On Waiting: A Political Economy of Affect in Restaurant Service

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April 2012

A dissertation submitted to McGill University in partial
fulfilment of the requirements of the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Department of Art History and Communications Studies
Communication Studies Program

Acknowledgements

Abstract

This research project attends to the social and political relations surrounding casual restaurant servers' production of "good service." Service standards have become so normalized as to be largely invisible in day-to-day life, yet their performance reproduces and reinforces sexualized gender roles and social differences. Restaurant service is consumed as part of the "experience economy," such that the interactions with service workers become a constituent part of the service commodity, making servers' intersubjective work directly productive for capital in a way that requires novel disciplinary and compensatory regimes, effectively entrepreneurializing service workers to motivate the good service that restaurants promise their customers.

Good service depends on a series of illusions that enable customers to enjoy the subjective role of the sovereign consumer by engaging in the fetish of good service, where there is some understanding that the service relationship is normalized and habitual work for the server, but both parties pretend that it is autonomous, sincere and organic, a fetish I term the "illusion of spontaneity." Maintaining this illusion requires selectively eliding some features of restaurant work, in what I term the "eclipsed exertion," while other kinds of labour are showcased; for instance, the productive work of food production and cleaning is mostly performed in hidden kitchens, while servers' (often highly sexualized) bodies circulating on the restaurant floor are staged for their seated customers. The division between kitchen and dining room mimics the broader process of offshoring materially productive labour in the post-Fordist economy, but it does so within the space of the restaurant itself; the restaurant can in a sense be thought of as a microcosm of the processes of contemporary global capitalism. The structure of labour processes in restaurants thus directs attention to how theoretical accounts of affective and immaterial labour might be expanded to include the manual labour that makes this kind of work possible, as well as to the work and citizenship conditions extended to the repetitive manual workers in service's backstages.

Eclipsed exertion also refers to the hidden work of servers, though, both the tasks (such as cleaning and restocking) that servers regularly do but that are not as prominently displayed as service rituals, and those parts of service, like the emotional modulation of presenting the mandated cheerful demeanor that are not cast as "work" per se in the service exchange, instead resting on a parasitical adoption of social habits of mutuality and reciprocity. Such occlusions, of service labour's status as *labour*, also interfere with considerations of service's status as skilled or meaningful work, since many of the traits of service, such as deference and care, are cast as "natural" aptitudes innate to the women who mostly do this work. Public recognition of affective labour's status as labour is crucial, particularly in restaurants where customers' proximity to workers appears to give them privileged access to workers' labour processes, and where customers play a central role in their disciplinization and compensation by tipping.

The notion of good service provides a constructive access point to the intersection of emotional labour with other economic and social habits, norms and institutions because it illustrates how either self-motivated or imposed gestures of goodwill and courtesy are underscored by economic incentives, power relations and social norms. In short, it enables the study of how interpersonal communication between individuals are organized as commodities, providing a platform for thinking about service relationships politically, as well as addressing how capitalism adapts to incite the increased subjective labour needed as the services come to make up an ever greater part of the economy.

Abrégé

Ce projet de recherche étudie les relations politiques et sociales qui encadrent la production d'un « service de qualité » par des serveurs de restaurants de catégorie moyenne. De nos jours, les standards de service ont été normalisés au point de passer largement inaperçus. Cependant, la prestation de ces services sert la reproduction et l'intensification de rôles de genre sexualisés et de différences sociales. Le service au restaurant est consommé dans le cadre d'une « économie de l'expérience », de sorte que les interactions avec le personnel de service font partie intégrante du service marchand. Il en résulte que le travail intersubjectif des serveurs devient directement productif pour le capital et requiert des régimes compensatoires et disciplinaires nouveaux qui transforment le personnel de service en entrepreneurs motivés à offrir le service de qualité que les restaurants vendent à leur clientèle.

Ce service de qualité est tributaire d'un ensemble d'illusions qui permettent au consommateur de jouir du rôle subjectif de consommateur souverain en se livrant au fétiche du service de qualité. Même s'il est entendu que la relation de service est ici normalisée et relève d'un travail pour le serveur, les deux parties font comme si elle était autonome, sincère et organique, phénomène que nous nommons « illusion de la spontanéité ». Le maintien de cette illusion demande qu'on élude certains aspects du travail en restaurant au profit de certains autres, procédé que nous appelons « occultation de l'effort ». Ainsi, les travaux productifs de ménage et de production des aliments sont en grande partie effectués à l'abri des regards dans les cuisines, tandis que les corps des serveurs (souvent fortement sexualisés) circulent dans la salle comme sur une scène destinée aux clients. La division entre la cuisine et la salle de service reproduit, dans le cadre spatial du restaurant, le processus plus large de délocalisation du travail productif matériel qui caractérise l'économie postfordiste; il est ainsi possible de concevoir le restaurant comme un microcosme des processus du capitalisme global contemporain. La structure des processus de travail en jeu dans la restauration permet ainsi de voir de quelle manière les descriptions théoriques sur le travail affectif et immatériel pourraient

être enrichies et inclure le travail manuel qui en est la condition de possibilité, attirant l'attention, du même coup, sur les conditions de travail et de citoyenneté consenties à ceux qui effectuent les tâches manuelles et répétitives dans les coulisses du service.

Le concept d'occultation de l'effort renvoie aussi au travail caché des serveurs, qu'il s'agisse de tâches (comme le ménage ou le réassortiment) effectuées sur une base régulière sans avoir pour autant la même visibilité que les rituels de service, ou de ces éléments (comme la modulation émotionnelle qu'implique une aménité de rigueur) qui ne sont pas considérés comme du travail en tant que tel dans l'échange de service mais plutôt comme le résultat de l'adoption parasitaire d'une habitude de réciprocité. Ces formes d'occultations du travail propre aux services sont aussi liées à des considérations sur le statut du service comme travail qualifié et significatif, dans la mesure où bon nombre des caractéristiques du service, telles que la déférence et la sollicitude, sont présentées comme des aptitudes « naturelles » innées aux femmes qui, la plupart du temps, exercent ces emplois. La reconnaissance publique du travail affectif comme travail proprement dit est essentielle, particulièrement dans les restaurants où la proximité des clients avec le personnel leur donne un accès privilégié aux processus de travail de ces derniers et où les clients, par la pratique du pourboire, jouent un rôle central dans leur disciplinarisation et leur compensation.

La notion de service de qualité fournit un point d'accès intéressant sur la rencontre du travail émotionnel avec d'autres pratiques, normes et institutions économiques et sociales. Elle permet ainsi d'illustrer la façon par laquelle des attitudes d'affabilité et de politesse, auto-induites ou imposées, sont renforcées par des incitatifs économiques, des relations de pouvoir et des normes sociales. En résumé, cette notion permet de comprendre comment la communication interpersonnelle entre des individus peut prend la forme d'une marchandise et constitue par conséquent une base pour saisir les relations de service de manière politique. Enfin, elle permet d'appréhender la manière par laquelle le capitalisme s'adapte pour encourager un travail subjectif de plus en plus en demande à mesure que le secteur des services devient plus important dans l'économie.

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Introduction

> That you may, for a relatively small outlay of cash, walk freely into a dining room not your own and be greeted by an affable, clean, and well-dressed person who will smilingly show you to your table, offer you a drink, take diligent note of what you would like to eat, and then go and fetch it for you, all while pretending to be your friend—that is a remarkable freedom and a rich pleasure, unique in this vale of tears.[1]
> – John Banville

For many years now, restaurants have been a casual part of urban life, so quotidian as to seem banal and inevitable. John Banville's words remind us just how special restaurant service is, and how delightful it is to be its subject. As the servicescape of contemporary western society proliferates, seemingly without limit, our encounters with strangers in public increasingly take place as part of service exchanges. These exchanges, wherein communication is sold as a commodity alongside the service itself, stitch together the fabric of everyday life, quietly influencing how we view others and ourselves. However, all too often we often consume service unreflexively.

The restaurant server (more commonly known as a waiter or waitress)[2] is the face of an establishment for the tables he or she serves. As labour historian Dorothy Cobble notes, "Waitressing as an occupational category is bound by the thinnest of common threads: all waitresses serve food. Beyond this commonality one encounters diversity in the nature and duties of the occupation; the environs in which the work is performed; the wages, hours, and working conditions; and the

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[1] John Banville, "Dining with the Tiger: Ireland's Restaurant Bubble," *Harper's* 323(1934) New York: 2011, 83-4.

[2] Throughout this study, I use "server" as a gender-neutral category of restaurant workers engaged in serving tables, while the more commonly used "waiter" and "waitress" are reserved when I am speaking specifically about male or female servers. Anthony Bourdain prefers the gender-neutral "waitron." In Anthony Bourdain, *Kitchen Confidential: Adventures in the Culinary Underbelly* (New York: Bloomsbury, 2000).

attitudes toward the occupation by the public and the waitress herself."[3] Work

waiting tables is emblematic of many characteristics of the service industry: it is

highly interactive, labour-intensive, requires affective labour and hinges on a

compensation system that combines traditional wage-based income and direct

payment by customers. This dissertation addresses the work of North American

casual dining servers, in restaurants featuring sit-down table service without the

austere formality of fine dining or the programmatic rationalization of fast food

service.[4] While standards of acceptable or hospitable service vary greatly even

within North America, this account aims to explore the fundamental relations

underlying service provision in restaurants, which I argue can be read as

microcosms of the general working of globalized capitalism.

 The affective exchanges of service become a key regime that organizes

contemporary interpersonal communication, making everyday service encounters

and how they are materially and symbolically fashioned by commercial institutions

a matter of central importance to Communications scholars. Giving serious attention

to the material practices that nuance these interactions helps us to better

understand how their very familiarity renders them obscure. Because service

encounters are cast in the form of a commercial exchange, both service workers and

their customers engage in relations circumscribed by their perceived interests, such

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[3] Dorothy Sue Cobble, *Dishing It Out: Waitresses and their Unions in the Twentieth Century* (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1991),15.
[4] For brevity, this style of restaurant will henceforth be referred to as "casual dining," which is consistent with industry terminology, although other terms to describe this genre of service include "fast casual" definition (Walker, *The Restaurant*, 29-30); casual restaurant (Crang, "It's Showtime," 307); and the "ambiguous middle" (Mars & Nicod, *World of Waiters*, 38); and "midspace" (Lynn & Entrepreneur, 34). My goal is to describe the genre of service as broadly as possible to focus on the relations that full-service restaurants rely upon.

that workers are sometimes exploited and customers instrumentalized in the course of their interactions. As Susan Willis has argued, "one of the features of our society is that we tend to live production and consumption as completely different activities"[5]; in the service encounter, where aspects of the two are dramatically merged in time and space, we might better understand what we consume by looking at how it is produced, in the labour of interactive service workers. Attention to the specificity how service is structured enables us to explore what kinds of relations, strategies and practices we might engage in to have more gratifying relationships with the others we serve and who serve us.

The last century has evinced a veritable explosion in personal services. Harry Braverman attributes this to a number of factors, including a drastic attenuation in the numbers of in-house "servant" staff, longer working hours for professionals, capitalism's fulfillment of its appropriation of commodity production and ensuing conquest of services, and the dislocation of greater numbers of women from households into the realm of paid labour, which both expands the available labour pool and fosters greater demand for commercial answers to the cleaning, cooking and care-based services that these women had previously provided at home.[6] The services constitute the fastest growing employment sector in North America and Europe,[7] yet the vast majority of the literature on labour and political economy still

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[5] Susan Willis, *A Primer for Everyday Life* (London: Routledge, 1991), 54.
[6] Harry Braverman, *Labor and Monopoly Capital,* (New York & London: Monthly Review Press, 1974), 359. Specifically, it is the capitalization of a lot of the work that *women*, specifically, used to do at home for free.
[7] Robert Reich, *The Work of Nations: Preparing Ourselves for 21st Century Capitalism* (New York: Vintage Books, 1992); Roland Rust, "What is the Domain of Service Research?" *Journal of Service Research* 1 (2) (November 1998), 107; Cameron Lynne Macdonald and Carmen Sirianni, "The Service

attend primarily to materially productive labour and to the intellectual and creative

ministrations of professional (or "intellectual") work.[8] The definition of the tertiary

or service sector depends on the distinction between materially-based agricultural

and manufacturing labour and all that is not.[9] John Allen and Paul du Gay argue that

service work should not be considered as merely an adjunct or complement to

manufacturing labour, but as a field with its own qualities that should be thought of

as a series of cultural relations with economic repercussions:

> service work necessarily involves the production of meaning. As part of
> what is consumed by the customer of a service is the social interaction,
> service work necessarily involves the production of distinct meanings. In
> other words, a profitable service relation is one in which distinct meanings
> are produced for the customer… Which is to say that what is properly
> 'economic' and what is properly 'cultural' about service work are
> inseparable, notably because the very act of servicing is both 'cultural' and
> 'economic' at one and the same time.[10]

While I agree with their insistence on the distinction from manufacturing work, for

the purposes of the present study, however, I would constrict this definition slightly,

by replacing their term "cultural" with "communicative" instead. This shift enables

us to separate the interactive communicative labour of the service worker from the

cultural, informational or emotional values produced in other fields of immaterial

labour such as marketing, promotions, engineering and so on, while still putting this

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Society and the Changing Experience of Work," in *Working in the Service Society* eds. Cameron Lynne Macdonald and Carmen Sirianni (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1996), 1.

[8] Holly J. McCammon and Larry J. Griffin, "Workers and their Customers and Clients: An Editorial Introduction," *Work and Occupations* 27:3 (2000); Joel I. Nelson, "Work and Benefits: The Multiple Problems of Service Sector Employment," *Social Problems* 41:1 (1994).

[9] John Allen and Paul Du Gay, "Industry and the Rest: The Economic Identity of Services," *Work, Employment and Society*, 8, 2 (1994), 258; David Carlone, "The Contradictions of Communicative Labor in Service Work," *Communication and Critical/Cultural Studies* 5 (2) (2008), 158; Jonathan Gershuny and Ian Miles, *The New Service Economy: The Transformation of Employment in Industrial Societies* (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1983), 11; Greta Foff Paules, *Dishing it Out: Power and Resistance among Waitresses in a New Jersey Restaurant* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1991), 17.

[10] Allen and Du Gay, "Industry and the Rest," 266. See also, Carlone, "Contradictions of Communicative Labor."

work in conversation with literature addressing this kind of work through the shared theoretical space of the production of meaning in commodity form.[11]

Most of the gestures that make up this expanding economy of service—preparing and serving food; cleaning; caring for children, the sick or the elderly; providing advice, attention or affection to those who cannot find it elsewhere—are not in fact new. Many have for millennia been performed for free as the responsibilities of slaves, household staffs and housewives and other family or community members.[12] As Braverman notes, it is only when workers are hired to perform them in order to secure a profit that these newly financially productive services are enfolded into the market of monopoly capitalism.[13] Thus, this efflorescence of new services in the market does not indicate new needs, even when they feature new products; rather, it indexes a broader appropriation of free actions into a capitalist scheme of profit. The study of service should include attention to the appropriation by capitalism of, as Braverman puts it, "the activity of humankind including what had heretofore been the many things that people did for themselves or for each other,"[14] but it must also extend to the social relations engendered by the new regimes of economic distribution and remuneration in service-oriented enterprise.

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[11] See Maurizio Lazzarato, "Immaterial Labor," in Paul Virno and Michael Hardt (Eds.) *Radical Thought in Italy: A Potential Politics* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press), 1996, 133-147. This distinction is also why I opt, in this study, to describe servers' subjective work in terms of emotional labour or affective labour, rather than using Ronald Greene's (2004) concept of communicative labour, which, while excellent in its inclusion of organizations' marketing discourses and rhetoric, attends to this rhetorical force rather than the more emotional performances of individual workers that are the focus of my account here. See Ronald Walter Greene, "Rhetoric and Capitalism: Rhetorical Agency as Communicative Labor," *Philosophy and Rhetoric* 37:3 (2004).

[12] MacDonald and Sirianni, "The Service Society," 2.

[13] Braverman, Labor and Monopoly Capital, 362-3.

[14] Ibid. See also Carl Gershuny and William R. Rosengren, *The Service Society* (Cambridge: Schenkman Publishing Company, 1973).

One implication of Braverman's statement is not only that capitalism is encroaching on the community and familial obligations of care, but also that much of what is now considered to be "communication" falls economically into the category of "service."[15] However, the implications of this transition have largely remained unexplored within communications research. By attending to how communication acts like a commodity and in what specific ways, we gain greater access into the nature of contemporary communication between strangers within economic interactions, including any unseen or taken for granted restrictions or incentives that come into play, the kinds of subjectivity these practices breed in service workers and their consumers, and how the spread of service relationships might impact individuals' other interactions in the public sphere. Once they are made a part of capital, the gestures of service produce value, and surplus value can be extracted from the labour of their production. The notion of "good service" provides a fertile access point to the intersection of service with other economic and social habits, institutions and forms, because it enables us to investigate how either self-motivated or imposed gestures of courtesy are underscored by economic incentives, power relations and social expectations. In short, it is the study of how interpersonal communication between individuals is structured like a commodity, and the kinds of relations and behaviours that this configuration produces.

Communication Studies is interested in institutions that fall into the tertiary service sector, yet the field seldom addresses interpersonal communication in these terms. The restaurant server provides a productive site for studying interpersonal

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[15] See for example Dallas Smythe, "Communications: Blindspot of Western Marxism," *Canadian Journal of Political and Society Theory* 1:3 (1977): 1-28 about selling communications as a commodity.

communication as service, because the communication is unmediated and immediate, yet still implicated in a variety of institutional structures. Furthermore, restaurant service is familiar and quotidian to many, although it also has the potential to be a special event. This gives restaurant service both a familiarity that makes it an ideal site for questioning how interpersonal relations are commodified as service, while also making it crucial to investigate how these systems work, for this very immediacy and normalizedness gives its broader structures the opacity that accompanies such familiarity, making it seem inevitable rather than historically determined and reproduced. As progressively more of the economy is about communication as value, it becomes imperative to create ways of thinking through how interpersonal communication is affected by its imbrication into capital in order to provide a platform from which to think about communication politically.

This is not to say that other Communications scholars aren't thinking about these issues, if in different terms. For instance, Melissa Gregg notes how in contemporary white collar workplaces, there are "copious ways the contemporary worker relies on *simulations* of affect to maintain the bonds of capitalist enterprise," as "fake" social attachments increasingly replace more authentic ones.[16] She is referring specifically to the onlining of affective coworker relations, as emailed emoticons and Facebook commentary replace the kinds of bonds that characterized workplaces before they were computerized and interactions between coworkers become increasingly mediated by screens. A similar bond seems to hold in the affective relationships of service encounters, where the casual affective bonds of

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[16] Melissa Gregg, "On Friday Nights: Workplace Affects in the Age of the Cubicle." In Melissa Gregg and Gregory J. Seigworth (eds.) *The Affect Theory Reader* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2010), 253.

community are sold as part of a service rather than exchanged freely and autonomously. Brought out of the office and into the broader space of the city, Gregg's analysis calls to mind Todd Gitlin's reading of Georg Simmel's metropolis. In his influential essay "The Metropolis and Mental Life," Simmel argued that the stimulation of metropolitan life leads urbanites to develop a mental carapace, what he calls a blasé attitude, which enables them to block out the overwhelming panoply of sights and sounds in the city. Simmel's city dwellers are a calculative lot, with eyes forever open to opportunity.[17] Gitlin, however, posits that there is a gap in Simmel's blasé attitude, finding that people experience ephemeral affective or sensual engagements constantly as they circulate through the city, that commodities and media provide tiny distractions that are needed in order for subjects to feel and relate.[18] It is, he argues, the very rationality of city life that forces urbanites to seek out these moments of sensation and affect as compensation for the mental drudgery of constant calculation. Importantly though, for Gitlin, they "experience, and crave, particular kinds of feelings—disposable ones."[19] These are precisely the kinds of feelings that service provides: a sudden, instantaneous relationship that lasts for the duration of a meal, and Gitlin and Gregg's model provides a means of thinking about the consumption of emotions as communication that takes place outside of, for example, mass media institutions.

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[17] Simmel, "The Metropolis and Mental Life." In Richard Sennett (ed.) *Classic Essays on the Culture of Cities* (New York: Appleton-Century-Croft, 1969).

