard to find permanent work. In my country I was a workplace trainer with my union – I have a teaching certificate. But that means less than nothing here.
- Nanny: Canadian experience is what they want to see. That’s why I’m doing this nanny work. But a friend of mine is doing volunteer work. And she says, **“if you volunteer they actually see you and they like your work; you stand a better chance of getting the job than you do trying to apply and not knowing any one at the company or being recommended.”** Of course, volunteering doesn’t pay the bills.
- SE: Yeah, it’s that old saying: “It’s *who* you know, not *what* you know.”
- Temp: I’m learning that the hard way. And I’m learning a lot of other hard lessons as well. **One boss ripped me off and didn’t pay me what they said. I don’t know, it could have been a mistake, but I didn’t go back to find out.**
- Nanny: Sometimes the work I’m expected to do is so much more than I expected and I think I should be paid a lot more - **working all those hours, no overtime, they don’t pay you over time...I guess you’re just supposed to be happy to have a job.** But I can’t say anything.
- Temp: **Sometimes, you just work through it, you work with it. And I guess that’s what I’ve done. I didn’t have time to stop and say: you know what; I’m being treated unfairly here.**

- SE: A friend of mine who is an immigrant had it bad. **He was a temp worker in pretty labour-oriented type jobs – not a great environment – always dirty and hazardous. Safety issues weren't met and of course the money was never close to what he expected. He had at least a year of those kinds of jobs.**
- Temp: **You get worse treatment being a temp employee than being a refugee. Before I was a landed immigrant, steady work was harder to find. But I didn't feel inferior; I was never mistreated in any way because of my status in Canada but, once I became landed, and I started working for temporary employment agencies, that's when I began to feel as I were being treated unfairly.** They call me a flexible worker and that's supposed to make me feel good.
- Nanny: **As a temp, whether you're landed or not, they don't respect you; you're just a number.** Like number 6.
- SE: I'm not a number. I'm a free man – at least free from having a boss. But my work *is* flexible. I like to say I'm my own boss. But to tell the truth, too often **according to the boss, you're there for a paycheck, so you just do your work and that's that...no benefit, nothing, no respect.**
- Nanny: But don't you work for lots of different people? Doesn't that mean you have lots of bosses?
- SE: Yeah, there *are* days when you could say that the new boss is pretty much the same as the old boss.
- Temp: And self-employed people don't get benefits. It's like my work, you get no long-term contracts or benefits. And with your home office you have to pay for stuff an employer normally would.
- SE: Okay, okay, you've got a point or two there. The “no benefits thing” does make things harder. And it is hard when you're self-employed to take a vacation – after all not working means not earning money. Maybe you could say that my work is more precarious than flexible.
- Nanny: I thought work was better here in Canada. But I can see that you have to take what you can get – especially if you're an immigrant. My friend has a background in IT and she told me **“I'm not going to find an IT job if I'm not landed.” So, she wouldn't go in search of one. And now she's accepted the situation for however long it takes for her to be landed and so she says that whatever comes her way, she'll just work with it for now.**
- Temp: I saw a lot of things when I worked for the union in my country. And I'm sad to see that even here in Canada you have jobs that don't pay you for the training time, or you have employers who insist on paying cash, and they pay for piece

work or hourly work depending on which is less. I feel like I'm on of those teeter-totters the kids are playing on – up and down, up and down – but going nowhere.

SE: Yeah, I know that even if you *do* work full-time at those jobs it doesn't mean you're out of trouble. Full-time isn't what it used to be.

Nanny: Assuming you can even *find* full-time work! A winning lottery ticket seems easier to get sometimes.

Temp: Looks like my kids are ready to head home.

SE: See you tomorrow then?

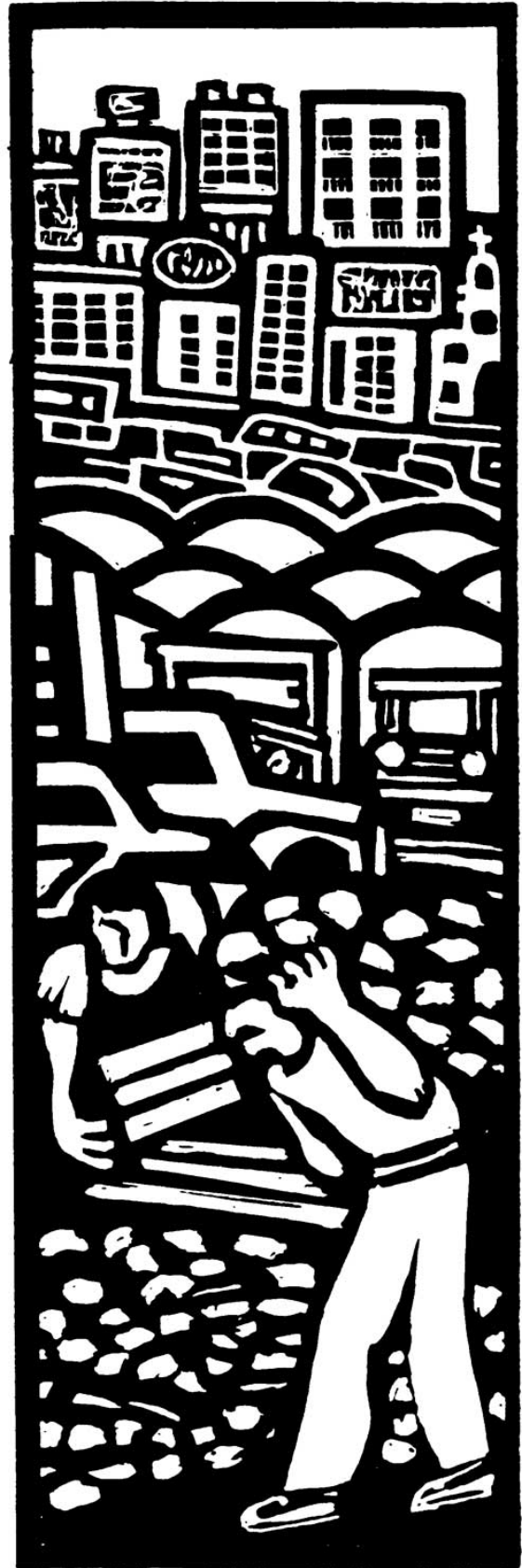
Temp: Your guess is as good as mine. I never know *when* I'm going to get work. I could get a job tomorrow and it could be weeks before I'm back here or I could be here every day for the next couple of weeks. I have almost no control over my schedule.

Nanny: Well, then, it's a *temporary* good-bye.

5.

Where Have All The Good Jobs Gone?

Precarious Work and
Strategies To Improve Work



“ I’m not going to find an IT job if I’m not landed. So, number one: I wouldn’t go in search of one. Number two: I accepted the fact that –OK, this is the situation for however long it takes for me to be landed, And, number three: whatever comes my way, I’ll just work with it for now”.

Precarious work is
MULTIDIMENSIONAL
(made up of numerous dimensions) as well as
SPECIFIC
to the life-circumstances of particular people (in this case a special focus was made on immigrants).



What exactly is precarious work? How do we determine if a job is precarious?

How do we measure precarious work?

How are people coping with precarious work?

How are people resisting precarious work?

What is decent work?

How can people work together to reduce precarious work and increase decent work?

PRECARIOUS WORK refers to arrangements that give employers flexibility but leave workers without stable and secure work. Precarious work conditions are defined by the absence of a number of elements---not only one. Precarious work means little or no job security (short or no contract), limited or no benefits and worker protections, and not having stable and predictable hours and income. It may also mean not having enough hours and having to piece together several jobs or short contracts, and it may mean working under the table and being paid cash. Although many precarious workers pay in to public benefits such as Employment Insurance through deductions, they may not qualify for EI and other benefits because they don't meet minimum employment requirements because of seasonal or part-time work. Precarious work may also mean 3-D work: jobs that are dirty, dangerous or difficult. Some precarious work pays well—it isn't defined by low wage levels. Precarious work arrangements are found in many jobs and sectors as arrangements become increasingly flexible for employers.

DECENT WORK involves opportunities for work that is productive and delivers a fair income, security in the workplace and social protection for families, better prospects for personal development and social integration, freedom for people to express their concerns, organize and participate in the decisions that affect their lives and equality of opportunity and treatment for all women and men.