[18] Todd Gitlin, Media Unlimited: How the Torrent of Images and Sounds Overwhelms our Lives (New York: Metropolitan Books, 2001), 34.

[19] Ibid., 41.

As Rachel Sherman notes, in her study of service in luxury hotels, there are new forms of inequality in service that go beyond exploitation and need to be explored.[20] Where social relations and communication are part and parcel of the commodity on offer, scholars need to look beyond traditional Marxist accounts of labour exploitation in order to consider what is at stake in the transition toward the service economy and how worker subjectivity is implicated in this shift. For Sherman, the co-presence of service consumer and producer makes relations such as the commodity fetish impossible, since the social relation of inequality between producer and consumer is obvious—and, indeed, is an integral part of the commodity experience of luxury—instead, she finds that service relations work to normalize inequality rather than obscure them.[21] She argues, after Amy Hanser, that service interactions where deference is a constitutive feature involves "doing" or performing social difference as an integral part of the service itself.[22] Similarly, and related, numerous feminist accounts of service hold that "good service" entails a performance of gender, which in itself often entails displays of deference, care and often flirtation.[23] This makes the waitress a useful figure of study, demonstrating

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[20] Rachel Sherman, *Class Acts: Service and Inequality in Luxury Hotels* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2007), 259.
[21] Ibid.
[22] Ibid.; Amy Hanser, (2007) "Is the Customer Always Right? Class, Service and the Production of Distinction in Chinese Department Stores." *Theory and Society* 36:5, 415-35; Amy Hanser, *Service Encounters: Class, Gender, and the Market for Social Distinction in Urban China* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2008).
[23] Lorraine Bayard de Volo, "Service and Surveillance: Infrapolitics at Work Among Casino Cocktail Waitresses," *Social Politics* 10:3 (2003); Elaine Hall, "Smiling, Deferring and Flirting: Doing Gender by Giving 'Good Service,'" *Work and Occupations* 20:4 (1993); Elaine Hall, "Waitering/Waitressing: Engendering the Work of Table Servers," *Gender and Society* 7:3 (1993); Eleanor LaPointe, "Relationships with Waitresses: Gendered Social Distance in Restaurant Hierarchies," *Qualitative Sociology* 15:4 (1992).

how the gendering of professions in the service economy allows the work of "good service" to blur into care work and even to some degree sex work.[24]

Linked to this is service labour's implication in an "economy of experience," in which the "experience" that is sold depends heavily on interaction with service workers, whose personalities and ability to create rapport determines the quality of the "product" for sale.[25] Where the affective quality of the relationship produced in the service encounter is primary to the commodity on offer, the commoditized service relationship, then workers' subjectivities, personalities and intellects are implicated differently than in more manufactory labours. The significance of this shift is that it means that service not only establishes a subjective position for workers to occupy within the service relationship, but also its *consumers*; because service is constituted in a relationship, both consumers and producers alike adopt specific subjective positions in their participation in the highly normalized and habitual routines of giving and receiving service.

Doing interactive service work requires a considerable subjective investment by workers, who must harness their social skills, emotional aptitudes and ability to "read" a situation or client in order to deduce the most optimal way to interact with him or her in order to give good service, as not every customer has precisely the same expectations or desires of service relationships. There is a considerable

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[24] Karla Erickson, "Bodies at Work: Performing Service in American Restaurants," *space & culture* 7:1 (2003), 85.

[25] Joseph Pine and James Gilmore, The Experience Economy: Work is Theatre and Every Business a Stage (Boston: Harvard Business School Press, 1999), 117; Bernd Schmitt, Customer Experience Management: A Revolutionary Approach to Connecting with your Customers (Hoboken: Wiley, 2003), 18, 219. Schmitt goes so far as to argue that employees should be considered as "internal customers" within the experience economy, and employers, thus, must provide the right "employee experience" in order to ensure the right customer experience (41). The notion of an experience economy is derived from labour management manuals such as the above, and has been enormously popular and influential in business schools.

literature on the kinds of subjective, emotional, affective, communicative and cognitive work performed by workers in the production of good service. These kinds of labour bear different orientations toward the organizations that employ restaurant servers, as capital stages new arrangements, pay scales, disciplinary apparatuses and motivational structures to secure workers' consent and complicity in the production of good service. These are not performed in exactly the same way across or, indeed, even within any given service industry or organization, but similar forces are at work throughout the services where customer experience is primary and there is a substantial degree of interaction with workers—in tourism, care work, and retail, to name just a few.

However, as Ivan Illich gently reminds in *Shadow Work*, "those who since the eighteenth century write about work, its value, dignity, pleasures, always write about the work that others do."[26] His statement points to a contradiction at the heart of existing accounts of emotional, affective and immaterial labor in the service industries, particularly those in the experience economy, where customers' perception of the service they receive is primary. Scholarly treatments of interactive service workers frequently cite the visibility of these labors to their consumers, given that the customer is physically proximate during some parts of the production process. However, this excludes consideration of the many facets of this kind of work that customers do not see, such as behind-the-scenes on-site productive labor, as in the hidden kitchens of restaurants, or techniques of emotional management deployed by interactive service workers in their engagements with customers.

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[26] Ivan Illich, *Shadow Work* (Boston and London: Marion Boyers, 1981), 105.

Literature on the interactive services is produced and read by academics, who, while they do engage in the intellectual, creative and emotional exertions of a form of immaterial labor, are for the most part strictly consumers in the sphere of interactive service work. Paradoxically, while I find that they do well in theorizing the productive and affective work engaged by service workers to produce good service, they are often less eloquent on its consumption.

While the structure of workers' labor processes is set by service organizations and their management, much of the day-to-day experience of service work is shaped by interactions with customers, who also play a direct role in workers' supervision and, in many cases, remuneration, for example with tips, commissions and sales bonuses. While academic accounts of service work do well at critiquing how capital gives form to service employment milieus—certainly a valid enterprise, as it is certainly capital which determines the *structure* of interactive service relationships—critical literature needs to rethink how we, as scholars and consumers, operate within it. I argue that this begins with adapting a critical theory about the *customers* of immaterial or affective labor in order to build a theoretical platform for a politics of service consumption. Specifically, this needs to begin with an account of consumer subjectivity as it is constructed in the spaces of service exchanges, as well as a recognition of the differences between interactive service work and other kinds of immaterial labors.

Structure and Methodology

Restaurant work, specifically, provides a rich site for inquiry because it is implicated in an experience economy, like tourism, but it is more habitual and casual

than most travel; it integrates feminized interpersonal relations that have a great deal to do with care work, yet these are grounded in a particular social construction rather than the provision of bodily care; and it is like retail in that workers have a stake in selling customers things, yet this relationship is more sociable and ostensibly less grounded in social bonds than the shorter interactions of much of retail work, where there are few illusions for either party that the relationship is about anything other than making more or less informed commodity purchases. Urry argues that, "the longer the delivery takes, the more intimate the service, and the greater the importance of 'quality' for the consumer."[27] In restaurant service, encounters between service workers and their customers are of considerable length, composed of a series of interactions over the course of the meal, making the social relations that circumscribe restaurants integral to their consumption. If duration itself requires greater intimacy, this too breeds the need for more affective labour and consumption in order for it to "work." Thus, seemingly authentic social relationships with servers becomes more important with duration. This aspect of service quality highlights what makes the restaurant service worker exemplary. Where workers and their skills are fused, then evaluation of service quality bleed into considerations of the person performing it as being his or herself likeable, so that aspects well beyond the adequate provision of service are assessed in the space of the service encounter.

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[27] Urry, *Tourist Gaze*, 69.

I have a considerable amount of waitressing experience, in several regimes of service.[28] I do not directly address my own experiences over the course of this study—these jobs were taken on for money, not research, and I neither took notes nor considered the work I did ethnographically at the time—but they necessarily inform my reading of restaurants, influencing which elements I have brought out over the course of my analysis and giving insight into the rhythms and textures of restaurant work. Furthermore, I did not personally conduct formal interviews with other servers, although as an interested observer I did pay careful attention to the goings-on of restaurant business while patronixing dining establishments.

My reasons for so doing are twofold: firstly, the existing literature is saturated with ethnographies and first-person accounts, and there is a considerable body of work that includes extensive interviews with working waitresses, which I draw from considerably in my own account. Such treatments do well to ground the

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[28] I held serving jobs at seven establishments over an approximately nine year period. At The Cottage, a large family restaurant with a section that doubled as a nightclub and bar at night in Huntsville, ON, I worked variously as a busser, server, hostess, service bartender, bar runner, cocktail waitress, and cover charge girl over a three year period. The establishment was privately owned, employing over 100 staff including service workers, cooks, bouncers and bartenders. As many as forty people would be working at the same time during a single shift. I worked a year as a cocktail waitress and shooter girl at Loose Change Louie's, in Waterloo, ON, a 1000-head nightclub targeting mostly undergraduates from the city's large university population. My next engagement was much later, after finishing my B.A., working in a combined bistro, retail and catering outfit staffed entirely by women, The Butcher's Daughters. I prepared and served light lunches, assisted retail customers cutting deli and post-slaughter butchery, cooked, performed formal service at catered weddings and events, and I prepped a lot of carrots and onions around this. The owner and manager worked alongside us, and as in many small businesses, we were expected to work as hard as they did in their endeavor. Aside from catering tips, we were not allowed to expect or invite tips, although the few we still received were shared equally. I worked for eight months at a busy Montreal Second Cup (next to Paragraphe across from McGill University), the subject of my Master's thesis, which attends to how workers' engagements with customers are routinized into repetive affective labour by assembly line-like layout of the café counter, sort of Fordism with a smile. I then worked at a mid-range casual dining restaurant called La Taverna in Montreal, serving lunch and dinner part-time over a year and a half. Finally, my shameful fall from service grace, I worked for approximately six weeks at The Peel Pub on Ste. Catherine, a cheesy all-day cheap food and beer joint famed for recycling beer and for being the only logical place in the city where hobos and wealthy McGill undergrads might mingle at 2 a.m.

experiences of individual waitresses within the history of service evolution but tend to be largely descriptive in nature. The problem with relying entirely on ethnography and interviews is that it becomes difficult to make claims about structural forces that operate outside of the workers' impressions, or claims that contradict what service workers think is happening, while still respecting the perspectives of those included. At certain points, these accounts also introduce the problem of personality, where the account is more structured by an individual's subjective experience of the work rather than looking at institutional systems that operate more generally. By instead grounding my analysis in the intersection between how the industry reproduces itself in the discourses of tourism and hospitality management studies and critical theory, my account aims to strike some balance between thinking service from the perspective of interactive service workers, the organizations that employ them, and how service standards and norms situate and construct the customers whom they serve, looking at service as a system of network of relationships and the communication that builds them rather than merely as a goal or ideal that these parties aspire to or the realities of its execution. This framework enables a discussion about service as it is experienced by customers, produced by workers, and implicated within broader social fields such as managerial discourses. It facilitates an exploration of the subjective positions of the participants integrated into an institutionalized system as they are produced or affected by this system, in order to better account for the promises and pitfalls of communication and social relationships that are executed in the form of service.

My primary interest in writing this project is to provide a theoretical

treatment of the structural forces that circumscribe restaurant service labour,

rather than an account of how these labour processes are lived or experienced.

While the heterogeneity of workers' positions and labour processes in diverse

restaurants—the industry being remarkable for the predominance of independent

entrepreneurs and small enterprises—gives it a heterogeneity that makes it difficult

to make universal statements, this work seeks to sketch out some of the structural

forces that shape restaurant work since most restaurants still tend to stick to a more

or less similar organizational models that allow us to make generalizations about

how restaurant labour is structured.[29] As Michel Foucault has argued regarding the

analysis of general structures,

> Schematically one can say that the 'ideal type' is a category of historical
> interpretation; it's a structure of understanding for the historian who seeks to
> integrate, after the fact, a certain set of data: it allows him to recapture an
> "essence"(...) working from general principles which are not at all present in the
> thought of the individuals whose concrete behaviour is nevertheless to be
> understood on their basis.[30]

What he means by this is that studying structures enables us to show how different

fields establish and legitimate truths, and that actors accept these as true and act

accordingly. So, for example, when discourses, such as those circulated within

management literature, claim that touching a customer's shoulder and smiling helps

servers to earn larger tips, then a server is likely to do so. Whether there is any truth

to the claim or not doesn't necessarily matter to managers; what is important is that

servers believe it and act accordingly in order to provide the intimacy and care of

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[29] Nelson, "Work and Benefits," 242. Again, see Foucault (1991) and discussion in Introduction chapter about reading institutions as systems.
[30] Michel Foucault and Graham Burchell, Colin Gordon and Peter Miller (eds.) *The Foucault Effect: Studies in Governmentality* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991), 80.

the good servers that organizations want these workers to supply their customers. As Foucault reminds, "'Discipline' isn't the expression of an 'ideal type' (that of 'disciplined man'); it's a generalization and interconnection of different techniques themselves designed in response to localized requirements."[31] Drawing on descriptive accounts of restaurant service as primary sources, rather than conducting extensive interviews, enables me to allocate more time to exploring the intersections of these accounts with critical literature in the fields of political economy, affective labour and social philosophy. Speaking abstractly about restaurant service enables us to think about service as a privileged kind of communication, one imbricated into other political and institutional systems, rather than thinking about service as service. In short, the abstraction of service as communication leads to a privileged access to the structural conditions of the production and consumption of service, rather than remaining grounded in the minutiae of its execution

This work thus involves a rigorous review of the existing literature on waitressing and other interactive service positions, and reading these alongside articles from management and hospitality schools in which they describe how to motivate workers to achieve organizational goals. I looked for recurring themes in order to account for the structural conditions of "good service" in restaurants in order to establish or isolate patterns in order to show what kinds of thematic problems they considered important. This often took the form of an overriding concern with gratuities, which were put forward as key to servers' at-work

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[31] Ibid.

motivation and a key way for organizations to ensure the provision of better service

and to increase employee job satisfaction and thus reduce costly turnover. In a

sense, both customer satisfaction and worker satisfaction were conflated here, in

tips, which act as both measure and driver of positive social encounters, often in

ways that directly contradicted statements made by restaurant customers and

servers alike in ethnographic accounts. Furthermore, in both of these dimensions, as

a measure of customer satisfaction and motor of worker motivation, tips were

considered central to the success of the enterprise. I argue that the reason for this is

that contemporary capitalism has had to evolve new means of motivating and

rewarding worker compliance and consent in order for them to perform the

emotional and affective labour necessary to "good service."

Chapter Outline

     This project aims to stage a multifaceted exploration of different dimensions

of how service is staged in contemporary casual dining. The discussion begins with a

broad history of service's evolution in the West and an introduction to applicable

theoretical models that facilitate further analysis, followed by several chapters that

aim to tackle different angles of service practices in order to give form to how

service mores intersect with race, gender, class, sexuality, ethnicity and other social

categories in their provision and consumption.

     The literature review traces a genealogy of the feminization of service,

looking at how the introduction of women into restaurant work changed what

constituted "good service" and produced a new consumer subjectivity, that of the

sovereign consumer. This in turn signaled a shift in focus, where service became not only about performing the work, but also the creation of value in the form of service itself, in the communication of the service encounter. In service, the commodity produced is not tangible, so the labour that produces the commodity cannot be analyzed using traditional Marxist categories of alienation, skill, and the fetish, even though Marxism still speaks to these issues in a different way. By looking at other models to interpret this kind of labour, namely Arlie Russell Hochschild's concept of emotional labour and the autonomist models of affective and immaterial labour, I lay out alternative theoretical rubrics that can be used to evaluate service in successive chapters.

Chapter Two attends to social relations surrounding the consumption of relationships in the service encounter. I argue that good service depends on a series of illusions that enable customers to enjoy the subjective role of the sovereign consumer by engaging in the fetish of good service, where there is some understanding that the service relationship is normalized and habitual work for the server, but consumers pretend that it is spontaneous, sincere and organic. The service experience depends on this fetish, relying on what I term the "illusion of spontaneity," where the social relations attendant to the consumption of service are made to seem like self-motivated gestures rather than merely conforming to institutional norms. Maintaining this illusion requires selectively eliding some features of restaurant service, in what I term the "eclipsed exertion," while other kinds of labour are showcased. Most restaurants today feature hidden kitchens, for example, where food is produced outside of the customers' experience and then

theatrically presented by the server. Additionally, I address how this relation effects

servers' disciplinization, for management interventions management must not be

exposed to customers in order to sustain the fetish of good service, according

servers a degree of autonomy in their interactions with their clienteles. However, I

argue that these institutions find other ways to recoup the loss of authority by

resorting to alternative payment models (outside of wages) in order to secure

servers' consent and complicity in performing the affective labour required to

produce the customer service relationship.

Chapter Three attends to one such feature, the gratuity, which is in many

ways a defining feature of restaurant service work in North America. Tips make up

the majority of servers' incomes, and service workers will try very hard to please

the customers who pay them. Customers tip their servers at the conclusion of the

dining experience, as a means of evaluating the service quality through its financial

compensation. I look at a broad cross section of tourist management literature on

customer tipping behaviours, which demonstrates that servers' authentic-seeming

affective performances can increase tip amounts, and, by extension, their livelihoods.

I argue that the circulation of ideas about what can increase tips serves to discipline

workers into engaging in certain kinds of affective work that make up "good service,"

acting as a means of ensuring workers' compliance with the promise of service

made by their employers. This is consistent with other accounts of postindustrial

labour that hold that capital aims to ensure worker cooperation by aligning their

interests with those of capital, in this instance by delegating the compensation of

servers to those they aim to please. Furthermore, this displaces wages as a site of

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antagonism from restaurant entrepreneurs to customers, so that restaurants can intensify other dimensions of service labour while clients unwittingly compel servers to self-discipline in order to produce the good service that should ensure their incomes.

Chapter Four considers skill and gender, and how these intersect in the heterosexualized space of restaurant service. Service work has traditionally been considered "unskilled," however feminist labour theorists hold that this relies on a particular framing of what constitutes "skill," specifically one that fails to recognize the aptitudes naturalized as "women's work"—care, emotional modulation and sociability—casting them instead as innate talents and denying this work the status of labour. The chapter also attends to how the physical work of serving is effaced by the eclipse of exertion and illusion of spontaneity, such that much of the labour of providing service is obscured by the very standards of its performance. I argue that the physical work of service labour is concealed, while servers' bodies are highlighted as aesthetic or sexualized objects. Furthermore, the relations of deference and care that characterize service are accompanied by the mandatory performance of a flirtatious, feminine heteronormative sexuality for waitresses, in a way that blurs into sex work. For contrast, the chapter then addresses male servers, looking at how masculinity is mediated through an aggressive heterosexuality and horseplay in low-end institutions, using a reading of the 2006 comedy film *Waiting…* By comparing the ways that male and female servers are staged as gendered bodies in service, this chapter seeks to point to the enforced heteronormativity of restaurants as a site of oppression for many service workers.

The following chapter, "Co-production and the Division of Labour and Compensation," attends to the rationalization of restaurant production and the various ways that this is concealed from the consumer, particularly during the high-stress period of "the rush," peak dining hours where restaurant workers' labour is particularly intense. The chapter addresses how tasks and responsibilities are parceled out in different positions to maximize organizational efficiency, and, through their division, are individualized as singular posts, each with its own unique arrangement with management regarding responsibilities, status and pay. Looking at each of the auxiliary floor positions in restaurants in turn serves to structure an account of how auxiliary service workers are compensated, in the form of tip-outs from servers, according to the degree to which their interactive labour matters to consumers as a constituent part of the production of good service. This enables an analysis of the political economy of affect *between* co-workers in restaurants, which I argue acts as a microcosm of contemporary global capitalism in the way it carves up the responsibilities and compensation of different restaurant positions.

Finally, Chapter Six, "Cleaning Labour in Restaurants," takes an in-depth look at one restaurant position, the dishwasher, to contrast how cleaning work is positioned within the service economy, using it as a counterpoint to the server. Associated with dirt, waste and repetitive labour, dishwashing is a low-status occupation, one predominantly filled by often undocumented immigrants or others who are unable to easily find work elsewhere. These workers rarely, if ever, have any contact with restaurant clientele, and their subjectivities matter little in the performance of their at-work tasks. They are paid a flat hourly rate, and there is

little room for advancement. The discussion of dishwashers is used to stage a critique of the autonomists' emphasis upon the liberatory potential of affective labour, to show that existing social inequality based on gender, race and class are reproduced in service spaces. While theorists such as Hardt and Negri attend to how the performance of affective labour creates communicative bonds outside of capital's aegis that contributes to the general intellect to enrich the intellectual, linguistic and cultural resources of those who perform it, these accounts fails to address the degree to which many are excluded from this richness by the nature of their work, reproducing inequality anew in the very site where they find the potential for revolution.

Chapter One: Literature Review

"To make an omelette, you must crack a few eggs."[32]

My review of the relevant literature consists of two parts. In the first, I conduct a genealogy of good service in European and North American restaurants, attending to how the introduction of greater numbers of female workers into service work changed what was thought to constitute "good service" over the last 150 or so years. In the second, I address the predominant theoretical models applied to workers whose labour is constituted in subjective or intersubjective performances, including influential accounts of what is termed "emotional labour" and "affective labour," and situate these theories within their adoption in the field of service research.

A Genealogy of Good Service in Restaurants

As Elliott Shore notes, "Certain facets of restaurant dining now seem so natural or automatic that it is worth noting that they are based on culturally and historically specific rules and expectations."[33] Service customs evolved alongside and in restaurant establishments, and historicizing their emergence denaturalizes them by articulating them with the cultural trends that gave them shape. In particular, many of the social relations that inscribe service today derive from the introduction of large numbers of female workers into waitressing work, which feminized service decorum and created a new image of the service customer.

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[32] Variously attributed to Stalin, Robespierre and a few other monsters, but that's in all likelihood apocryphal.
[33] Elliott Shore, "Dining Out: The Development of the Restaurant," in Paul Freedman (ed.) *Food: The History of Taste* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2007), 302.

The earliest European restaurants were premised upon work and displacement, requiring travel to stimulate the demand for food prepared and eaten away from one's own kitchen, and their aestheticization and rendering into spaces of leisure was gradual.[34] The earliest Western eateries were street-side cookshops for urbanites without access to kitchens, or were attached to inns and catered to travelers who had nowhere else to go for a meal.[35] The service therein was rudimentary at best—in some, the clientele was charged with the preparation of their own meals, while in others "innkeepers, men or women, often simply put punch bowl or platter on a table and let people help themselves."[36] Customers paid a flat fee for a place at a common, set-menu table, and portioning was "competitive." The food served was often the same meal every day and, by most accounts, not a particularly tasty one.[37] The majority of "servers" in these establishments were the proprietors, their families and slaves, and the introduction of wage labour in hospitality, as in other industries, made a much later entrance.[38] Good service was not a priority, nor even a concern; restaurants during this period were functionalist, premised entirely on fulfilling a biological need.

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[34] There were restaurants in Asia long before this, but I argue that they are a part of a different developmental trajectory.

[35] Alan Beardsworth and Teresa Keil, *Sociology on the Menu: An Invitation to the Study of Food and Society* (London and New York: Routledge, 1997), 106; Nicholas M. Kiefer, "Economics and the Origin of the Restaurant," *Cornell Hotel and Restaurant Administration Quarterly* August 2002, 58; Rebbeca Spang, *Invention of the Restaurant: Paris and Modern Gastronic Culture* (Cambridge and London: Harvard University Press, 2000), 29-30.

[36] Alison Owings, *Hey Waitress! The USA from the Other Side of the Tray* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002), 8.

[37] Kiefer, "Economics and the Origin of the Restaurant"; Spang, *Invention of the Restaurant*, 7; Roy Strong, *Feast: A History of Grand Eating*, (Orlando: Harcourt, 2002), 287; Stephen Mennell, *All Manners of Food: Eating and Taste in England and France from the Middle Ages to the Present* (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1985), 136-7.

[38] Cobble, *Dishing It Out*,18; Reich, *Future of Success,* 91-5; Paton Yonder, *Taverns and Travellers: Inns of the Early Midwest* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1969), 59-61.

The commercialization of dining out as a leisure practice was gradual, and this coincided with a changing orientation toward the workers who presented and delivered the food on offer. Restaurants where food was prepared on-order emerged in the eighteenth century, but the first establishment bearing the title was founded in 1765 by a Parisian soup vendor, the locution taken from the restorative broths served there.[39] The first luxury restaurant, Antoine Beauvilliers' La Grande Taverne de Londres, opened in Paris in 1782. This establishment is notable for its inauguration of the restaurant as a place to be experienced, featuring extraordinary food, a vast wine cellar, a sumptuously decorated dining area and "smart waiters."[40] It also had a hidden kitchen, enabling the showy presentation of dishes. La Grande Taverne, in short, was a restaurant designed to commoditize eating as a pleasurable experience—not itself a new practice per se, as people have in all likelihood entertained in the home since the dawn of time, but the first time the practice of eating out as leisure was made into a business, making the experience of eating directly productive for capital. La Grande Taverne might, then, be one of the first establishments premised upon the commoditization of sustenance as an experience. Furthermore, in so doing it democratized both the consumption of cuisine and of the attentive service of professional waiters, both having heretofore been exclusively the preserve of the elite.[41]

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[39] Christopher Egerton-Thomas, *How to Open and Run a Successful Restaurant*, 3rd ed. (Hoboken, NJ: Riley and Sons, 2006), 4.
[40] Kiefer, "Economic Origins of the Restaurant;" Jean-Anthelme Brillat-Savarin, *The Physiology of Taste* trans. Anne Drayton (New York: Penguin, 1970), 273.
[41] Strong, *Feast*, 287; Amy B. Trubek, *Haute Cuisine: How the French Invented the Culinary Profession* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2000), 31-41; Mennell, *All Manners of Food*, 140; Shore, "Dining Out," 305.

La Grande Taverne was also one of the first locales to adopt service *à la russe,* where dishes were served course by course to individuals at private tables, rather than *à la francaise,* in which dishes were served buffet-style, brought out as they were ready and shared by all diners the table. The shift to *service à la russe* might seem relatively simple, but it had a profound affect on the nature of the social relations surrounding the dining experience. Serving food in courses decreased the quantity of food on the newly individualized tables and enabled the showy presentation of dishes and the wealth represented by their flatware, and was adopted in private homes and restaurants alike in the mid-nineteenth century.[42] But this method of service also required more output on the part of the servers; as Civitello describes, the consecutive courses were served "by attentive waiters who took away empty dishes and replaced them with new full ones. This way, food that was meant to be served hot would be hot when it arrived at the table. The host got to show off his wealth in the array of the food, numerous sets of dishes and glasses, and many servants."[43] Furthermore, this method placed an additional layer of care in the service experience; "no one at table need have anything remotely practical to do with handling the food" since having staff "to carve and serve it clarified social distinctions."[44] The shift to *service à la russe*, in restaurants with private tables, also mandated that everyone be served their meal at the same time, which changed chefs' labour processes so that the contemporaneousness of tables' diverse orders had to

[42] Strong, *Feast*, 295-300; Brillat-Savarin, *Physiology of Taste*, 268; Linda Civitello, *Cuisine and Culture: A History of Food and People* (Hoboken: John Wiley and Sons, 2004), 216; Mennell, *All Manners of Food*, 150.
[43] Civitello, *Cuisine and Culture*, 216.
[44] Strong, *Feast*, 299.

be taken into account.[45] This led to Auguste Escoffier's imposition of a novel division

of labour in restaurant kitchens, where cooks were divided by productive function

in order to expedite service, enabling the restaurateur to offer faster service in order

to cater to middle class customers, rather than waiting for a single master chef to

craft each element of every meal single-handedly as they could when their

audiences were made up entirely of the leisured aristocratic class who could take

longer at meals.[46]

Another distinctive shift in the nature of restaurant dining and service

occurred with the introduction of the menu, which was widespread in England and

France by the 1770s. This was in part spurred on by early restaurants' focus on

nouveau cuisine's curative foods and bouillons, which meant that dishes ordered

had to correspond to a given customer's specific ailments. The advent of the menu

meant that the tastes and preferences of the clientele were taken into account,

signaling a shift from the mere provision of sustenance to catering to a consumer-

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[45] Michael Steinberger, *Au Revoir to All That: The Rise and Fall of French Cuisine* (London: Bloomsbury, 2009), 20-21; Strong, *Feast*, 284.

[46] The division of labour in restaurant kitchens emerged as a response to a specific set of historical conditions in a particular restaurant and was by no means inevitable. It worked well enough, however, that the system had tenacity and was adopted elsewhere and retained. Escoffier, an early 19th century chef, organized the kitchen into distinct "parties," designating the garde manger who prepared cold dishes and managed supplies; the rôtisseur who handled roasts, grilled and fried dishes; a saucier who exclusively prepared sauces; and the patissier who preoccupied himself with pastries, desserts and breads. This division of labour rationalized the kitchen. As Mennell notes, "The effect of Escoffier's reorganisation of the economy of the kitchen was thus to break down traditional craft demarcations, while advancing the division of labour into more rational specialisations and weaving the kitchen staff into closer interdependence with each other," (159). This division of labour into distinct "stations," or task foci, is still in place in most kitchens, although in many there is greater flexibility and less specialization, with cooks able to man several of the stations and often moving between them with relative fluidity. Mennell argues that this division was necessary for restaurants to provide *service à la Russe*, where everyone at the table receives an individual dish at the same time—in short, it is the key to the synchronized service of meals to whole tables. The division of labour into tasks remains a standard in kitchen labour processes in restaurants today. See Civitello, *Cuisine and Culture*, 244; Mennell, *All Manners of Food*, 159-63; Peter Scholliers, "Novelty and Tradition: The New Landscape for Gastronomy," in Paul Freedman (ed.) *Food: The History of Taste* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2007), 335; Steinberger, *Au Revoir to All That*, 20-21.

audience. As Spang puts it, changing conceptions of the restaurant's role in turn

necessitated

> a new sense of the menu: the creation of a list of available items from which each consumer made personal choices at the most convenient moment... When ordering from a restaurant menu, the patron therefore made a highly individualistic statement... By the mere presence of a menu, the restaurant's style of service demanded a degree of self-definition, and awareness and cultivation of personal tastes, uncalled for by the inn or cookshop.[47]

The introduction of the menu signals a shift toward the restaurant as a site of self-expression and the desire of restaurateurs to cater to this. This transition also marks a different kind of customer, one who began to see the act of eating out as one of self-definition. Made-to-order food meant that customers could eat what and when they wished, liberating the consumption of food in restaurants from the timeline of the entrepreneur and aligning this, too, with customers' desires.[48] Furthermore, the menu was accompanied by the introduction of private tables and booths, rather than only offering crowded group tables, signaling a change in the ways that restaurants were thought about as social spaces. This innovation allowed restaurants to facilitate private sociality, the leisurely enjoyment of one's own dining companions whilst eating together. All of these elements signal a reallocation of the values according to which restaurateurs thought about the service they were providing, and as each modification proliferated through the industry, it changed the expectations customers bore about the products they purchased and how these were presented and served to them.

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[47] Spang, *Invention of the Restaurant,* 76; see also Marc Jacobs and Peter Scholliers, "*Vaut or ne vaut pas le Détour:* Conviviality, Custom(er)s and Public Places of New Taste Since the Late Eighteenth Century." In Marc Jacobs and Peter Scholliers (eds.), *Eating Out in Europe: Picnics, Gourmet Dining and Snacks Since the Late Eighteenth Century* (New York: Berg, 2003),10.
[48] Kiefer, "Economics and the Origin of the Restaurant," 59.

Finally, the introduction of the menu has important ramifications for the degree of interactivity required of restaurant service. When customers merely ate whatever was posted on a bill of fare, there was no need for much interaction between the innkeepers and bartenders and their clientele—one requested and paid for a meal and beverage, and it was provided. However, with the menu, customers had options to consider and choices to make, and these were discussed and expressed to a server. The extensive wine lists and propagation of meal options mandated waiters' having knowledge about the products they served and expressing these to their clientele. Spang describes how this period predates the advent of universally recognized dish naming, so a given customer would require an explanation of various dishes, for a title such as "Boeuf Bourguignon" wouldn't signify any particular method of preparation to them, as it would today.[49] In explaining the meals to clients, the server was also educating them about food and methods of preparation; many of the dishes served would never have been consumed by the population outside of courtly circles.[50] Servers were thus key in the cultivation of a new gastronomic market by educating their customers about food at a time when many remained illiterate and would seldom have access to a cookery book. This marks a major shift in terms of client expectations, for the

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[49] Spang, Invention of the Restaurant, 182-192.
[50] The menu also inaugurated a new importance to appear knowledgeable about food, particularly as restaurants grew more widespread, were democratized and brought foods and methods of preparation theretofore exclusively made available at court to the middle classes. As Elliott Strong writes, "Confronted by a restaurant menu they could not help but be made aware of the dozens of different ways of preparing a single ingredient. Such variety had of course existed in the past, but only in sharply restricted circles. The average consumer would have had no knowledge of it and had probably never seen a cookery book… Thus eating in a restaurant became a learning process, and, what's more, a means of gaining and exercising an attribute much prized by the Enlightenment, taste." *Feast*, 287. See also Shore, *Au Revoir to All That*, 309; Joanne Finkelstein, *Dining Out: A Sociology of Modern Manners* (Washington Square, NY: New York University Press, 1989), 202.

quality of their interactions with the service worker became a part of the overall experience of dining out, so that these encounters could be evaluated alongside other dimensions of the dining event, such as the quality of food or wine. Service became something that could be 'good' or 'bad' in a more pronounced manner than when barkeeps merely dropped soup tureens and steins of beer before their customers. In short, taking customers' desires and experience quality into account also bred the need for greater interactivity, and the two together produced "good service" as a goal of some restaurant organizations.

Before this period, gustatory entertainment as a leisure practice mostly took place at private dinner parties in homes, and this was underwritten by the work of scores of in-house or for-hire domestic servants.[51] This labour bears a considerable mark on the evolution of service norms in the 18th and 19th centuries. The introduction of standards of service required a precedent, and this came from the Victorian domestic. Because they lived among those whom they served, rules of decorum were crucial in maintaining the distinction between classes, and domestics were enjoined to be as invisible and quiet as possible when in the presence of their employers.[52] Many of the service styles—food delivery, speech patterns, carving customs and the like—were the practices and standards of local domestic workers, however restaurants solidified the profession of serving outside of homes and

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[51] See Strong, who describes the 19th century dinner party as "an expression of class solidarity" that was to a large degree broken up by the advent of rarefied foods and service milieus in restaurants. *Feast*, 273.
[52] Cissie Fairchilds, *Domestic Enemies: Servants and their Masters in Old Regime France* (Baltimore and London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1984); J.J. Hecht, *The Domestic Servant Class in Eighteenth-Century England* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1956), 71; Pamela Horn, *The Rise and Fall of the Victorian Servant* (Sparkleford: Sutton, 1990), 121-126; Strong, *Feast*, 287.

established a standard of decorum that was premised upon greater interactivity between server and served.

Following the French Revolution, the displacement of vast numbers of peasants and former aristocrats' former domestic servants led to a large-scale availability of experienced service and cooking staff, which coincided with a rising culture of eating out in Paris. Domestic service peaked during the Victorian period and was on the wane throughout the nineteenth century and moribund by the turn of the twentieth. Even before the decline of the domestic, many servants who saved or came into a little money left household employment to become keepers of public houses or taverns.[53] While there is some debate as to whether domestic workers abandoned their posts in homes en masse to seek out the freer living conditions of waged labour available in urban restaurants or if the establishments advantageously appropriated the surplus of labour of these newly displaced workers, it is clear that there is a strong link between these two trends. Many of the tasks that these workers were performing on behalf of new service facilities—preparing and serving foods, greeting guests, cleaning—were precisely the same as those they had performed in the stately manor houses in which they once lived and worked: "the 'commercial revolution' of the late nineteenth century, especially the rise of the service industries, was not the development of new types of work in society, but merely the performance of existing work in a new setting."[54] While the service expected in these venues was a far cry from the austere formality of

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[53] Ibid., 188; Mennell, *All Manners of Food*, 139-42.
[54] Edward Higgs, "Domestic Servants and Households in Victorian England," *Social History* 8(2), 1983, 209. See also Hecht, *The Domestic Servant Class*, 189.

Victorian households, the ex-servants brought with them the mannerisms, standards and elocutions of the aristocracy, playing a key role in circulating the social behaviours of the elite among the working class.[55] The mannerisms of the ruling class and those who served them thus influenced burgeoning standards for the rites and rituals framing the production, service and consumption of a meal—a sort of trickle-down of service mores—and many of the service mores and norms of the embryonic restaurant industry inherited these preoccupations with underlining status differentials by performing a quiet deference as a means of enacting social separation.

North American restauration similarly began with taverns and inns intended primarily for travelers without other options rather than for leisure, and there were established taverns posting Bills of Fare in New England by the late seventeenth century. Fine dining came much later to North America, which saw its first formal restaurant, Delmonico's, open its doors in New York in December of 1827. Delmonico's was the first place in America where customers could order *à la carte*, rather than using the *table d'hôte* style of inns and taverns, and the food and décor were opulent and refined.[56] Like its continental counterparts, Delmonico's imported the service techniques of domestics, a standard that remained in place for luxurious restaurants catering to the rich, and is in many respects still in place today. As Cobble writes,

> the ideal resembled the standards set for domestic servants in upper-class
> homes: unobtrusive, meek, and respectful. Faultless table service consisted in

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[55] Hecht, *The Domestic Service Class*, 227-8; Fairchild, *Domestic Enemies*, 111; Beardsworth and Keil, *Sociology on the Menu*, 107.
[56] Owings, *Hey Waitress!*, 9; Civitello, *Culture and Cuisine*, 204.

'absolutely noiseless movements'... Social interaction between customer and server should be avoided, and in no instance were customer wishes or opinions to be contradicted.[57]

In luxury service, then, the server was to remain relatively quiet and invisible, and deferential above all.

However, the nineteenth century also saw the evolution of distinctly North American service standards. The expansion of greater numbers of European settlers into the western frontier was key, as travel continued to play a central role in the establishment of the foodservice industry. While the servers in luxurious *à la carte* establishments such as Delmonico's were all men (and in many cases remain so today[58]), the taverns and inns frequently employed female servers, although these women were commonly assumed to be morally loose, an association that haunts the profession to this day.[59] However, a new public image of service was forged by a chain of restaurants called Harvey Houses, established alongside the westbound travel routes by entrepreneur Frank Harvey in the 1880s. While good service until this point was largely premised upon servers' deference, silence and invisibility, modeled on domestic servants, the chain's employment of "Harvey Girls," as they were known, bred a new style of service, in which the social identity of the female

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[57] Cobble, *Dishing It Out*, 46-7. See also Paules, *Dishing It Out,* 137-8; Greta Foff Paules, "Resisting the Symbolism of Service Among Waitresses" in Cameron Lynne MacDonald and Carmen Sirianni (eds) *Working in the Service Society* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1996), 264-90.

[58] Cobble, *Dishing It Out,* 17; Louise Kapp Howe, *Pink Collar Workers: Inside the World of Women's Work* (New York: Avon Books, 1977), 94; Lapointe, "Relationships with Waitresses," 380.