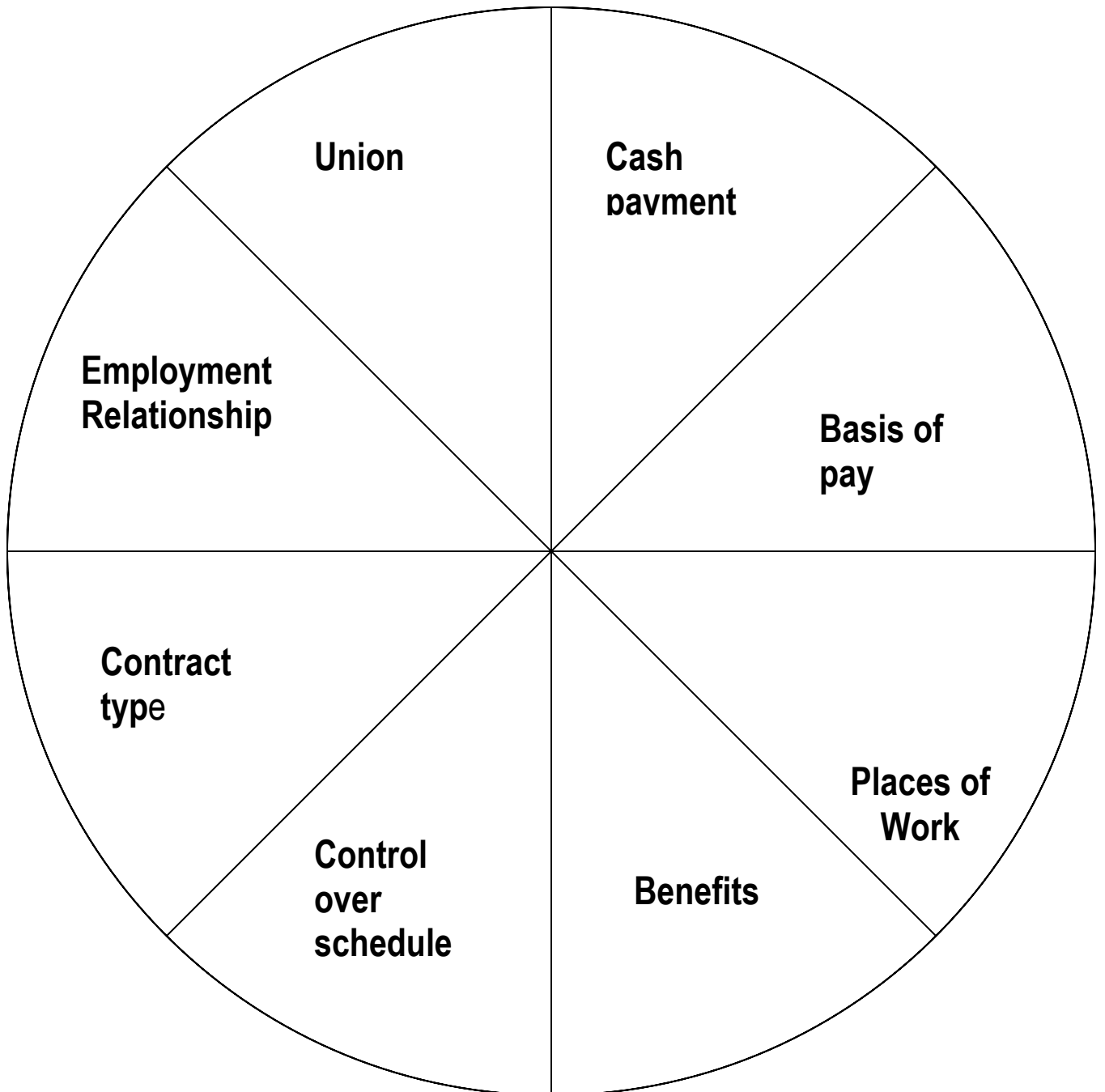
STRATEGIES refers to the way immigrants respond to precarious work both within the realm of work (for example, the search for stable employment, or the combination of multiple jobs to complete a living wage) and in terms of securing decent work.