[59] Cobble, *Dishing It Out*, 24-6; Frances R. Donovan, *The Woman who Waits* (Boston: 1920 rept. New York: 1974), 26-7; Markman Ellis, *The Coffee House: A Cultural History* (London: Weidenfield and Nicolson, 2004), 110-112; Owings, *Hey Waitress!*, 13-15; Mary Lee Spence, "They Also Serve Who Wait," *The Western Historical Quarterly* 14(1), 13, 16-17; Candacy A. Taylor, *Counter Culture: The American Coffee Shop Waitress* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2009), 84-5. When eating out was still confined to taverns and inns, not only the staff but also the clientele was largely male, as women (and particularly unaccompanied ones) patronizing these establishments would have been considered similarly morally questionable. See Cobble, *Dishing It Out*, 18.

server was highlighted and displayed. And, as one account of these early waitresses acknowledges, "By adding women to the workforce, interaction between the workers and the customers changed greatly."[60]

Frank Harvey built his chain of restaurants alongside the Santa Fe rail line, after signing a contract that granted him the exclusive right to serve its passengers. The Harvey House chain was wildly successful, serving 15 million meals a year at its peak.[61] Existing establishments in the West were rudimentary, however Harvey envisioned serving a proper Victorian meal to his clientele, and he spared no expense in providing it. Unlike other roadside inns and taverns catering to travelers, the food was good, the premises spotless, and the service speedy and polite. Clients were served on china flatware with linen cloths and real silver, and the restaurant spaces were kept meticulously clean, often inspected by Harvey himself.[62] He imposed rules of decorum upon his rough frontier clientele, prohibiting swearing and instituting a coat rule on the dining room—no service without a dining jacket.[63]

Harvey Houses initially employed male servers, until 1883 when a fistfight broke out between two waiters at the outfit in Raton, New Mexico on a day when Harvey himself happened to pass by for a surprise inspection. This gave him the idea to hire women instead, for he perceived them to be more docile and obedient, and he felt that they more effectively conveyed the gentility his brand tried to

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[60] Cobble, *Dishing It Out*, 3.
[61] Cobble, *Dishing It Out*, 39; Leon Elder and Lin Rolens, *Waitress: America's Unsung Heroine* (Santa Barbara: Capra Press, 1985), 14-15; Owings, *Hey Waitress!*, 9-10; Spence, "They Also Serve Who Wait," 9. Leslie Poling Kempes, *The Harvey Girls: Women Who Opened the West* (New York: Paragon, 1989), 55.
[62] Poling Kempes, *Harvey Girls;* Brenna Steward Duggan, *Girls Wanted: For Service at the Fred Harvey Houses.* Unpublished MA Thesis, Texas Tech University, 2008, 12-28; Civitello, *Cuisine and Culture*, 246; Barbara Haber, *From Hard Tack to Home Fries: An Uncommon History of American Cooks and Meals* (New York: The Free Press, 2002), 87-103.
[63] Duggan, Girls Wanted, 28.

project.[64] While at the time waitressing was still considered a morally suspect position, based as it was on young women's interaction with men outside of the home, Harvey went to great pains to establish a new model for feminine labour in restaurant service.

The "Harvey Girls," as they were known, were nice Christian girls recruited from lower-middle class households in the East and Midwest and brought to outposts along the train line, where they were housed in well-ordered and heavily supervised dormitories. Harvey Girls were paid a flat fee of $17.50 a month plus room and board to serve trainloads of passengers five-course meals in twenty-five minutes, a feat that relied on a tightly regimented and well-organized service routine.[65] The upright girls who worked at the chain were carefully monitored in order to maintain the public perception of their moral propriety: "Women were proud to be selected as Harvey Girls, a name they preferred because 'waitresses' were often identified as women of ill repute in the West."[66] Outfitted in identical collared black dresses with aprons ("so that they could never be mistaken for 'fallen women'"[67]) and highly trained and disciplined, the Harvey Girls were uniformly

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[64] Ibid., 31; Civitello, *Cuisine and Culture*, 247.

[65] The service remained, in spite of the speedy turnover of the tables, quite genteel. The origins of fast food and speedy service are also found in the automats western American frontier, in feeding stations established to service hopeful homesteaders and prospectors. Interestingly, the automats were premised on their provision of food that never seemed to have been touched by human hands—a service regime premised upon the apparent lack of service as service. See Cobble, *Dishing It Out*, 21; Jeff Weinstein, "A Postcard History of the American Restaurant," pp. 244-257 in Ron Scapp and Brian Seitz, eds., *Eating Culture* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1998), 249; Shore, "Dining Out," 320.

[66] Richard Metzer, *Images of America: Fred Harvey Houses of the Southwest* (Charleston: Arcadia Publishing, 2008), 12. Harvey himself was insistent that his staff be referred to exclusively as Harvey Girls, and never as "waitress."

[67] Haber, From Hard Tack to Home Fries, 102.

"obedient, depersonalized, and controlled with machine-like efficiency"[68] by an organization inspired by Frederick Winslow Taylor's theories of scientific management. The uniforms themselves conveyed much about the public identity of the girls, with high collars and long hemlines designed to communicate their moral rectitude, as well as to efface the individual identities of those who wore them. These, along with the branded "Harvey Girl" title and extensive training, served to conflate the girls with their jobs as a category, negating their at-work individual identities.[69] The girls were accepted in public perception as morally correct even though they held heretofore "tainted" jobs, but this was underlined by the very public displays of their disciplinization by the restaurant organization—the title, the uniforms, well-publicized dormitories and monitoring of their private lives. While the Harvey Girls on the dining floor promoted the chain's clean, white image, the kitchens told a different story, staffed by workers who "reflected the population of the southwest—black, Hispanic, and Indian,"[70] inaugurating another habitual and enduring restaurant industry practice, that of having a colour line at the kitchen door.

The Harvey Houses marked a standardization of good service, acting as a prototype for the legions of restaurant chains that would come in their wake. Additionally, the Harvey House chain saw the introduction of one of the central

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[68] Taylor, *Counter Culture,* 82. See also Metzer, *Images of America*, 16; Poling Kempes, *The Harvey Girls*, 55.
[69] See Owings, *Hey Waitress!*, 108; Taylor, *Counter Culture*, 82.
[70] Civitello, *Cuisine and Culture*, 247.

precepts of service as such, for the girls were "trained to never violate the precept

that the customer is always right."[71] As historian Breanna Duggan writes,

> it was ultimately up to the Harvey Girl to make sure the guest was happy. To
> do this, training manuals insisted the waitress was to smile, greet the
> customer, and be courteous throughout the meal. The Harvey Girls were not at
> the restaurant just to look pretty; they had a job to do as well. Therefore,
> training in the Harvey Service was rigorous. The girls had an exact way to
> serve the food and treat the customers.[72]

The girls were a central component of the dining experience the Harvey Houses

offered, establishing themselves as iconic figures in the popular imagination of the

time, as evidenced by the copious references to the job in the popular culture—one

highlight is the 1946 MGM musical starring Judy Garland, *The Harvey Girls*, which

includes a musical number about hygiene and proper table settings.[73] Harvey Girls

began the long process of removing the stigma of sex work from waitressing, as well

as showing that women were capable of handling its physical exertions and

normalizing their presence on the service floor. Simultaneously, their meticulous

training and cheerful politeness constituted a feminizing of service, making eating

out more congenial and homey. The mere fact of being served by proper women

changed customer expectations about the kind of service experience offered.[74] In

short, the Harvey Houses laid the groundwork for the feminization of service labour,

creating a prototype for the kind of obedient and courteous service that customers

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[71] Elder and Rolens, *Waitress*, 15. Susan Benson, in her study of early American department stores,
contends that the phrase "the customer is always right" was in fact coined by John Wanamaker. Susan
Porter Benson, *Counter Cultures: Saleswomen, Managers, and Customers in American Department Stores,
1890-1940* (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press), 93-4.
[72] Duggan, *Girls Wanted*, 40-1.
[73] Civitello, *Cuisine and Culture*, 247. See the trailer at http://is.gd/AHaTlC. See Duggan, *Girls Wanted*,
for a comprehensive list of cinematic and literary treatments of the Harvey Girls.
[74] The girls also had the effect of taming the establishments' often rough clientele; the presence of upright
young women in the restaurant served to police consumers' behaviours by changing the climate of the
establishment. See Haber, *From Hard Tack to Home Fries*, 91.

expect even today. While the Harvey Girls remained isolated to the Harvey Houses themselves, this period served to create a new prototype for women who served, and their introduction into the dining rooms of America changed people's expectations for service as such. As one account notes, "Harvey's most significant contribution to improving life in the west was his recruitment of female waitresses who would add not only efficiency but personal warmth and charm to the restaurants."[75]

During the first World War, as in many industries, a dearth of male labour led to ever greater numbers of females being hired as waitresses. Once hired, restaurateurs found them to be more obedient and congenial than the waiters that preceded them. Furthermore, they saved money since women were paid less, so many kept their positions once the men returned from the war to reclaim their jobs.[76] Female servers became increasingly normal, and were quite commonplace by the mid-1920s, a period that coincided with a tremendous expansion of the restaurant industry and also a broader commodification of experience as a central facet of modern consumption. The number of restaurants in the United States tripled between 1900 and 1930, and by 1938 there were more than a million people working in food service outlets. As Cobble notes, eating out had grown to become "a pastime no longer reserved for the rich or the single male businessman or traveler."[77] This trend gave further impetus to the influx of women into the service sector:

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[75] Haber, From Hard Tack to Home Fries, 100.
[76] Cobble, *Dishing It Out*, 19; Shore, "Dining Out," 320.
[77] Ibid., 20.

> The move toward inexpensive, simple dining added to the demand for women. The cheaper labour of women was necessary where employer profits were lower. The quick yet personable service needed in informal eateries also clashed with the leisurely, aloof style of the male waiter, traditional in full-service, formal restaurants and upper-class homes. The presence of a friendly, attractive female server suited owners perfectly.[78]

In short, dining grew more casual at the same moment that female servers were deemed more capable of nurturing such an environment, such that the expansion of casual dining and prevailing attitudes toward gender together produced an affable, engaged service style.

Cobble argues that this movement was heightened by the trend toward theme restaurants from the late 1920s onward. As these businesses sought to distinguish themselves by marketing novel service experiences and milieus, most "employers preferred women in these new-style eateries. Few of the exotic 'theme' restaurants called for men: women were more suited for the role of decorative object."[79] During this period, casual dining service work grew increasingly premised upon friendliness, mild flirtation, and servers' beauty as ornaments of the dining room—in short, not exactly the predominant traits associated with men.[80] By the 1950s, four out of five restaurant servers were women, and the industry was one of the largest sites of women's employment.[81] Outside of fine dining, where service was still defined by the old world formality of domestic service standards, sexy themed uniforms became the norm, and tableside conversation grew to be increasingly

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[78] Ibid., 21.

[79] Ibid., 22. While men still retained a monopoly on the high-end eateries, the real losers in this transition were African-American men, who were by and large forced out of the industry entirely, or to its very lowest rungs or behind kitchen doors. Women of colour had always had a very marginal status in the service industry, particularly in the higher-paying and more visible interactive service jobs. See Chapter Six for a discussion of race in restaurant labour.

[80] Ibid., Bayard de Volo, "Service and Surveillance," 347; Erickson, "Bodies at Work," 84; Hall, "Smiling, Deferring and Flirting," 79.

[81] Cobble, *Dishing It Out*, 27.

characterized by a chatty, bantering style.[82] From the mid-twentieth century on,

restaurant service became highly sexualized, although it no longer bore the same

taint of prostitution as it did for the pre-Harvey Girl tavern barmaid. In short,

service work began to be defined in terms of the performance of emotional qualities

and personality attributes, such as flirtatiousness and care, generally attributed to

women. This period also coincided with a broader shift in the meaning of women in

public, as well as the increasingly pervasive use of images of feminine sexuality in

numerous commercial enterprises, such as advertising, however the public image of

womanhood bore a considerable influence over a job that was progressively more

deemed to be "woman's work," the restaurant server.

The restaurant industry continued to proliferate throughout the twentieth

century, and there was a dramatic rise in the number of ethnic restaurants in

particular after a relaxation of North American immigration laws in the 1960s.[83]

Over the course of the last hundred years dining out has become an increasingly

normal part of many people's lives. The integration of more women into the

workforce, longer life expectancies, rising educational standards and smaller

households all contributed to the increasing appeal of having someone else cook and

clean up after meals—enough so that the proportion of household incomes spent on

eating out doubled in North America and parts of Europe between the early 1960s

and mid-1990s.[84] As it grew more common, as one study notes, "eating out was

given new significance by the general public, the media and the chefs. It became a

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[82] LaPointe, "Relationships with Waitresses," 382-3.
[83] Civitello, *Cuisine and Culture,* 300-301; Scholliers, "Novelty and Tradition," 345.
[84] Scholliers, "Novelty and Tradition," 345.

social activity linked to pleasure. More people than ever before considered a meal out as a convivial, joyful occasion."[85]

The introduction of women into service environments produced a shift in the decorum of service, both in what kinds of regimes of affect and communication were deemed appropriate to service as well as to the kind of consuming subject that service providers imagined themselves to be catering to. While pointing to the historical emergence of such regimes serves to frame the historical moments that shape the nature of good service today, the persistence of these modes of communication begs further investigation into how gender and status are played out today in the restaurant service encounter, in order to build a stage for thinking about how to act politically, both as consumers and as servers in restaurant encounters. The feminization of restaurant service coincided with a broader integration of women into service occupations and a transition toward a culture of mass consumption in a competitive service market, and these two forces acted in tandem to produce a particular orientation toward service. Introducing women into service professions changed expectations about the service decorum of the work, a shift toward homier, friendlier and more personalized relations. This holds not just when more women began to work as waitresses, but also with 19th century phone operators, retail staff, and in secretarial and clerking services in offices.[86]

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[85] Ibid., 351-2.
[86] See Gregory John Downey, *Telegraph Messenger Boys: Labor, Technology and Geography, 1850-1950* (New York: Routledge, 2002) for a discussion of women's integration into telegraphy offices and the feminization of operator work; Venus Green, "Goodbye Central: Automation and the Decline of 'Personal Service' in the Bell System, 1878-1921" *Technology and Culture* 36:4 (1995): 920-25; Michèle Martin, "Hello Central?": Gender, Technology and Culture in the Formation of Telephone Systems (Montreal: McGill-Queens University Press, 1991), 99; Carolyn Marvin, *When Old Technologies Were New: Thinking About Electronic Communication in the Late 19th Century*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988), 26;

Susan Benson's analysis of department stores in the early 20th century

theorizes a period that overlaps with the feminization of waitressing and points to

similar historical trajectories. She describes how the stores hired women to make

shopping a more pleasurable shopping experience for female customers, and

trained their staffs to interact with consumers in very specific ways. The new

department stores shared with restaurants the problem of normalizing their

services, and the techniques deployed in either industry cross-pollinated the other.

They were tasked with creating a new kind of customer alongside a new kind of

service worker, and part of this consisted of convincing the customer that she

deserved both the products and treatment that she would receive. As Benson puts it,

"The cultural message of the store… suggested to the customer that she was of the

class which deserved to be served, that her consumption was a token of her

standing in the urban bourgeoisie."[87] To do so, the stores hired female counter

workers, out of both necessity and the desire to make the department store space

inviting to prospective patrons. She writes that, as in restaurants, "Managers

selected saleswomen both for their cheapness in the labor force and for their

'female' personality characteristics which coincided with the skills of selling:

empathy, habits of persuasion instead of command, and a homely familiarity with

the merchandise."[88] Such measures helped to personalize mass-produced

commodities by making the stores more congenial, however the service standard it

Graham S. Lowe, "Mechanization, Feminization and Managerial Control in the Early Twentieth-Century Canadian Office," pp. 177-209 in Craig Heron and Robert Storey (eds) *On the Job: Confronting the Labour Process in Canada* (Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1986), 194-98; Margery W. Davies, *Women's Place is at the Typewriter: Office Work and Office Workers 1870-1930* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1982), 51-78.
[87] Benson, Counter Cultures, 4.
[88] Ibid., 5.

established lingered well after, becoming central to customer expectations of service provision. In Benson's narrative, the department stores come to regret the centrality accorded the consumer by mid-century, the stores' managers worried that their businesses had grown too service-oriented, as customers began to abuse privileges as rights.[89]

The kind of consumer stance that was constructed during this period has considerable ramifications for the present-day performance of service and evaluations of its quality, and particularly when addressing how gender and social status play out in service encounters. The consumption of services since the turn of the twentieth century is premised upon a particular formation of the clientele, as what du Gay has termed "sovereign consumers." Du Gay argues that service provision today is premised upon a model of an autonomous consumer who is conscious of the vastness of the service market and their value as potential clients of it. As the services proliferate, ever more of organizations' perceived competitive edge—and thus their marketing, advertising, and managerial focus—is established by the affective performances of service workers as a key component of a brand experience.[90] While the roots of the sovereign consumer lie at the turn of the twentieth century, where embryonic consumer culture sought to seduce potential customers by flattering them with the status achieved through the very act of consumption itself—we already see traces of this structure in the Harvey Girl.

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[89] Ibid., 93.
[90] Panikkos Constanti and Paul Gibbs, "Emotional Labour and Surplus Value: The Case of Holiday 'Reps,'" *The Service Industries Journal* 25:1 (2005); Emma Dowling, "Producing the Dining Experience: Measure, Subjectivity and the Affective Worker," *ephemera: politics and theory in organization* 7:1 (2007); Carlone, "Contradictions of Communicative Labor."

Furthermore, significantly, Benson finds the construction of this kind of consumer to be inseparable from the feminization of clerking labour in the department stores she studies, although I argue that in restaurants this is also firmly grounded in the commodification of experience, that the status of being a sovereign consumer is an integral part of what is consumed in good service. As Amy Hanser argues, people of social different social groupings encounter one another in spaces of retail and service, making these spaces sites where social difference is negotiated. Working in contemporary China, where an officially Communist culture is repositioning itself as a much more hierarchized one, she writes

> It is across the counter, and in service work settings more generally, that entitlements are expressed and social distinctions are performed and legitimated. Key social divisions—along the lines of class, gender, and even generation—solidify in the course of service interactions. Because the resulting divisions make inequality instead appear to be a question of difference, these social distinctions play a central role in helping Chinese people make sense of—and accept—new forms of inequality.[91]

Thus service encounters can be read as spaces where social relations and inequalities are both enunciated and reproduced.

Virtuosic Work in Marxist Political Economy

By definition, interactive service workers labour in and through interfacing with those who consume the service. This makes their communication itself the means of production, and then when in this drawn into the regime of service, "niceness" itself becomes a part of the commodity, rendering service workers' subjectivities productive for capital. Marx describes service labour as "nothing other

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[91] Hanser, Service Encounters, 3.

than the useful effect of use-value," which means that the labourers' work itself becomes the commodity.[92] While service workers inarguably perform other tasks and services—selling goods, managing finances, and cleaning—the personnel in interactive service labour, in their conduct and self-presentation, characterize and constitute this abstract, service.[93] Service work makes workers directly visible to their consumers in a manner unimaginable in the realm of fetishized commodities, so that many traditional accounts of labour no longer map as neatly onto the actual relations of service labour. Yet at the same time, because people are paying for the services they consume, they are aware both of the service worker's labour to produce it and of the constructedness of the communication that accompanies. The consumption of service is thus cynical: the commoditized nature of the relationship is clear, yet people act like they don't know it.