8 key dimensions of precarious work

- 1. Contract type**
- 2. Unionization**
- 3. Terms of employment**
- 4. Control over one's schedule**
- 5. Basis of pay**
- 6. Cash payment**
- 7. Benefits**
- 8. Where you work**

PRECARIOUS WORK WHEEL



STRATEGIES

**What are people doing to get by,
to survive and cope
with precarious work?**

**What strategies have
people developed to resist
the negative consequences
of precarious work?**

**And what are people
doing to find decent
work?**

**What should people
be doing?**

The Immigrants and Precarious Employment Project found that immigrants face a number of problems at work and in settlement, that they try many things to deal with them, but not all of them work – and many of these will sound familiar

The research found that the problems people faced during their first year in Canada included:

325 reported a problem with an employer or co-worker

23% reported discrimination

19% reported a problem because of their immigration status

19% reported on accent/language problems

11% reported problems finding work

7.9% felt they had problems b/c no Canadian experience

7% experienced racism

When asked what they did to address these problems, the responses were:

18% switched jobs

12% attended language classes

12% networked or used their networks (for information, to improve)

7% legalized or worked to legalize their status

4% filed a formal complaint (against an employer or co-worker)

What does this have to do with dimensions and strategies?

6. PRECARIOUS WORK WHEEL

JOB TITLE OR TYPE:

The diagram is a circular wheel divided into eight equal segments by four intersecting lines (vertical, horizontal, and two diagonals). Each segment contains a label in its center. The segments are: Contract Type (top-left), Union (top-right), Employment Relationship (right), Control over schedule (bottom-right), Basis of Pay (bottom), Cash Payment (bottom-left), Benefits (left), and Places of Work (top-left). The wheel consists of an inner circle and an outer ring. The outer ring is divided into eight sections, each labeled 'SCORE:'. Below the wheel is a rectangular box with the text 'OVERALL SCORE:' followed by a smaller empty box for the score.

OVERALL SCORE:	
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7. TEETER TOTTER PARK TALK: A PLAY OF PRECARIOUSNESS

A POWER PLAY ABOUT PRECARIOUS WORK

ACT II

SCENE: The next day at the park

Nanny: I see you're taking care of your kids again today.

SE: Yeah, I decided to take a personal sick day. Unpaid, of course.

Nanny: But you have national health care, don't you?

SE: Sure, that covers most things. But it doesn't cover your salary for sick days. That would require additional benefits that only some jobs have. It's one of the things that self-employment doesn't really have.

Nanny: Look who else isn't working today.

SE: So, it looks like you didn't get called in to work this week.

Temp: That's right. I guess I *should* start buying lottery tickets more often. The odds are probably better than finding work.

SE: Well, the odds of winning are almost the same whether you buy a ticker or not.

Temp: So, how do we change the odds for getting good work?

Nanny: **A friend of mine goes to night school cause she's trying to move out of a cleaning factory situation. She works during the day and then in the evening she goes to night school to do accounting.**

Temp: When you come here, no matter what experience you have had, it seems like you have to go to school all over again. We need to do a better job about letting people know what's out there. When I first started, **friends hooked me up with jobs and I didn't really go looking. I took whatever I got, because I didn't have any other options really. I didn't know about these other places out there, help centers or whatever you call it.** I'm thinking about going to a resume workshop clinic-getting someone to help me put together my experience and background into a more sellable form.