Marx's descriptions of the commodity repeatedly underline its tangibility, its material quality as a thing that can circulate.[94] In the first volume of *Capital*, he outlines a separation between productive and unproductive labour—that which results in a tangible commodity and that which does not—and he distinguishes the service worker, "from the prostitute to the king" from the productive labourer, arguing that the two are only confused by their both being paid a wage.[95] He briefly

[92] Karl Marx, *Capital, Vol. I* trans. Ben Fowkes (New York: Vintage Books, 1977), 299. See also Braverman, *Labor and Monopoly Capital*, 360; Carmen and Sirianni, "The Service Society," 3.
[93] Jennifer Parker Talwar, *Fast Food, Fast Track: Immigrants, Big Business, and the American Dream* (Boulder: Westview Press, 2002), 99; Robin Leidner, "Rethinking Questions of Control: Lessons from Macdonald's." In Cameron Lynne MacDonald and Carmen Sirianni (eds.) *Working in the Service Society* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1996), 30.
[94] Typical is his insistence that, "The individual commodity is in fact a finished article, which has left its mode of production behind it and which contains preserved within itself the process in which particular useful labour was performed and objectified." Marx, *Capital,* 980.
[95] Ibid., 1042.

acknowledges the potential for a productive service worker, then dismisses this category as too marginal to merit detailed consideration for having "scarcely reached the stage of being subsumed even formally under capital," and he then treats them as unproductive—if waged—labour.[96] Ultimately, though, he concludes that, "The distinction between *productive* and *unproductive* labour depends merely on whether labour is exchanged for *money as money* or for *money as capital*."[97]

He outlines two kinds of intellectual labour, one where a commodity can exist apart from its producer, such as a painting, and one in which the commodity is inseparable from the act of its production, such as a dance, medical care, pedagogy and so on. Only the latter is productive labour for Marx, because while a dancer might produce surplus value, this value is not productive because the money paid to witness a cultural event is paid out of one's own pocket, from one's wages or income, and never funded by capital.[98] However, this latter kind of labour, the virtuosic performance, has grown to become a dominant category of waged labour, rather than a special case or exception as it was for Marx. Writing now, Paolo Virno takes up this subject virtuosic labour, which he argues is now the "prototype" of waged labour in post-Fordism.[99]

Virno defines the work of the virtuoso as "activity which finds its own fulfillment (that is, its own purpose) in itself, without objectifying itself into an end product, without settling into a 'finished product,' or into an object which would

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[96] Ibid., 1044.
[97] Ibid., 1047.
[98] Ibid., 1047-8.
[99] Paolo Virno, "Virtuosity and Revolution: The Political Theory of Exodus," trans. Ed Emory in *Radical Thought in Italy: A Potential Politics* eds. Paolo Virno and Michael Hardt (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1996), 191-3.

survive the performance. Secondly, it is an activity which requires the presence of

others, which exists only in the presence of an audience."[100] Thus, the labour of the

virtuoso cannot be separated from the subjects who create it, nor can it be divorced

from the presence of its recipients, rendering his notion of fetishism inapplicable to

this kind of virtuosity, or at least drastically mutating how such distance from

production might operate. This, to Virno, implies that virtuosic labour is always

inherently political; because it is executed linguistically and requires the presence of

others, he considers virtuosic labour to be political praxis.[101] He writes that,

"contemporary product becomes 'virtuosic' (and thus political) precisely because it

includes within itself linguistic experience as such."[102] What is expanded in these

exchanges is the workers' linguistic capacity, an increased shared space of common

meaning, which he draws under the rubric of Marx's concept of the general intellect:

> the post-Fordist virtuosos, 'performing' their own linguistic faculties, can not
> take for granted a determined *end product. General intellect* should not
> necessarily mean the aggregate of the knowledge acquired by the species, but
> the *faculty* of thinking; potential as such, not its countless particular realizations.
> The 'general intellect' is nothing but the *intellect in general*.[103]

What is ultimately produced and expanded in the post-Fordist economy for Virno is

the shared space of collective meaning, an expanded capacity to understand one

another and a non-State public sphere. Thus, Virno draws attention to how virtuosic

at-work communication breeds a new ground for political action, directing our

attention to an ontological priority of mental states or affects as sites of resistance to

capitalism.

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[100] Paolo Virno, *A Grammar of the Multitude* trans. Isabella Bertoletti, James Cascaito and Andrea Casson (Los Angeles: Semiotext(e), 2004), 52.
[101] Virno, "Virtuosity and Revolution," 192-3.
[102] Virno, Grammar of the Multitude, 56.
[103] Ibid., 66 (italics in the original).

Interactive and Emotional Labour

C. Wright Mills' 1951 study *White Collar: The American Middle Classes* pointed to a new category of labour that he saw emerging in America: a white-collar class of workers who work with people, symbols and ideas rather than producing things, effectively putting subjectivity to work.[104] He writes that,

> In the world of the small entrepreneur, men sold goods to one another; in the new society of employees, they first of all sell their services. The employer of manual services buys the workers' labor, energy, and skill; the employer of many white-collar services, especially salesmanship, also buys the employees' social personalities. Working for wages with another's industrial property involves a sacrifice of time, power, and energy to the employer; working as a salaried employee often involves in addition the sacrifice of one's self to a multitude of 'consumers' or clients or managers.[105]

In salesmanship, he argues, workers are thus implicated in what he terms a "personality market," in which "personal or even intimate traits of the employee are drawn into the sphere of exchange."[106]

Arlie Russell Hochschild takes up this class of workers in 1983's *The Managed Heart*, which attends to how this relation holds for "pink collar" service workers. She chronicles the training and at-work responsibilities of flight attendants in order to address the psychological, social and political consequences of workers' engagement in what she terms "emotional labour," meaning that which requires the regimentation of displayed emotions as a term of employment. She defines emotional labour as,

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[104] C. Wright Mills, *White Collar: The American Middle Classes* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1951), 65.

[105] Ibid., 183.

[106] Ibid., 182. Mills also addresses the emergence of what he calls a "salesmanship mentality," which prefigures the emergence of the entrepreneurial subjectivity (or "tipped subjectivity") produced in workers addressed in Chapter Three.

> the management of feeling to create a publicly observable facial and bodily display(…) this labor requires one to induce or suppress feeling in order to sustain the outward countenance that produces the proper state of mind in others—in this case, the sense of being cared for in a convivial and safe place.[107]

While human emotion is always submitted to layered regimes of performance and social obligation, she finds that one of the key components in the production of experience in the personal services is a separation of at-work emotional states and performances from the felt emotions of the person who performs them. Because the service worker whose activity is integrated into the capitalist sphere of value does not, as it may appear, sell his or her labour directly to the customer who uses the service. In the majority of services, this labour is first of all sold to and paid for by the capitalist, who then remarkets and sells this work on the commodity market.[108] In service, employee affectivity becomes a productive factor that must be managed and controlled alongside traditional labour aspects such as speed and efficiency, in order to effectively "produce" a quality commodity experience. This gives the employer both the incentive and justification to monitor and discipline worker behaviours, affectivity and their very personalities as sites of labour and thus of managerial control.[109]

Hochschild dedicates a great deal of attention to the marketing of affect, which is particularly pronounced in the airline industry, where flight attendants' good graces and fantastic sexuality feature prominently in both corporate

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[107] Arlie Russell Hochschild, *Managed Heart: Commercialization of Human Feeling*, 20th anniversary edition (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003), 7.

[108] Braverman, *Labor and Monopoly Capital*, 260; John Urry, "Work, Production and Social Relations," *Work, Employment and Society*, 4:2 (1990), 271-4.

[109] Leidner, "Rethinking Questions of Control," 30.

discourses and the popular imagination. The marketing of authentic emotional warmth means that employee affectivity becomes a productive factor that must be managed and controlled in order to effectively "produce" a consistently gratifying commodity experience. Where affect is a term of employment, workers' facial expressions, turns of speech and mood become subject to organizational regimentation. Further, the increased advertising and marketing on this one point, not to mention the multitudinous representations of service in the mass media, foregrounds the constructedness of warm service, reminding consumers that all potential clients who walk through the door are interpellated as recipients of this congenial munificence, which are not, of course, genuine acts inspired by one's resplendent person.[110] Thus, she argues, a surfeit of marketed affable experiences leads to a greater cultural emphasis upon authenticity. As Hochschild remarks, since "advertisements, training, notions of professionalism, and dollar bills have intervened between the smiler and the smiled upon, it takes an extra effort to imagine that spontaneous warmth can exist in uniform—because companies now advertise spontaneous warmth, too."[111] She finds that the obligatory warmth of the "emotional proletariat" is rejected, as customers "subtract the commercial motive and collect the personal remainders matter-of-factly, almost automatically" in order to "ferret out the remaining gestures of a private gift exchange"[112]—cynically engaging with service workers while still expecting them to be sincere. To remain

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[110] See Philip Crang, "It's Showtime: On the Workplace Geographies of Display in a Restaurant in Southeast England." In Ash Amin and Nigel Thrift (eds.) *The Blackwell Cultural Economy Reader* (Malden: Blackwell, 2004), 309; Gerald Mars and Michael Nicod, *World of Waiters* (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1984), 28.
[111] Hochschild, *Managed Heart*, 5.
[112] Ibid., 192.

competitive, service providers must thus engage in rigidly selective hiring practices and train their workers to not only display, but to actually *feel* the correct emotional states.

Hochschild draws attention to another key aspect of the emotional labour of provisioning care: in order to correctly articulate the emotion being expressed, the worker must appear as if no work is being done, that the correct emotional state is actually felt, and not produced as the product of emotional labour. When what is displayed is good cheer and taking pleasure in serving, she argues that, "to show that the enjoyment takes effort is to do the job poorly."[113] This aspect of service labour functions to make this work invisible, so that while one might appreciate the material actions of service workers as labour—the fetching of foods, running errands, and so on—the emotional components of their at-work comportment are not considered to be labour per se:

> The emotion work of enhancing the status and well-being of others is a form of what Ivan Illich has called 'shadow labor,' an unseen effort, which, like housework, does not quite count as labor but is nevertheless crucial to getting other things done. As with doing housework well, the trick is to erase any evidence of effort, to offer only the clean house and the welcoming smile.[114]

By highlighting this aspect of emotional labour, Hochschild essentially preserves the Marxist character of the fetish, where the history of a commodity's production is invisible in its consumption. In spite of the fact that the service worker is visibly, tangibly present, working, the erasure of the fact that this work is, in fact, work serves to erase the labour from emotional or care provisioning.

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[113] Hochschild, *Managed Heart*, 8.
[114] Ibid., 167; Illich, *Shadow Work*.

Hochschild's primary concern is with the instrumentalization of "faces and feelings" that accompanies this appropriation of emotional performance into the capitalist scheme of value, and she worries that, "when emotional labor is put into the public marketplace, it behaves like a commodity."[115] She argues that in order to fulfill their at-work obligations to display emotional states that they are not necessarily feeling, such as exuding patience and concern for a dour client, many service workers retreat into "deep acting" and other dramatic techniques to render a split between their displayed and felt emotions. She argues that in service work, "smiling is separated from its usual function, which is to express a personal feeling, and attached to another one—expressing a company feeling," so as to better accommodate the corporate marketing of its employees good will.[116] In order to fulfill their obligations to supply appropriate emotional responses in interactions with customers, service workers must divorce themselves from idiosyncratic regimes of private emotional responses and present the emotional states mandated by the kind of work they are performing and that is imposed from above by employers. These repeated articulations of emotional dissonance, she posits, can lead interactive service workers to develop an incapacity to emote genuinely in at-work and interpersonal exchanges. She fears that, "a private emotional system has been subordinated to commercial logic, and it has been changed by it."[117]

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[115] Ibid., 14. See also Amy S. Wharton, "Service with a Smile: Understanding the Consequences of Emotional Labor." In Cameron Lynne Macdonald and Carmen Sirianni (eds.) *Working in the Service Society* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1996); Rebecca J. Erickson and Amy S. Wharton, "Inauthenticity and Depression: Assessing the Consequences of Interactive Service Work," *Work and Occupations* 24:2 (1997).
[116] Hochschild, *Managed Heart*, 127.
[117] Ibid., 187.

Her focus on the gravity of this emotional dissonance serves to forge a connection between the manual labours of manufactory workers and the emotional displays of service personnel. Comparing factory workers and flight attendants, she argues that, "in order to survive in their jobs, they must mentally detach themselves—the factory worker from his own body and physical labor, and the flight attendant from her own feelings and emotional labor."[118] Thus, both kinds of workers are estranged from the means of production—for the service workers, however, this entails a separation from their own bodies and personalities as instruments of labour. Hochschild's insistence on this point appears to be motivated by a desire to retain alienation as central to the experience of service industry workers.

In his early writing, Marx outlines four aspects of alienation: first, the worker is alienated from the products of her labour, because these are owned and controlled by others; secondly, the worker is alienated from the labour process, because she has no control over the means of production, and the activity of labour is empty except as a means of obtaining a wage; third, the worker is alienated from other people because the production of commodities reduces human relations to object relations and forges the antagonistic nature of a classed society; and finally, the worker is alienated from his or her own human nature, from the "species essence."[119] All of these aspects are made explicit in Hochschild's account. The service worker must to some degree be separated from the products of her labour,

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[118] Ibid., 17.

[119] Karl Marx, *Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts of 1844* trans. Martin Milligan (Moscow: Foreign Language Publications House, 1961); Judy Cox, "An Introduction to Marx's Theory of Alienation" *International Socialism* 79 (1998) available online at http://pubs.socialistreviewindex.org.uk/isj79/cox.htm.

which are, after all, produced in the emotional states of another person. Additionally, the service worker produces emotive displays that are mandated by her organizational employer and by implicitly agreed-upon cultural norms for a given serious milieu, and thus retains little control over what kinds of displays can be appropriately expressed; in this dimension, the first two types of alienation are achieved, for the service worker has no control over either the "objects" produced (emotive states), nor over the means of production (subjectivity). Hochschild is also at pains to argue that this at-work relation distances interactive service workers from others, by making the people with whom workers have interpersonal contact into clients, into instruments to which their labour is applied, and she also tentatively posits that this has ramifications for workers' social interactions off the job.[120] Finally, service workers' alienation from their own human nature is demonstrated in the bifurcation between experienced and expressed emotions in at-work encounters, a condition that Marx finds in manufactory workers as well. He writes that, "the worker feels himself only when he is not working; when he is working he does not feel himself."[121] "Not feeling oneself," then, becomes the primary expression of the alienation of interactive service workers.

This idea of "not feeling oneself" motivates two of the most useful critiques of Hochschild's work, which bear addressing. The first is leveled by Kathi Weeks against both Hochschild's and Mills' accounts, which she argues falter in posing the answer to this problematic relation in a somehow authentic self that exists outside

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[120] See Carlone, "Contradictions of Communicative Labor."
[121] Marx, Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts.

of and prior to its alienation in work.[122] Hochschild's model has also been critiqued

for its presumption of a rigidly top-down model in which control and power are

unilaterally imposed upon the service worker by her employer while denying her

any agency or power. For instance, Bolton and Boyd argue that service workers are

in fact skilled emotional managers who use their ability to control both their own

and clients' reactions in order to produce desired results, namely happy customers,

in order to secure greater income. They find that Hochschild's central premise

discounts how skilled emotional labour can empower workers in their interactions

with clients and customers.[123] Further, they note, the service worker, as the

producer of emotional states, owns the means of production, unlike her industrial

peers.[124] This, however, means that these affective skills are developed outside of

the workplace, as a set of social responses and aptitudes, deepening the exploitation

of workers by pushing the acquisition of labour skills outside of working hours,

while skewing traditional categories of labour relations.[125]

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[122] Kathi Weeks, "Life Within and Against Work: Affective Labor, Feminist Critique, and Post-Fordist Politics." *ephemera: theory and politics in organization* 7:1 (2007), 247-8. Instead, Weeks proposes that, "Rather than a true self versus its estranged form, or a reproductive sphere of practice separate from a sphere of properly capitalist production, an alternative critical strategy might thus hinge instead on the distinction between life and work and a vision of what subjects in relation could become in contrast to what they are," (248).

[123] Sharon C. Bolton and Carol Boyd, "Trolley Dolly or Skilled Emotional Manager?: Moving on from Hochschild's *Managed Heart*." *Work, Employment and Society* 17:2 (2003). For a discussion of this ability to take pride in managing customers in the context of restaurant service specifically, see Diane Kirby, *Barmaids: A History of Women's Work in Pubs* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997) and Paules, *Dishing It Out*, 278.

[124] Bolton and Boyd, "Trolley Dolly," 293.

[125] The assertion of the "deskilled" nature of service labour, found for example in Braverman's account, has come under heavy fire, particularly from feminist scholars who argue that this position discounts the feminine nature of some interpersonal skills while privileging the "masculine" skills of manufacturing. See Chris Warhurst, Paul Thompson and Dennis Nickson, "Labor Process Theory: Putting the Materialism Back into the Meaning of Service Work." In Marek Korczynski and Cameron Lynne MacDonald (eds.), *Service Work: Critical Perspectives* (New York: Routledge, 2009), 102.

Hochschild's theory of emotional labour, then, while rarely citing political economic literature, can be read as an endeavor to map relations of alienation and exploitation onto workers who do not (necessarily) produce material goods. While the qualities of the emotional worker are ever more grounded in the person of the worker—self as product, smile as asset, language and subjectivity as the means of production—the worker is still as alienated and obscured by the fetish as ever in her account. Her insistence on the persistence of the fetish relation in consumption and the alienation of emotional workers from the means of production—their very bodies and personalities—thus implies a sort of doubling of exploitation, where traditional modes of exploitation are heightened or accelerated through the introduction of another layer of performance and management that permeates beyond the physical and economic positioning of the worker to a commercialization of feeling, a penetration of his or her very subjectivity. As Judith Rollins notes, where there is a personal relationship that accompanies work, work can be made, "more profoundly exploitative than other comparable occupations grows out of the precise element that makes it unique: the personal relationship between employer and employee."[126] Thus the creation of new modes of labour, such as in interactivity, calls for renewed analysis into the kinds of exploitation and social difference that are thereby produced, moving beyond more conventional Marxist frameworks.

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[126] Judith Rollins, *Between Women* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1985), 156. See also Carmen and Sirianni, *Working in the Service Society*, 15.

Emotional Labour vs. Affective Labour

Autonomist conceptions of virtuosic work are expanded in Maurizio

Lazzarato's influential account of what he calls "immaterial labour." He defines this

as "the labor that produces the informational and cultural content of the commodity;"

it refers to both the work of marketers, pollsters and informational workers, as well

as the articulation of cultural and creative standards, tastes, public opinions and

fashions.[127] This labour is highly collaborative, taking place in flows of information,

and its "products" are communication itself. Thus, this labour affects subjects in

their roles as both producers and consumers:

> The particularity of the commodity produced through immaterial labor (its essential use value being given by its value as informational and cultural content) consists in the fact that it is not destroyed in the act of consumption, but rather enlarges, transforms, and creates the 'ideological' and cultural environment of the consumer. This commodity does not produce the physical capacity of labor power; instead, it transforms the person who uses it. Immaterial labor produces first and foremost a 'social relationship.'[128]

The capitalist control enacted in the execution of immaterial labour is thus

rearticulated in its consumption, which in turn reproduces control in consumers'

labours. As Jason Read argues, this not only integrates the production of subjectivity

into capitalism, but also makes it directly profitable, simultaneously extracting

surplus value from immaterial labour and reproducing demand for its products.[129]

In immaterial labour, Lazzarato argues, "the process of the production of

communication tends to become immediately the process of valorization," and

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[127] Lazzarato, "Immaterial Labor," 133.
[128] Ibid., 138.
[129] Jason Read, *Micro-Politics of Capital: Marx and the Prehistory of the Present* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 2009), 9.

subjectivity is rendered a use value.[130] He reminds, however, that we cannot confine subjectivity to merely "at-work" interactions, so that all subjective actions must be brought into relation with the capitalist mode of production and made susceptible to capitalist control. Lazzarato holds that in immaterial labour, capitalist power is more totalitarian than past forms, since it makes workers' subjectivities a site of control: "capitalism seeks to involve even the worker's personality and subjectivity within the production of value."[131] Here he echoes other sociological and philosophical accounts of interpersonal labour in the assertion that the mandate of care in service work entitles management to interfere with how emotions are felt and expressed, rendering subjectivity under the administration of capital.[132]

While the emotional labour of the service worker is necessarily alienated from her to some degree—it is, again, largely conceived as a feeling or impression that is produced in the perspective of another person—as we noted in the discussion of virtuosity above, it cannot be wholly divorced from either its producer or its audience. This strange relation between a feeling that is internal and external, shared and individual, is perhaps best expressed in the concept of affect. Affect is a mutual relationship, rather than merely a display or reception of gushing enthusiasm or one-sided congeniality. It is interactivity, a relation. As Michael Hardt argues, "Affects require us, as the term suggests, to enter the realm of causality, but they offer a complex view of causality because the affects belong simultaneously to

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[130] Lazzarato, "Immaterial Labor," 144; italics removed.
[131] Lazzarato, "Immaterial Labor," 136.
[132] Arlie Hochschild, "Feeling Management: From Private to Commercial Uses" in *The Blackwell Cultural Economy Reader* eds. Ash Amin and Nigel Thrift (Oxford: Blackwell, 2003); Leidner, "Rethinking Questions of Control," 31.

both sides of the causal relationship. They illuminate, in other words, both our

powers to affect the world around us and our power to be affected by it, along with

the relationship between those powers."[133] This definition might seem intentionally

disruptive and confusing in the context of a server-served relationship, where it

seems to be so clearly the server who works to produces affects, and the customer

who receives their bounty. However, if the affect produced is considered only in

terms of the emotional worker, then it is too easily reduced to an obligatory

spectacle of false cheer without authenticity. In order to consider the customer, who

must also produce an emotional state based on relations with the interactive service

worker for good service to "work," then affect as a mutual relation must be

foregrounded. The worker must produce the perception of good service, but this

perception must be produced from the perspective of the served. As one waitress

succinctly puts it, "Really good service is a collaboration."[134] Using Hardt's definition

of affect to some degree answers the question posed above about the nature of good

service: is it merely a fulfillment of a worker's mandated obligations, or does it

require the customer's cooperation and perception that the service was, in fact,

good? The answer, I argue, lies somewhere between the two: while the worker has

upheld her end of the bargain in providing what constitutes, in her and the

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[133] Michael Hardt, "Forward," in *The Affective Turn: Theorizing the Social* eds. Patricia Ticineto Clough and Jean Halley (Durham: Duke University Press, 2007), *ix.* In this dissertation, to the greatest extent possible, I have tried to use "emotional labour" to describe the work performed by service workers to modulate their emotional displays, and "affective labour" to describe the way in which this is made reciprocal, where it produces a relationship or describes the product of the worker's emotional labour in the affective state of the customer. Sianne Ngai, in her work on the "minor" emotions, argues that: 'At the end of the day, the difference between emotion and affect is still intended to solve the same basic and fundamentally descriptive problem it was coined in psychoanalytic practice to solve: that of distinguishing first-person from third-person feeling, and, by extension, feeling that is contained by an identity from feeling that is not." Ngai, *Ugly Feelings* (Cambridge and London: Harvard University Press, 2005), 27. However, both the definitions of affects and how this plays out in service are manifold.
[134] Waitress Beulah Compton quoted in Owings, *Hey Waitress*, 105.

organizational perspective, "good service," it's not entirely good if the customer doesn't perceive it to be so. Affect both is and is not entirely separate from the worker and the service client: it is a relation of mutuality.

Life in the Social Factory

Virno notes that the key qualities desirable in work today are adaptability and linguistic aptitude, traits that are produced not through at-work or scholastic discipline but through socialization outside of work.[135] He argues that this implies a double movement, that socialization appears independent of production, while the organization of labour has been put to work to socialize workers with the qualities needed for optimal performance, so that social lives train subjects for work. Part of this manifests as what Pierre Bourdieu calls *habitus*, the embodied understanding of a lifetime's social practices that situate subjects as actors within different fields. This concept is important in reading interactive labour because for communication or service to "work" relies on a shared body of codes and meanings; while the production of these folds into the general intellect, the ability to harness them or to symbolically "mean" correctly at work depends on possessing an appropriate tacit or intuitive bearing and performing it—as does the client/customer's recognizing this as the "correct" way to behave. Such understandings become part of one's value in work in public.

The way that social lives are implicated in labour value and work lives creep into leisure resonates with Marx's conception of real subsumption, which he

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[135] Paolo Virno, "Ambivalence of Disenchantment," 14.

distinguishes from formal subsumption. Formal subsumption occurs where capital

encounters labour process from an older mode of production and subsumes it as

is.[136] In formal subsumption, the labour process remains unchanged, but it begins to

produce commodities for capital rather than goods for direct exchange without

surplus. At some point in formal subsumption, the mode of production "begins to

become differentiated within itself," in scale, and real subsumption emerges from

this as the specifically capitalist mode of production. In real subsumption, the actual

conditions of labour change, imposing cooperative or socialized labour that is

directly productive for capital and creating relative surplus value.[137] Production

processes are conceived by capital, with only capital's interests in mind.[138] In short,

with formal subsumption capital can only take over existing processes; in real

subsumption it can *invent*.

Hardt and Negri argue that real subsumption has now expanded so that it has

no outside, forming what they call the social factory. In this, Negri argues, "the

capitalist supersession of the law of value…dislocates the relations of exploitation as

a whole. It transforms exploitation into a global social relation."[139] It permeates the

production of feelings and knowledges, such that, "social production is dominated

by the specifically capitalist mode of production"[140] Essentially, in the social factory,

the relations that characterize production saturate all of society to invest daily life

with the disciplinary regimes normally associated with at-work discipline. As Read

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[136] Karl Marx, *Capital*, 1021.
[137] Marx, *Capital,* 1024.
[138] Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri, *The Labour of Dionysus: A Critique of the State Form* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1994), 224.
[139] Antonio Negri, *Marx Beyond Marx: Lessons on the Grundrisse* trans. Harry Cleaver, Michael Ryan and Maurizio Viano (Brooklyn: Autonomedia, 1991), xvi.
[140] Hardt and Negri, *Labors of Dionysus,* 224-5.

notes, "In formal subsumption the production of subjectivity is linked primarily to reproduction, while in real subsumption the production of subjectivity itself becomes productive for capital."[141] The real subsumption of capital can be read as a simultaneous expansion into more areas of social life and its becoming microscopic in its incursions into the subjectivities used to valorize collaborative knowledge: "In real subsumption, it is no longer possible to identify production within the limited space of the factory—every act of production incorporates knowledge, instruments, discoveries, and social relations that are not present in the limited space or time of the factory. The factory becomes a social factory."[142]

Personhood itself becomes part of the capital for securing income; Hochschild herself puts it succinctly when she argues how a smile becomes an emotional worker's "asset."[143] Part of this, and implicit in much of the research on emotional and aesthetic labour, is that vast elements of the "skills" of contemporary labour are developed on one's own time outside of the workplace. As David Carlone notes, today job training and communication education "intervene in the general intellect, channeling it toward the production of economic value. In this way, communication and culture invigorate capitalism."[144] Thus, workers are not paid for time devoted to gaining these skills, just as in many emotional labour accounts they are not compensated for performing these elements of their work in the workplace. However, this dimension of emotional labour can be read slightly differently using Virno or Lazzarato, who would argue that what is developed in the worker is a

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[141] Read, *Micropolitics,* 136; all ital in original.
[142] Ibid., 122.
[143] Hochschild, *Managed Heart*, 4.
[144] Carlone, "Contradictions of Communicative Labor," 162-3.

capacity for language, the general intellect, which both inheres in the individual worker and enriches us all. But it also uses this intellect, as Carlone, again, reminds: "job-training students learn to monitor themselves so that they may perform appropriate behaviours. In other words, the communication commonplace of mutuality provides a philosophy and corresponding set of technologies for customer service work."[145]

Compensation and Cynicism

Alongside this delegation of learning skills to workers, much of the labour of earning has been tipped toward worker autonomy such that in many fields pay relations are directly linked to workers' job performance and, by extension, to the performance of the capitalist organization itself. Robert Reich argues that this transition to "soft money"—where salaries can just as easily shrink as grow—is one of the characteristic features of the new economy.[146] This income can take on many forms, such tips garnered more or less based as a percentage of sales, stock options, sales commissions and bonuses; what these new forms share is an alignment of workers' earnings with their ability to act as an entrepreneur, specifically in such a way that workers interests and those of their employers are linked through shared earning objectives. This reorientation of workers' incomes is also significant in the way in which it reorganizes the relationship with customers, who increasingly have a direct impact on earnings, either by making a sale that will secure a bonus, or who

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[145] Ibid., 166.
[146] Reich, Future of Success, 98.

directly augment or provide workers' incomes.[147] This entails a shift in workers'

subjectivities, toward what Foucault calls *homo oeconomicus*, who acts "as an

entrepreneur of himself."[148]

The Italian autonomist school of political philosophy repeatedly returns to

the figure of the opportunist, a cynical subject who sees no singular goal, only

possibilities to be taken advantage of and rules to negotiate. Virno writes that,

"Opportunism, fear, and cynicism—resounding in the postmodern proclamation of

the end of history—*enter into production*."[149] He finds that opportunism has become

a part of production itself, as nihilism and alienation have shifted from being the

nasty consequence of capitalism to one of its primary drivers. (ie in

entrepreneurialism). A certain degree of cynicism is unavoidable in service work,

where the job mandates the repetitive performance of seemingly intimate or

organic social relations for cash, just as cynicism inevitably factors in when one pays

for it. Looking more closely at how contemporary service is structured enables an

investigation of how the mores of what we call "good service" structure and mystify

this relation for contemporary service producers and consumers.

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[147] Robin Leidner, *Fast Food, Fast Talk: Service Work and the Ritualization of Everyday Life* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996), 162; Carlone, "Contradictions of Communicative Labor," 159.

[148] Michel Foucault, *Birth of Biopolitics: Lectures at the Collège de France 1978-1979* trans. Graham Burchell (New York: Palgrave-MacMillan, 2008), 226.

[149] Virno, "Ambivalence of Disenchantment," 14; italics in the original. Both Virno and De Carolis argue that many of the traits of this opportunism, the fundament of which is freedom and flexibility, were in fact "concessions" made in response to radical demands of past generations. See Massimo de Carolis, "Toward a Phenomonelogy of Opportunism," trans. Michael Turits in Paolo Virno and Michael Hardt (eds.) *Radical Thought in Italy: A Potential Politics* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1996), 38.

Chapter Two: Social Relations in Restaurant Service

> "The only people who truly believe that customers are always right are the customers themselves."[150]

As John Urry has compellingly argued, what is consumed in interpersonal services such as tourism is the social relationship between server and served: "The quality of the social interaction is itself part of the service purchased."[151] This relationship is not merely an add-on or adjunct to its primary utilitarian functions—in the case of the restaurant, the biological necessity of eating, and the gustatory pleasure of eating well—it is a vital and central part of what restaurant customers consume and thus central to what interactive service workers produce. Food provision was one of the first services to premise itself upon the commoditization of experience, and restaurants inaugurated many of the customary affective regimes and modes of address that have since diffused into other services.[152] It can thus be considered a prototypical regime of interaction within tourism and hospitality industries. The restaurant server exemplifies what customers seek out in the social relations of service encounters, or what is expected of "good service."

When we talk about "good service" in restaurants, we mean some combination of the adequate and timely provision of food, the bodily work of serving it, as well as the performance of a persona that fulfills our expectations

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[150] Michael M. Lefever, *Restaurant Reality: A Manager's Guide*. (New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold, 1989, 18.

[151] Urry, *Tourist Gaze*, 60. See also Cobble, *Dishing It Out,* 45.

[152] For a discussion of restaurants as harbingers of new forms of capitalism, see Gary Alan Fine, *Kitchens: The Culture of the Restaurant* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996), 7-10. Susan Benson's *Counter Cultures* attends to similar structures in department store retail, and Urry's *Tourist Gaze* follows the early trajectory of the commoditization of experience in the early tourist industry in England.

about how a server should act. The standards of what is considered "good service"

in North America are so normalized that they often feel natural or self-evident. But,

as the last chapter showed, these standards emerge from somewhere—clients walk

into restaurants already possessing a sense of what they hope to find there, what

kinds of behaviours and styles of address are appropriate on their parts and those of

their servers, and the social relations that are engaged in when consuming "good

service." Literature in the field of hospitality management holds a general consensus

on what constitutes "good service" from the perspective of the customer: it is

defined by customers' expectations of service, based on their past experiences (or

consumption of mediated representations of) similar restaurants and how the

service provision deviates from or conforms to these expectations, either by

exceeding them or by falling short.[153] In short, it is customary. Both sides are

engaged in a habitus of good service, in which the non-discursive appreciation of

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[153] Mary Jo Bitner, Bernard H. Booms and Lois A. Mohr, "Critical Service Encounters: The Employee's Viewpoint" *Journal of Marketing* 58 (1994), 95-106; Kenneth E. Clow et. al., "The Antecedents of Consumer Expectations of Services: An Empirical Study Across Four Industries," *Journal of Services Marketing* 11:4 (1997); John A. Czepiel et. al., "Service Encounters: An Overview" pp. 3-15 in John A. Czepiel, Michael R. Solomon and Carol F. Surprenant (eds.) *The Service Encounter: Managing Employee/Customer Interaction in Service Businesses* (Lexington and Toronto: Lexington Books, 1985), 8-9; Amy R. Hubbert et. al. "Service Expectations: The Consumer versus the Provider," *International Journal of Service Industry Management* 6:1 (1995); Dawn Iacobucci and Amy Ostrom, "Gender Differences in the Impact of Core and Relational Aspects of Services on the Evaluation of Service Encounters," *Journal of Consumer Psychology* 2:3 (1993); Peter G. Klaus, "Quality Epiphenomenon: The Conceptual Understanding of Quality in Face-to-Face Service Encounters" pp. 17-33 in John A. Czepiel, Michael R. Solomon and Carol F. Surprenant (eds.) *The Service Encounter: Managing Employee/Customer Interaction in Service Businesses* (Lexington and Toronto: Lexington Books, 1985), 22; Peter K. Mills, *Managing Service Industries: Organizational Practices in a Postindustrial Economy* (Cambridge: Ballinger Publishing Company, 1986), 23; J. Richard McCallum and Wayne Harrison, "Interdependence in the Service Encounter" pp. 35-48 in John A. Czepiel, Michael R. Solomon and Carol F. Surprenant (eds.) *The Service Encounter: Managing Employee/Customer Interaction in Service Businesses* (Lexington and Toronto: Lexington Books, 1985), 41; Wendy S. Zabava Ford, "Customer expectations for interactions with Service Providers: Relationship versus encounter orientation and personalized service communication," *Journal of Applied Communication Research* 29:1 (2001); Robert Johnston, "Service transaction analysis: assessing and improving the customer's experience," *Managing Service Quality* 9:2 (1999), 102-9. Also, it bears repeating that these vary somewhat by geographical region and class. See Michael Lynn, "Geodemographic Differences in Knowledge About the Restaurant Tipping Norm," *Journal of Applied Social Psychology* 36:3 (2006).

each side's expectations go without saying or are tacitly defined and understood by both parties.[154] Customers determine what constitutes good service based on the good (or bad) service they've already received and evaluated as such in past encounters; this, in turn, is provided by servers who attempt to anticipate and respond to customer desires based on their own experiences with past customers (as well as past servers when they were customers). Service standards are informed by their cultural contexts, but they solidify and persevere even as contexts change, so that service norms bear traces of the social relations of their time. They can thus be read as mediations of social expectations about race, class and gender positions, and demonstrate what kinds of intimacy consumers seek out in their interactions with people who produce the sociability surrounding the commodification of dining in the experience economy.

This chapter picks up from the last chapter's historical excursis on the evolution of restaurants and how service standards and norms were produced alongside them, attending to how good service is staged in restaurants today following the feminization of restaurant service over the course of the 20th century and the emergence of the ideal of the sovereign consumer that accompanied this. It opens with a discussion of the nature of part of the restaurant commodity, the interactive aspects of the dining experience, in order to better analyze how service labour creates value and meaning in this context. I argue that customer expectations structure regimes of good service that seem spontaneous, individualized and

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[154] Pierre Bourdieu, *Practical Reason: On the Theory of Action* trans. Randall Johnson (Palo Alto, CA: Stanford University Press, 1998), 66-7; Pierre Bourdieu, *The Social Structures of the Economy* (Cambridge: Polity, 2005), 37; Carol Wolkowitz, *Bodies at Work*, (London: Sage, 2006), 20, 87.

autonomous, when for the worker they are often routine and habitual, requiring workers to produce the "illusion of spontaneity," or seemingly genuine friendliness, as part of a unique dining experience. This performance relies on the obfuscation of some kinds of restaurant service work, while other kinds of labour are showcased, creating something of a paradox: since service workers and restaurant customers are in the same place during the service encounter, it seems as though the relations of production are exposed, however much of this work is in fact displaced to backstage areas and not accessible to consumers. This tension, which I term "eclipsed exertion," makes it all the more important to address how customers and servers are constituted in the space of the restaurant encounter. The eclipsed exertion and the sincerity of workers' emotional performances also serve to validate and normalize the status differential that is performed in service relationships, which further reinforces and perpetuates customers' sense of consumer sovereignty. Thus, many of the habits and standards of restaurant service are structured precisely to reinforce and legitimize service norms.

Restaurants and the Commodification of Experience

As Joanne Finkelstein has written, "the restaurateur and waiter are united in the manufacture of an abstract event in which states of mind such as pleasure and a sense of ease are the products."[155] Today, much of what is consumed in the casual dining sector is the experience of dining out, of eating professionally prepared food in an atmospheric environment. First and foremost, restaurants turn meals and the experience of ordering and eating them into commodities, what has been termed a

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[155] Finkelstein, *Dining Out*, 56.

"commercialization of sustenance"[156] wherein "eating out has gradually come to be presented as an aesthetically governed practice."[157] Like many services, this constitutes an expansion of capital, making ever more dimensions of human life and interaction productive by making the reproductive work of subsistence profitable.[158] This commercialization of sustenance is about much more than mere nourishment; what is consumed is an experience, not only of the food but also of the atmosphere of the restaurant as a social space.[159] Restaurants epitomize what economists Joseph Pine II and James Gillmore term the "experience economy," in which the primary commodity bought and sold is the ephemeral pleasure of consuming the service itself—in this case, literally. They posit that, "As services, like goods before them, increasingly become commoditized… experiences have emerged as the next step in what we call the *progression of economic value.*"[160] As the services proliferate, the locus of both competitive advantage and customer expectations is the quality of the experience on offer, as the customer perceives it. Where there is a reallocation of emphasis from the mere consumption of a service to the

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[156] Alan Warde and Lydia Martens, "Eating Out and the Commercialization of Mental Life," *British Food Journal* 100:3 (1998), 148-9.

[157] Alan Warde, "Continuity and Change in British Restaurants, 1951-2001: Evidence from the *Good Food Guide*" pp. 229-243 in Marc Jacobs and Peter Scholliers (eds.) *Eating Out in Europe: Picnics, Gourmet Dining and Snacks since the Late Eighteenth Century* (Oxford and New York: Berg, 2003), 241.

[158] Braverman, Labor and Monopoly Capital, 359.

[159] Crang, "It's Showtime"; Dowling, "Producing the Dining Experience," 120; John S. A. Edwards and Inga-Britt Gustaffson, "The Room and Atmosphere as Aspects of the Meal: A Review," *Journal of Foodservice* 19, 2008; Egerton-Thomas, *How to Open*, xiii, 9, 15, 132; Finkelstein, *Dining Out*; Jacobs and Scholliers, "*Vaut or ne vaut pas*," 6; Breffni M. Noone et. al., "Perceived Service Encounter Pace and Customer Satisfaction: An Empirical Study of Restaurant Experiences," *Journal of Service Management* 20(4), 2009; B. Pine and Gilmore, *Experience Economy*; J.D. Pratton, "Customer Satisfaction and Waiting Staff," *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management* 16:6 (2004); Michael Riley, "Marketing Eating Out: The Influence of Social Culture and Innovation," *British Food Journal* 96:10 (1994); Warde, "Continuity and Change," 241; Varda Wasserman, Anat Rafaeli and Avraham N. Kluger, "Aesthetic Symbols as Emotional Cues," pp. 140-165 in Stephen Fineman (ed.) *Emotion in Organizations* (London: Sage, 2000), 142.

[160] B. Joseph Pine II and James H. Gillmore, "Welcome to the Experience Economy," *Harvard Business Review* July-Aug 1998, 97; italics in the original.

consumption of an experience, there is a parallel shift in emphasis or expectations:

the service transaction is no longer primarily about its usefulness, but about its

quality. The experience itself is not only useful—in that a meal is consumed and a

few hours' respite from hunger thus obtained—it's pleasurable. The server who acts

as the face of the restaurant becomes in some sense a part of this commodity, at

least in their exchanges with the clientele and for the duration of the dining event.