- SE: It's crazy what we do around foreign credentials. Like that sad joke, if you need a doctor or a lawyer in Toronto, hail a cab. I know one guy who's doing survey work and he's a medical doctor from the Middle East. People say "get your degree" but more education doesn't automatically mean better decent jobs.
- Temp: It's more than just credentials. It's wages, job security, and health benefits. Unions have always been good for fighting about such things. I'm surprised that they're not stronger here in Canada.
- SE: Well, they're stronger here than most places, though I suppose that doesn't always mean much.
- Nanny: Are you in a union?
- SE: Well, I *have* been a member of a union. But I got laid off and that's when I figured out a way to work from home.
- Temp: Yeah, and I hear people talk about unions at some of the jobs I've done but I don't feel safe talking to them – even though I was a trade unionist back home and I know that the rules are different here than a lot of places; unions have legal protection and power to look out for workers.
- Nanny: The whole system should change. Look at me, I'm on a two-year work program and can't apply to become a permanent resident until my time is done. The people I live and work for are okay but if they ask me to work a 12 hour day, I can't really say "no". I have a friend who has to do this all the time. A lot of people want you to work the hard jobs but then they don't really want you to stay. I'm here to send money back and support my family. But whenever I talk about that I see that people resent this. And then I worry I won't last the two years.
- SE: It's not like it used to be, come here, work hard, and usually you could move up a bit. People haven't stopped working hard, they just stopped moving up.
- Temp: I work hard at *all* my jobs! I'd rather work hard at just one job. A job with some regular pay, some benefits, maybe even a collective agreement!
- Nanny: They talk about free trade, but you aren't free to go work where you want. The only thing free to move is stuff to sell, not the people to sell it ...
- Temp: ...or build it!
- SE: And then when you *can* move for work, families end up spread out all over chasing jobs.
- Nanny: You're telling me. And if I try to earn a little extra on the side, it can be really dangerous. Not that I have the time.

Temp: And you can't even get the jobs you are qualified to do.

Nanny: What do you think about resume workshops? I went to one at an agency in my neighbourhood to see what I could learn. And it seemed useful, even though I can't really use it until after I apply to immigrate.

Temp: I've heard of resume workshops but the only thing I've had time to do these past few years is learn English better. I suppose I should think about those workshops now.

SE: But I wonder if those workshops really change things. I can see that they would help someone like us. But there always seems to be more and more temporary work and underpaid work and more and more "work-from-home" arrangements...

Nanny: Hey, I thought you said you liked that!

SE: Well, you two have me thinking more about the lack of benefits and I'm beginning to see that yes there *are* advantages to not using your home for work.

Temp: With the tens of thousands of jobs lost recently I wonder how many more people will be forced to do things like work from home or do the temp work like me.

Nanny: I have a friend who says that volunteering at her community centre has been really helpful. She's seen a lot more people come in recently and she likes helping out. She even gets to take the workshops they give sometimes for free. She took this one workshop last week on precarious work – sounded really good. And she's made some good connections that have even got her some small jobs.

SE: That reminds me of a guy I worked with a while ago. He was from Peru and as soon as he got here, he volunteered for this non-profit. He helped them update their mailing and phone lists and made calls to dozens of agencies for a few months. He was also studying English. And after six months he got a job at one of the agencies. I was pretty impressed. Part of it was he was at the right place at the right time.

Temp: I'd *love* to do something like that. But I have to get paid work almost every day if I can. **I found that in Canada employers demand Canadian experience, not in theory, but for real; they ask you when, where and for how long you have worked. That was when I learned about volunteer work.** But how do you find the time to volunteer?

SE: Yeah, I know it's hard. But even a half a day a week can be a good investment in networking. What about connecting with one of the unions doing research on this? I know that OPSEU and CUPE have both talked about precarious work. And I bet that there's some international stuff on this as well.

Temp: I suppose it would be a good idea to learn more. But my English reading isn't so strong.

Nanny: I can help sometimes. And, you never know, sometimes they have things in multiple languages.

SE: I realize I have to learn a lot more myself. I wonder what's going on at this community centre right here? Workshop anyone?

8. WHAT'S HAPPENING CHART:

WHAT'S NEEDED TO REDUCE OR ELIMINATE PRECARIOUS WORK?

	CURRENT WORK / JOB	DECENT WORK	EDUCATION / TRAINING	NECESSITIES (of life, e.g. food, shelter, etc.)	OTHER
INDIVIDUAL					
AGENCIES					
COMMUNITY					
GOVERNMENT					