This experience must be produced in the perspective of the clientele,

constituting what we might consider a kind of affective experience value. In the

cutthroat restaurant industry, as one study notes, "establishments strive to insure

product differentiation separate from price and convenience. Restaurants strive to

differentiate themselves in cultural *meaning* as well as cost."[161] Since the restaurant

industry is extremely competitive, the provision of experience and thus of service is

of paramount importance to the welfare of an enterprise. Much of this has to do with

the aesthetic and social character of the restaurant itself—the lighting, music, décor,

atmosphere, quality of the food and beverages served, presence of other customers,

and so on. However, a good deal of the experience is constituted directly in the good

service of the wait staff one interacts with. In fact, numerous studies of consumer

satisfaction with restaurant experiences have found that communication with

service personnel is important in their evaluation of an experience.[162] This suggests

that at least to some degree, customers may "like" a restaurant when they "like"

their servers, making the quality of this interaction, engendered by the affective

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[161] Fine, *Kitchens*, 9.
[162] Clow et. al., "The Antecedents," 241; Christine Lundberg and Lena Mossberg, "Learning by Sharing: Waiters' and Bartenders' Experiences of Service Encounters," *Journal of Foodservice* 19, 2008, 45; Pratton, "Customer Satisfaction."

labour of service workers, a key factor in the production of value.[163] As Emma

Dowling points out, because servers' work toward the production of experience is

an integral part of the product being sold in restaurants, their "labour as affective

workers was constituent not attributive."[164] That is, the servers' affective labour is

itself directly productive of capital, rather than merely facilitating or complementing

it. Because of the competitive nature of the restaurant business, servers' affective

work, and thus, by extension, their personalities themselves, come to constitute a

part of the restaurant's capital, a composite piece of what's on offer. This, in turn,

gives restaurant management a significant stake in monitoring and ensuring the

quality of servers' affects, effectively rendering their at-work demeanours under the

auspices of the establishment's control, and according the regulation of experience a

markedly disciplinary nature.[165]

Finkelstein contends that dining in restaurants commoditizes pleasure, writing

that "dining out has the capacity to transform emotions into commodities which are

made available to the individual as if they were consumer items," and that people

eat in restaurants in order to seek out emotions that they feel are lacking elsewhere

in their lives.[166] But to do so requires a certain suspension of disbelief on the part of

customers, and techniques to convey authenticity and individualize the service

relationship on the part of the wait staff. As Stanley Hollander notes, events such as

dining out are often important and special for customers, but they are mundane and

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[163] Dowling, "Producing the Dining Experience," 120; Constanti and Gibbs "Emotional Labour and Surplus Value;" Mike Sosteric,"Subjectivity and the Labour Process: A Case Study in the Restaurant Industry," *Work, Employment and Society* 10:2 (1996), 298.
[164] Dowling, "Producing the Dining Experience," 121. See also Sherman, *Class Acts*, 20.
[165] Leidner, "Rethinking Questions," 30.
[166] Finkelstein, *Dining Out*, 4.

routine for the workers who facilitate them. Furthermore, since emotions are part of

what is consumed in service, he holds that "many people want special treatment in

some service situations."[167] This means that restaurants and servers need to find

ways to make the service experience seem special in order for it to have the

emotional qualities desired by consumers. As one study puts it, "In the minds of

those receiving the service, then, there is always the possibility of resentment that

something so special to them can be treated so routinely by those who provide it,

even though it is obvious that such an attitude implies competence."[168] Hochschild

regards this as fallout from the increasing pervasiveness of the commercialization of

feelings, as consumers

> have become adept at recognizing and discounting commercialized feeling: 'Oh,
> they have to be friendly, that's their job.' This enables us to ferret out the
> remaining gestures of a private gift exchange: 'Now *that* smile was really meant
> just for me.' We subtract the commercial motive and collect the personal
> remainders matter-of-factly, almost automatically, so ordinary has the
> commercialization of feeling become.[169]

Thus the emotional labour of restaurant servers is structured by the desire to

sustain this illusion, that the affective work of convivial care is autonomous and

individualized, what we might term an "illusion of spontaneity," rather than the

rehearsal of a standardized performance. The illusion of spontaneity is the

appearance of creating a singular service experience in an encounter that relies

heavily on the server's competence, grounded in his or her performance of the same

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[167] Stanley C. Hollander, "A Historical Perspective on the Service Encounter" in John A. Czepiel, Michael R. Solomon and Carol F. Surprenant (eds.) *The Service Encounter: Managing Employee/Customer Interaction in the Service Business*. (Lexington: Lexington Books**,** 1985), 50. See also Donald C. Pelz, "Interaction and Attitudes between Scientists and the Auxiliary Staff: I. Viewpoint of Staff," *Administrative Science Quarterly* 4:3 (Dec 1959); Heather Ferguson Bulan, Rebecca J. Erickson and Amy Wharton, "Doing for Others on the Job: The Affective Requirements of Service Work, Gender, and Emotional Well-Being," *Social Problems* 44:2 (1997), 238.
[168] Mars and Nicod, *World of Waiters*, 35.
[169] Hochschild, *Managed Heart*, 190.

service rituals and at-work tasks in serial encounters with a restaurant's clientele. For the customer, the service event is unique, while for the server it is one of many engaged simultaneously (a server works for several tables at the same time) and serially (attending to a succession of tables over the course of a given shift and a longer period of employment).

While restaurant service relies on the illusion of spontaneity in order to stimulate customer delight and produce the appearance of a natural and artless relationship, it also relies heavily on what Robin Leidner refers to as service scripts.[170] In Leidner's case studies, in fast food and insurance sales, these scripts are highly rationalized and either learned rote or prompted by machinery and managers. In restaurants, however, the illusion of spontaneity structures these scripts more casually—servers have a stock or toolbox of scripts to turn to in the provision of service, but must also work around and beyond them. As one account notes, "wait staff must be able to read and interpret customers' needs, judge what the customer expects, select service actions and scripts, and then deliver that service to the customer."[171] This does mean engaging in the highly routinized service scripts, but also of adding personal touches that disguise the routineity of service and help to maintain the illusion of spontaneity. As Leidner holds, "Interactive service workers may have to walk a fine line between not doing enough emotion work and thereby offending customers or clients by making them feel that they are

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[170] Robin Leidner, *Fast Food, Fast Talk: Service Work and the Ritualization of Everyday Life* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996), 9-12; Mary Gatta, "Balancing Trays and Smiles: What Restaurant Servers Teach Us About Hard Work in the Service Economy." In Sharon C. Bolton and Maeve Houlihan (eds.) *Work Matters: Critical Reflections on Contemporary Work* (Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan, 2009), 120.
[171] Gatta, "Balancing Trays and Smiles," 122.

not being treated as people, and trying too hard to seem personally involved in the interaction and thereby offending customers or clients by being perceived as insincere or manipulative."[172] Additionally, several accounts posit that it is here, in the skill of reading a situation and responding to it using one's personal resources, the ability to correctly assess and perform the habitus of service, that servers find much of the pride and satisfaction of their jobs.[173] To successfully do good service, though, workers must enunciate these scripts as if for the first time, and perform the emotional states that accompany such novelty.

As with many services, production and consumption are ostensibly merged in the space of the restaurant, which means, at least in theory, that restaurant patrons have direct and empirical access to at least some of the conditions of production surrounding their dining experience.[174] Restaurants are structured in ways that help to maintain the illusion of spontaneity by selectively showcasing and concealing various kinds of labour in order to produce the sense of good service that is unscripted and sincere. For instance, while the hot and dirty scrub work of the dishwasher is generally consigned to some hellacious back corner of the kitchen, bartenders are often prominently showcased mixing drinks behind their bars. Both the backstage kitchen and the erasure of some of the productive work of servers, that of the physical effort of serving and the emotional effort of doing so congenially,

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[172] Leidner, Fast Food, Fast Talk, 35.
[173] Bolton and Houlihan, "Trolly Dolly"; Gatta, "Balancing Trays and Smiles," 123; Paules, *Dishing It Out*.
[174] Lisa Adkins, *Gendered Work: Sexuality, Family and the Labour Market* (Buckingham and Philadelphia: Open University Press, 1995), 7; Braverman, *Labour and Monopoly Capital*, 360; Carlone "Contradictions of Communicative Labour"; Marek Korczynski, "Understanding the Contemporary Lived Experience of Service Work." In Marek Morczynski and Cameron Lynne MacDonald (eds.) *Service Work: Critical Perspectives* (New York: Routledge, 2009), 3; Claus Offe, *Disorganized Capitalism: Contemporary Transformation of Work and Politics* (Boston: MIT Press, 1985); Taylor, *Counter Cultures*, 66; William Foote Whyte, *Human Relations in the Service Industry* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1948), 17.

are a part of what we might term "eclipsed exertion." The consumption of labour as leisure relies upon conventions of good service where the affective and sensorial dimensions of the restaurant experience are promoted at the expense of productive dimensions, and the eclipsed exertion functions to sustain the illusions that underlie the consumption of experience. I use the term "eclipse" deliberately, for this relation describes not a complete concealment of labour, but its displacement onto selective sites such that some aspects are highlighted or showcased, while others are cast into the background by the very showiness of that which is foregrounded.[175]

The emphasis on individualized and sincere service is also implicated in how workers' interactions with their clienteles are observed, disciplined and generally managed. As Philip Crang notes, "surveillance must not be too intense or it itself can harm product quality; managers looming over waiting staff and diners as they talk would both be intrusive and make rather too explicit the corporate functionality of the interaction."[176] To maintain the illusion of spontaneity, the management of restaurant servers must also be elided for customers' benefit. As du Gay writes,

> If the "emotional labour" of customer service cannot be fully secured or effectively guaranteed through a system of close supervision and formal rules, then other systems which "attempt to minimize the potential area of error in the exercise of discretion" have to be brought to bear. This suggests a shift in emphasis away from formal direction as to how work *must be done* to "implicit" expectations as to how work *should be done*; in other words, towards a system of indirect normative regulation, or "government at a distance."[177]

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[175] The coinage is also, it should be noted, inspired by Rebecca Spang's description of the "eclipse of the kitchen" in her history of early French restauration. I discuss the eclipse of the kitchen and the invisibility of culinary work further later in this chapter. Spang, *Invention of the Restaurant*, 241.

[176] Crang, "It's Showtime," 309. As I will argue in the next chapter, the customer is also delegated much of the responsibility for monitoring and rewarding servers' affective performances by tipping them.

[177] Paul Du Gay, *Consumption and Identity at Work* (London: Sage, 2002), 115. In Chapter Three, I address the role of tipping in motivating and disciplining servers in greater detail.

Mars and Nicod have termed this style "ad hoc management," which emerged as a

response to two problems: first, customers are unpredictable, making restaurant

service resistant to rationalization, so both managers and servers must respond

flexibly to situations as they arise.[178] This is true not only of moments of crisis, such

as an unanticipated customer demand or a service failure, but also of the

unavoidable heterogeneity of customer experiences, since "a service to one

customer is not exactly the same as the 'same' service to the next customer."[179]

Secondly, ad hoc management obscures managerial interference in servers' social

interactions with clients, so that their interventions in service quality go largely

unseen by customers until moments of crisis.[180] While servers may be trained to

behave or interact with patrons in certain ways, customers seldom see this.

Moreover, while a restaurant manager might discipline or admonish servers for

their service styles, this too takes place at the end of a shift or in a backspace of the

restaurant—for while customers may not observe management's interventions, this

is not to say that servers go entirely unsupervised. Instead, restaurant managers

monitor their workers in a structure that Crang compares to Foucault's

panopticon—they sometimes or may be watching them, either from somewhere on

the service floor or via closed circuit camera, but servers never know whether or

[178] Mars and Nicod, *World of Waiters*, 7-8, 34; Fine, *Kitchens*, 148; Bayard de Volo, "Service and Surveillance," 349-51; M.P. Filby, "'The Figures, The Personality and the Bums': Service Work and Sexuality" *Work, Employment and Society* 6:1 (1992); Leidner, *Fast Food, Fast Talk*, 28-31; Gerald Mars and Peter Mitchell, *Room for Reform: A Case Study on Industrial Relations in the Hotel Industry* (Bletchley: Open University Press, 1976); Klaus, "Quality Epiphenomenon"; Urry, *Tourist Gaze*, 68; Paules, *Dishing It Out*, 49-75; Ulla Forseth, "Gender Matters? Exploring How Gender is Negotiated in Service Encounters," *Gender, Work and Organization* 12:5 (2005).
[179] Christian Groonröos, Service Management and Marketing: Managing the Moments of Truth in Service Competition (Lexington, MA: Lexington Books, 1990), 30.
[180] Bayard de Volo, "Service and Surveillance."

when they are being watched and self-discipline as if watched at all times.[181] The ad

hoc management style thus erases a certain kind of labour, at least from customers'

perspectives—that of disciplining restaurant staff—from the service space, thus

buttressing the illusion of spontaneity that underlies good service by making

servers' good will appear authentic and self-motivated. Furthermore, since

customers retain their own means of disciplining servers, the threat of withholding

tips at the conclusion of the meal if they are dissatisfied, ad hoc management

reinforces the figure of the sovereign consumer, who is accorded status and implicit

authority for the duration of the service encounter, seemingly encountering a server

without any apparent institutional discipline over whom they themselves exercise a

degree of power.

This management style accords service workers greater autonomy in their

interactions with customers, which is also necessary given that the emotional labour

underlining their interactions with customers is directly productive of the service

experience. Emotional or communicative labour is produced in the body and

subjectivity of the worker who performs it, and is thus inseparable from him or her;

thus, the nature of the service provided is highly specific to the person doing it.[182]

Dowling, discussing her own experience as a server, writes that

> the provision of the service depended on me using my intelligence, charisma
> and charm to create the table performance, because it was understood that the
> workers should not all be completely the same and that further value (and thus
> competitive advantage for the company) would be added to the product by
> granting us the scope to let our own personalities shape our engagement with
> the guest. I was supposed to understand myself as a real person interacting
> with other real people, not 'merely' a paid worker providing a service for a

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[181] Crang, "It's Showtime!," 308-9; Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison* trans. Alan Sheridan (New York: Vintage Books, 1995).
[182] Virno, "Virtuosity and Revolution," 192-3.

paying customer. If we were not too busy, conversation (as entertainment) with guests was encouraged by management, as the feeling of familiarity (uncomplicated, non-conventional engagement with the guest) was paramount to the product we were selling.[183]

Dowling emphasizes the authenticity and spontaneity of her interactions with customers; however, the skills of providing congenial service also rely heavily on the workers' experience and perception of what good service entails, their tacit and explicit on-the-job training, as well as the selective hiring processes through which organizations choose workers deemed to already possess the personality traits associated with service work.[184] However, it is imperative to keep in mind that such performances are staged or produced by workers *labouring.*

One influential account of the social dimension of service encounters, notes that, "A service encounter is work. This fact is usually recognized by both parties to the encounter."[185] While some kinds of service labour are made visible to customers, such as carrying dishes and moving through the space of the restaurant, much of the personal quality of good service is in fact premised upon the elision of affective labour's status as labour at all. For instance, to a friendly customer, it may appear that she and the server are engaging in an affable tableside exchange, each doing the same work of displaying a pleasant social demeanor.[186] However, this performance on the part of the server is underlined by a mandatory deference to the client, the service sentiment perhaps best encapsulated in the dictum "the customer is always

[183] Dowling, "Producing the Dining Experience," 121.

[184] Alicia A. Grandey and Analea L. Brauburger, "The Emotion Regulation Behind the Customer Service Smile," pp. 260-294 in Robert G. Lord, Richard Klimonski and Ruth Kanfer (eds.) *Emotions in the Workplace* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2002); Hall, "Smiling, Deferring and Flirting"; MacDonald and Merrill, "Intersectionality in the Emotional Proletariat;" Sosteric, "Subjectivity and the Labor Process."

[185] Czepiel et. al., "Service Encounters," 4.

[186] Normal sociability itself requires the work of regulating one's emotions to respond to the "feeling rules" of a given situation. See Hochschild, *Managed Heart*, 56-75; Erving Goffman, *Presentation of Self in Everyday Life* (New York: Anchor, 1959).

right." Service work is full of such aphorisms, like the oft-heard phrase, "my pleasure!" with which, accompanied by a smile, the server eradicates the traces of his or her own labour, pretending as if it is not in fact labour but self-motivated pleasure that drives him or her to serve.[187] Thus, paradoxically, the emotional labour of performing good service is premised upon its own erasure—the personable or affective dimensions of consuming the labour of good service requires eclipsed exertion, or the illusion of the labourers' leisure. The hidden affective or caring dimensions of work have been termed "invisible labour" or "shadow labour," but what I have termed eclipsed exertion in restaurant service bears a slightly different orientation.

Ivan Illich's concept of "shadow labour" describes the unpaid work of reproducing the labour force and the social conditions of production. More than just women's unpaid work at home of cleaning, cooking and childrearing, shadow labour describes "the stress of forced consumption, the tedious and regimented surrender to therapists, compliance with bureaucrats, the preparation for work to which one is compelled, and many of the activities usually labeled 'family life.'"[188] Illich's account attends to how shadow labour initially depended upon an "apartheid of the sexes," in which women's work at home figured outside the aegis of paid work and thus was excluded from being considered "work" at all; however, he notes that the growing

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[187] See Sherman, *Class Acts*, 39-44; Forseth, "Gender Matters?" 443.

[188] Illich, *Shadow Work*, 100. See also Daniels, "Invisible Labor." Daniel's (1987) account of invisible labour comes closer to the relations described in the present account, attending to how the care work accompanying other labour often goes unrecognized or uncompensated, particularly when it is performed by women, however his concept does not take into account the ways in which affective or communicative labour is simultaneously showcased and hidden in tourism and the services. See Arlene Kaplan Daniels, "Invisible Labor," *Social Problems* 34(5), 403-415.

leisure and service economy capitalizes on this labour, making it profitable.[189]

Furthermore, Illich's concept of shadow labour recounts the work that is disregarded because it's reproductive, while eclipsed exertion describes the hidden exertions of productive labour that are obscured by the very nature of what they create, the illusion of spontaneity. In the restaurant, however, while servers are recognized to be working, some of the work that they perform is denied the status of labour and is cast instead as sociability. Thus, eclipsed exertion works differently than shadow or invisible labour inasmuch as it relies not so much on a normalization of different kinds of labour as natural, but by splitting and according some facets of labour as labour, and others as pleasure.

Similarly, while the sheer fact of servers' bodies moving through the space of the restaurant, carrying and delivering food and drinks, prompts some recognition of the work in so doing, servers simultaneously hide much of the bodily exertion of service work. While some aspects of the body are accentuated in service, such as the aestheticized and sexualized waitress's body (see Chapter Five), the effort required to perform the work of service is occluded. For example, no matter how busy a server is, customers would almost never see one running on the dining room floor—a server might walk very quickly, but to run or betray busyness to customers would be like breaking character, exposing the effort that underlies service.[190] So the restaurant server can be recognized as actively working, but not too hard, suggesting that recognition of all of the work performed by restaurant workers

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[189] Illich, *Shadow Work,* 101.

[190] As Crang notes, in the institution where he was employed running was considered "panicky and dangerous." "It's Showtime!" 318.

would interfere with their customers consuming it as leisure.

This eclipsed exertion, the obfuscation of some kinds of service labour and its management, is particularly important in the restaurant, which is after all a space of leisure for some and a space of labour for others. As David Carlone notes, the communicative labour that goes into producing pleasurable service encounters relies on "translating the communication commonplace of mutuality into a technology of self and other to affirm customers."[191] Carlone's interest is in how communicative labour acts parasitically upon norms of communication such as mutuality, authenticity and reciprocity, or how "the economic context of customer service perverted communication technologies derived from mutuality and directed them toward the management of customers."[192] In the case of the restaurant server, the norm of good service in which servers enunciate sentiments suggesting that their work is not work toys with this convention, for while such statements might be made, it is still clear to (most) customers and servers that service should still be rewarded, in the form of the tip, and thus that it is still, in fact, work. In her ethnography of restaurant servers, Dowling similarly finds that there is "an implicit conflation of the paid and unpaid forms of affective labor."[193] Good service in restaurants is premised upon the suggestion of non-work and authentic and self-motivated gestures of good will, even if there is some tacit recognition on the part of both parties that this is work and should be compensated. So, while the relations of the production of experience are not fully obscured, neither are they fully exposed.

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[191] Carlone, "Communicative Labor," 159.
[192] Ibid., 168.
[193] Dowling, "Producing the Dining Experience," 118.