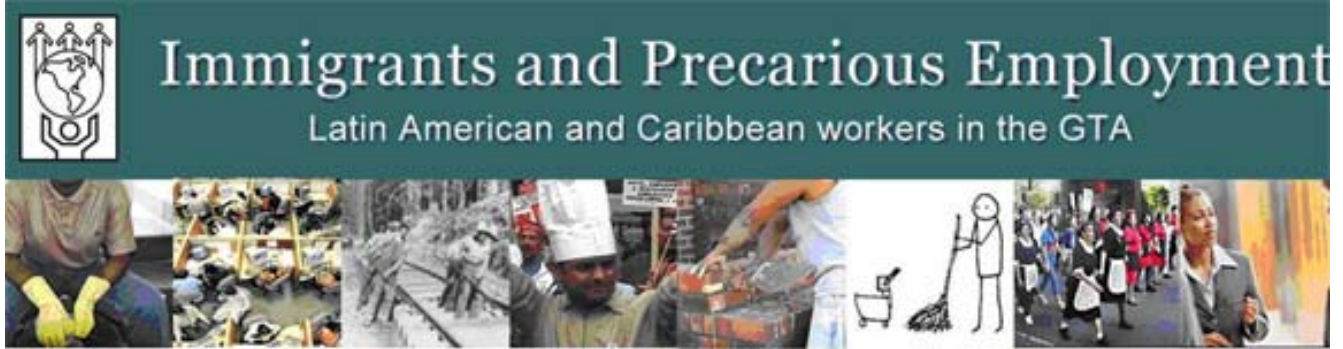
4. Jobology Forms

PRE-MIGRATION

WHO: _____

POST-MIGRATION

WHO: _____



The New Economy Has Changed the Nature of Work

The New Economy is transforming labour markets and work experiences. The New Economy focuses on information technologies and the service sector, with a decline in manufacturing jobs. There is a growth in high- and low-wage occupations in the service sector, and significant loss in middle-income jobs.

The Standard Employment Relationship has been eroded

The organization and regulation of work has changed in the New Economy. Employment has become more precarious. There has been erosion in the terms of employment, stability, and schedule predictability that organize work. There are also fewer opportunities for advancement as labour markets become increasingly segmented.

- Between 2001 and 2002, part-time employment in Canada rose three times the annual growth recorded for full-time employment, yet, hourly pay for part-time work grew at only half the rate of full-time work.
- The number of temporary agencies offering part-time, low-wage work has increased from 1300 nation-wide in the early 1990s, to 4200 in 2004.
- Between 1982 and 2001, the number of immigrants who are poor in Toronto grew by 125%, in spite of higher levels of education.

Immigrant Workers Face Distinct Challenges

Recent immigrants to Canada encounter a very different landscape compared to that found by

immigrants who came to Canada during the industrial boom of the post-World War II era. That immigrant cohort experienced economic mobility, at least over time, with education and language as key determinants of their employment experiences. Education and time in Canada no longer guarantee employment stability for immigrants.

A growing segment of the new immigrant workforce enters the labour force with less than full status—as visa overstayers, refugee claimants and permanent residents with sponsorship. These kinds of status produce distinct forms of vulnerability and precariousness at work.

Factors such as the lack of information to navigate the system, the absence of social networks, and the pressure to generate financial resources to support families in Canada and at home, push workers to accept low pay work with no benefits, cash payment with no recourse if employers refuse to pay for work done; and to work multiple part time jobs to achieve income security.

The Project

The **Immigrants and Precarious Employment Project** examines the opportunities and challenges faced by immigrants in the new, knowledge-based economy. We interviewed 300 workers from Latin American and the Caribbean who arrived in the GTA between 1990 and 2004. In our research, we asked:

- How are newcomers affected by broader trends towards precarious employment?
- What strategies do they implement on the job and as families in order to meet these challenges?

- What patterns of contact (or lack of contact) with social institutions and community organizations mediate immigrants' early settlement process?

Public Outreach and Education

Our Public Outreach Project is designed to draw on the research project findings to generate and distribute knowledge of immigrant employment trajectories and early settlement strategies beyond academia. Our two main products will be:

- A policy report based on our findings
- A popular education manual on immigrants and precarious work for frontline workers at immigrant service agencies¹.

Community Working Group Partners

- Access Alliance Multicultural Health Centre
- Black Creek Community Health Centre
- Centre for Spanish Speaking Peoples
- Community Social Planning Council Toronto
- Conflict Mediation Services Downsview
- Davenport Perth
- Doorsteps Neighborhood Services
- FCJ Refugee Centre
- Mennonite New Life Centre
- St. Christopher House

Policy Working Group

- Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives
- City of Toronto
- OCASI
- Ryerson University
- University of Toronto
- Workers Action Centre

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