Not all labour is hidden, of course. Restaurants also make use of structures that ostentatiously display outputs of labour, often directed toward augmenting or performing the status associated certain customer behaviours or demands. One such example is the ceremony accompanying the opening and service of bottles of wine at tables. Here, the additional expense of ordering a full bottle of wine also buys a display of this elevated status, both in the visible bottle of wine that remains at the table until it has all been consumed, and in the ritualized display of labour of displaying then opening the bottle and allowing customers to taste it and pronounce it acceptable before pouring. Rachel Sherman, in her study of luxury hotels, notes similar processes where hotel staff perform conspicuous displays of labour without any practical purpose—her example is turning down bedcovers at night, which serves no end except to demonstrate to guests that someone has been there, working—displaying the availability of labour and expenditure of effort as a means of affirming guests' status.[194] According to Sherman, interactive labour "is supposed to appear voluntary on the part of the worker; noninteractive labour is supposed to remain invisible," although as the case of the wine opening ceremony shows, in some cases displays of labour expenditure can be deployed to showcase the augmented status of the consumer who engages in augmented consumption.[195]

While some labours of service are showcased in restaurants, there is customarily a distinction drawn between the front and back of the house, the kitchen and the service floor where customers are seated, although of course both

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[194] Sherman, *Class Acts*, 39-44. Sherman also notes the display of certain obviously non-productive or only occasionally productive workers, such as doormen, who "function partly to indicate available labor," which may play a similar role to that of hostesses or maître d's in some restaurants.
[195] Ibid., 44.

are necessary. In all but a few restaurants, for example those that have embraced

the stylized open kitchen concept where (at least some) of the cooks' labours are

made visible to the clientele, the back of the house where the food is stored and

prepared remains hidden.[196] The separation of the kitchen from the dining room

floor coincided with restaurants' inauguration as leisure spaces for the consumption

of experience. As culinary historian Rebecca Spang writes, from this point on,

> the whole purpose of the restaurant… was to eclipse the kitchen, to pull a
> curtain of illusion across the real conditions of production, to aestheticize and
> tidy… the restaurant's customers never witnessed the cooking of food, the
> chopping of ingredients, the plucking of feathers, or the draining of blood;
> instead they waited, drinking wine and swallowing oysters, until the waiter, a
> Charon-figure passing between worlds, appeared with a paradisiacal bounty of
> flavors, smells, textures, and sights.[197]

This "eclipse of the kitchen" that Spang describes is integral to the illusions that

sustain restaurant hospitality, as well as giving shape to the labour processes of the

server.

The relative obscurity of the kitchen as a productive space is necessary in

order to construct the "theatre" of restaurant service, enacting a separation between

frontstage and backstage.[198] Accounts of restaurant service work almost universally

invoke the trope of food service as a kind of theatre, where the server performs

service in the showy presentation of food and drinks and in their tableside

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[196] Although they vary in composition, the open kitchen concept of restaurant makes production itself theatrical, but they often do so selectively. While the chefs tend to be foregrounded, often situated at the front of the exposed kitchen space, the less glamourous and status-laden tasks and positions usually remain backgrounded, and customers are still typically spared the sight of prep areas, the dishwashing area and other "dirty" spaces of kitchens in favour of the flash of sizzling grill and fry cooks. In short, open kitchens still rely on a selective foregrounding and backgrounding of different kinds of productivity as part of the aestheticized theatricality of "exhibition" cooking labour that is on sale. Entrepreneur Press and Jacquelyn Lynn, *Start Your Own Restaurant and More* (Madison, WI: Entrepreneur Media, 2009), 25-7.
[197] Spang, Invention of the Restaurant, 236.
[198] Goffman, Presentation of Self in Everyday Life.

demeanour.[199] Modern restaurant kitchens, the backstage, are hot and loud;

furthermore, as Fine's ethnography of restaurant cooking reminds, "Production

leaves little time for amenities. Kitchens, like many production lines, are dirty…

diners wish to believe that the backstage of restaurants is as spotless as the front

stage."[200] In the backstage kitchen, the dirty work of production is hidden in order to

maintain the spectacular illusion of the dining experience. It also often serves as a

refuge of sorts for servers, a place to break with the public face of the service

persona performed for customers.[201] Furthermore, it affords restaurateurs

advantages in terms of the economies of producing the dining experience. As Fine

notes,

> restaurants employ several strategic techniques to control costs: illusion,
> downgrading, reusing, and reducing. Each links the economic needs of the
> organization for survival with impression management. For those techniques to
> work, they must be limited to the backstage, for otherwise customers would feel
> cheated.[202]

The economies of producing the restaurant experience thus constitute another

dimension of the rationalization of restaurant production that must be obscured for

customers to consume the illusion of spontaneity.

Several theorists have noted that one of the key factors in the consumption of

culture is the obfuscation of the factory, a rupture between the unpleasant sphere of

production and plush consumption of experiences.[203] In modernity, as Susan Benson

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[199] Crang, "It's Showtime"; Taylor, *Counter Cultures*, 67; Egerton-Thomas, *How to Open*, xiii, 132; Erickson, "Bodies at Work"; Wasserman, Rafaeli and Kluger, "Aesthetic Symbols," 142; Whyte, *Human Relations*.

[200] Fine, *Kitchens*, 32.

[201] Mars and Nicod, *World of Waiters*, 102; Erickson, "Bodies at Work," 77-80; James P. Spradley and Brenda J. Mann, *The Cocktail Waitress: Woman's Work in a Man's World* (New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1975), 93; Taylor, *Counter Culture*, 67.

[202] Fine, *Kitchens*, 164.

[203] See Benson, *Counter Cultures*, 35; Carlone, "Contradictions of Communicative Labor."

argues in the case of the department store, "The conditions under which goods were manufactured were not normally visible to the public, while the conditions under which they were sold were a public spectacle."[204] Hiding the kitchen makes a spectacle out of the presentation of prepared foods, which seem to "magically" appear without having been produced and leaving the front of house a space that can be staged or aesthetically managed.[205] The occlusion of bodily exertion similarly functions as a dematerialization of restaurant service, so that it appears that what is consumed in "good service" is only the autonomous, self-motivated emotional relationship established with one's waiter or waitress and the pleasure of eating the good food that they bring.

Marek Korczynski argues that service organizations are grounded in what he calls the customer-oriented bureaucracy, where "production-side rationalization is joined to customer-orientation,"[206] merging the standardization, routinization and efficiency of industrial production values with a showy attentiveness to the needs and desires of the customer as a site of organizational competition. Korczynski's model strives to resolve, in service, Daniel Bell's observation that the central contradiction of capitalism is the coexistence of rational production and irrational consumption.[207] This contradiction, he argues, is resolved in the service industry by deploying interactive service workers taking on these kinds of boundary-spanning roles, wherein they take on elements of both production and consumption spheres

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[204] Benson, *Counter Cultures*, 128.
[205] Spang, Invention of the Restaurant," 156; Taylor, Counter Culture, 67.
[206] Marek Korczynski and Ursula Ott, "When Production and Consumption Meet: Cultural Contradictions and the Enchanting Myth of Customer Sovereignty," *Journal of Management Studies* 41:4 (2004), 575.
[207] Ibid.

in order to act "as a buffer between the relatively rationalized sphere of back-office service production and the relatively unrationalized sphere of consumption."[208] We see this in the hidden restaurant kitchen, where service workers literally and physically move between the mess of the kitchen as a space of production and the atmosphere of the dining room floor, a space of consumption. While the production side of the services remains grounded in Weberian rationalization, such a system is not so easily imposed on its patrons—not without interfering with the illusion of spontaneity and destroying their sense of themselves as sovereign consumers. The restaurant server acts as a mediator between kitchen and client, who communicates the desires of the latter to the former and negotiates any accidents or mishaps, playing what is known as a "boundary spanning role."[209] The boundary itself is constituted in the distinction between the dining portion of the restaurant where customers are seated, known as "the floor" in industry parlance, and the kitchen, where the atmosphere that characterizes the floor is suspended. Thus service conventions such as eclipsed exertion serve to obscure the rationalization underlying restaurants' material production and service, enabling the illusion of spontaneity so that customers can imagine themselves to be consuming an autonomous and individualized social relationship in the service encounter.

While the physical proximity of consumers and producers in the dining experience appears to expose the conditions of production, effacing the reified

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[208] Ibid., 579.
[209] Carlone, "Contradictions of Communicative"; Crang "It's Showtime," 319; Korczynski, "Understanding the Contemporary," Korczynksi and Ott, "When Production and Consumption Meet," Mars and Nicod, *World of Waiters,* 55-7; John McCarty et. al., 1990, "Tipping as a Consumer Behavior: A Qualitative Investigation" *Advances in Consumer Research* 17, 726; Taylor, *Counter Cultures*, 319.

rupture between production and consumption described by Marx as the commodity fetish, this relation is complicated in the space of the restaurant. Marx describes the commodity fetish, where "the commodity reflects the social characteristics of men's own labour as objective characteristics of the products of labour themselves, as the socio-natural properties of these things."[210] Thus in the fetish relation we see a commodity as something detached from the material conditions of its production, instead considering it only as a complete thing that arrives without any history, ready for consumption. He calls this process, whereby the social relations of the conditions of production appear to be objective market relations, "mystification." However, this relation does not adequately describe the relations surrounding the restaurant meal and its service. In good service, affect displaces the commodity fetish by baring some of the relations of production but couching them in a social relationship so that the conditions of their production remain mystified. While the social relations of the conditions of production are foregrounded, the objective market relations surrounding this production are elided or obscured. Thus, we might think of the fetish of restaurants a kind of "displaced mystification"—it is not a fetish in the traditional Marxian sense, but neither is it a full revelation of the labour process to customers—for what relations are displayed are showcased selectively. If in the commodity fetish social relations are mystified so as to appear to exist apart from individual human beings and entirely structured by market exchanges, in the restaurant social relations are made to appear as if they are

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[210] Marx, *Capital*, 164-5.

produced alongside, rather than as a part of, market exchanges and material

production, while still being recognized by a market value (the tip) by both parties.

While the relations underlying the consumption of restaurant service act

differently than Marx's commodity fetish, there is still a kind of fetish at work. Slavoj

Žižek describes the fetish as a refusal-to-know, engaging in social relations while

acting as if they are not circumscribed by economic and disciplinary factors.[211] He

describes this as closing one's eyes not to the reality of the relations at hand, but

rather to the illusions that sustain it, responding to alienated consumption by

consuming illusions of authenticity.[212] We can think of the illusion of spontaneity in

terms of this sort of fetish, where the customer stance is essentially that "I know it's

her job to be nice to me, but I'm still pretending it's authentic and self-motivated."

Thus the illusion of spontaneity underlines both the reality of customers' experience

of affective relationships with the workers who serve them, as well as giving them a

sense of entitlement to these workers' labours.

Status and Consumer Sovereignty in Restaurant Service

Finkelstein contends that dining in restaurants constitutes a commoditization

of the social experience of eating in public, which she argues is typified by rigidly

defined social hierarchies and displays of conspicuous consumption. She sees

restaurants as sites of displayed manners and formulaic interactions that are "fake"

and estranged from human needs, where diners consume emotional states that they

feel are absent in their daily lives—of poshness, perhaps, or self-indulgence and an

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[211] Ibid., 61.
[212] Ibid., 54.

entitlement to their elevated status.[213] Finkelstein finds this to be indicative of a

broader decline of the public sphere in general, writing that, "If the pleasures of

dining out are associated with a relief from the difficulties of sociality, particularly

from the necessity to meet and engage the other in any concentrated or contested

manner, then it must be considered a practice which weakens our participation in

the social arena, even as it appears to increase that participation."[214] While her

conclusions rehearse the Habermasian line about the decline of the public sphere in

her interpretation of customers' interactions with one another, she fails to remark

that in most restaurants the only people, aside from one's own dining companions,

that these artificially social interactions engage are their servers. Furthermore, as

Stephen Mennell notes, in this dimension of her critique it is "theories of the self

which (rather than restaurants *per se*) are Finkelstein's central concern," and that

even if her critique is true, "then it is not uniquely true of dining out."[215]

If people patronize restaurants primarily to consume social relations and

experiences, then her argument implicitly suggests that the general social

atmosphere of the restaurant experience is displaced onto affective relations with

servers, with all of the unilateral displays of amenable good cheer that this suggests.

While she does, indeed, find the "subservience" on the part of restaurant servers

oppressive, her account ventures far from most in that its focus lies in how service

labour oppresses its *customers* by exacerbating the false social conventions of dining

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[213] Her argument echoes Simmel's construction in "The Metropolis and Mental Life," where consumers seek emotive engagements with commodities to forge a break from the antipathy that develops to resist the overstimulation of urban life under capitalism. Georg Simmel, "The Metropolis and Mental Life," in Richard Sennett (ed.) *Classic Essays on the Culture of Cities* (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1969), 47-60.
[214] Finklestein, *Eating Out*, 5.
[215] Mennell, All Manners of Food, 337.

out, rather than attending to how such displays could potentially be exploitative or demeaning for the servers themselves. She instead finds the constant interventions and structured subservience of the waiter injurious to the customer—a subservience she finds exemplified by the sommelier, a wine expert who compliments the much less knowledgeable customer's selection with a hearty 'Excellent choice, sir'—by reinforcing the status boundaries which she argues are integral to the pleasure of dining out.[216] Her example is clearly drawn from fine dining; however, such regimes and scripts of deference are clearly present in more casual milieus as well. But her critique does direct attention to the question of whether good service and the deference and care this entails might be injurious to service consumers as well.

Elaine Hall argues that the restaurant industry is constructed upon a foundational image of the deferential server/servant, in order to reinforce the status distinctions between servers and those whom they serve. While she grounds this differential status in the gender relations of service, others have found this difference in the "demeaning" notion of the tip,[217] or have theorized them as leftover relations from the service mores imported from domestics. As Gretta Foff Paules argues,

> The image of the waitress as servant is fostered above all by the conventions
> that govern interaction between server and served. Much as domestic servants
> in the nineteenth century did not dine with or in the presence of masters, so
> today waitresses are forbidden to take breaks, sit, smoke, or drink in the
> presence of customers(...) The prohibition against engaging in such physically
> necessary acts as eating, drinking, and resting in the customer's presence
> functions to limit contact between server and served and fortify status lines. It

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[216] Finkelstein, *Eating Out*, 63.
[217] See Paules, *Dishing It Out*, 9; Owings, *Hey Waitress!*

is, in addition, a means of concealing the humanness of those whom one would
like to deny the courtesies of personhood.[218]

While some of the social relations are analogous, however, I find that her account
overplays the similarities between household servants and restaurant servers, perhaps
in part due to the similarity of their tasks and titles. There aren't many professions
where smoking, eating and drinking in front of customers *are* encouraged, regardless of
the status differential between the two parties.[219] Additionally, the disparity in rank
between workers and the clients they serve is neither as vast nor as fixed as that
between a domestic servant and his or her master. As Paules herself notes, today any
status distinction between servers and those they wait on is in all likelihood confined to
the duration of the service encounter itself and can even be reversed—one's server
today could be dining out at an adjacent table tomorrow, especially in casual dining
where the price point for entry as a consumer is relatively low.[220] Furthermore, the
ways these two groups, domestics and waged servers, relate with and to those they
serve is wholly different: restaurant service today is characterized by a surfeit of affect,
whereas domestic service was premised entirely on servant invisibility and an affective
lack—simply put, the personhood of the restaurant server to some degree matters
differently in their interactions with clients.[221]

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[218] Paules, "Symbolism of Service," 265-6.

[219] An exception to this can perhaps be found in some business liaisons, where relationships are cultivated through shared meals and social activities. See, for example, Anne Alison, *Nightwork: Sexuality, Pleasure and Corporate Masculinity in a Tokyo Hostess Club* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994) for a discussion of how this plays out in the context of Japanese salarymen.

[220] Ibid., 267.

[221] As Rollins notes, contemporary domestic workers are often selectively hired in order to maintain the status differential between cleaners and their employers, a relationship grounded in rituals of deference and often maternalism. *Between Women*, 157

Due to institutional standards, organizational rules and because their livelihoods

depend on customers' goodwill, as this is expressed by the tips they leave, servers are

required to generate displays of goodwill for their customers. The obligation to display

courtesy is, however, unilateral, creating an asymmetrical relation of courtesy. While in

polite society customers are likely to be relatively jovial in return, it is not required.

Thus, the service relationship is underlined from the start by an inequality of status, of

obligation.[222] As Paules writes, "Virtually every rule of etiquette is violated by

customers in their interaction with the waitress: the waitress can be interrupted; she

can be ignored and stared at; and she can be subjected to unrestrained anger. Lacking

the status of a person, she, like the servant, is refused the most basic considerations of

polite interaction."[223] She can be, and these things do happen, but for the most part she

is not; such behaviour, while customers may be entitled to it, would be considered rude

by most.[224] While, as I've said, I find that Paules overstates the affinity of service and

servant work and the stigma attached to such behaviours by customers, it's true that

there is an imbalance of status at work here, and that it is to some degree a constitutive

element of good service. Sherman argues that part of good service is the performance of

status differentials and social distance; however, she contends that the point of this

performance is not so much the debasement or subordination of the server, but rather a

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[222] Hochschild, *Managed Heart*, 86; Hall, "Smiling, Deferring and Flirting," 456; Mars and Nicod, *World of Waiters*, 92-100.

[223] Paules, *Dishing It Out*, 138. Here, Paules also draws on Goffman's concept of the "non-person," a category of person who can be entirely ignored or treated as if they are not present. The servant at a dinner party is one of the examples he uses to elaborate his claim. Goffman, *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life*, 95.

[224] Sherman argues that service consumers are aware of this ability, and that while customers are largely present in their interactions with service workers, they also know that they have "authority in reserve" should some crisis or failure arrive. *Class Acts*, 211.

particular construction of the consumer.[225] These accounts find at least some of the pleasure of dining out derives from a constructed status differential. However, I think it behooves us to keep in mind Paules' recognition that this differential is limited to the duration of the service encounter—it is not, in fact, necessarily a class difference, just a hierarchical construction of roles in the space of the service encounter. The root of this differential seems to be grounded not primarily in the ways in which their customers might interact with servers, as Paules would have it, but also in the way that the service industry, and particularly those parties who are primarily invested in the commoditization of experience, construct their customers. Service stances such as the elision of exertion and the selective hiding and display of some kinds of service labour work to mitigate the relation of subservience by casting the status differential of the service encounter as a social relation rather than a class structure.

Sherman finds that this construction is constitutive of service, where workers deploy stances such as eclipsed exertion in order to legitimate consumer desire and to give their customers a sense of entitlement to the servers' labour. She holds that service workers "produce guest subjects who are comfortable with and equipped to occupy their advantaged class position."[226] Where customers consume a great deal of human labour as part of the service experience, the affective dimensions of good service work to normalize social inequality and give clients a sense of entitlement while consuming it. Sherman also notes that while the availability of labour and the affective exertions of workers are foregrounded, this occurs alongside an elision of

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[225] Sherman, *Class Acts*, 259. See also Hanser, *Service Encounters*, for a discussion of how status differentials are enacted in service relationships.
[226] Sherman, *Class Acts*, 19.

productive labour, which tends to happen mostly in the backstage, away from customers' scrutiny. This, she argues, serves both to maintain what I have termed the illusion of spontaneity, but also allows customers to feel deserving of the service they receive:

> Not thinking about how 'they' make the service happen relieves the client of having to think about who the workers are or the situation they are in. This strategy may be part of the reason guests do not like to be reminded of the commodification of the service. And coding workers as *wanting* to serve them not only makes workers' labor feel more genuine but also allows guests to feel less exploitative.[227]

Thus the fetish of authentic and spontaneous service relies on these performances by service workers, which operate by performing subordinate identities and occluding their own labours in order to produce a particular kind of consumer subjectivity, which Sherman describes in terms of the legitimation of needs and normalization of social inequality and a corresponding entitlement to labour. Her analysis thus recalls du Gay's sovereign consumer, the powerful subjective stance accorded to the consumer of services.

Korczynski also describes how service providers attract and retain customers by deploying what he calls "the myth of consumer sovereignty," an ideological positioning that flatters customers by foregrounding their autonomy and power over a subordinate server in order to reproduce consumption as a sphere of freedom and choice, while masking the control that is actually exerted over the consumption process by the organization.[228] For Korczynski, the sovereign consumer is merely a strategy for masking the power that is exerted by the service

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[227] Ibid., 229.
[228] Ibid., 581; see also Frederic Jameson, *Postmodernism: Or, the Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism* (New York and London: Verso, 1991), 270-276.

organization itself. He uses the example of the menu as a compact emblem of this process: while a litany of available options appears to display the vastness of choices on offer, the list in reality limits options by excluding entirely that which is not on it. It is, as he notes, a conception of sovereignty that is primarily relational.[229] We see the kernel of this kind of this sovereign consumer in the restaurant industry almost at its inception—the moment when the sickly Parisian requests a restorative bouillon from a list of options that will address his or her own specific maladies and corporeal complaints, and then the subsequent shift toward private tables, individual servings, individualized and itemized bills for foodstuffs made to order based on individual whims and dietary tics.

Korczynski finds the myth of consumer sovereignty to be potentially damaging to the consumer because it is premised upon a falsehood: consumer sovereignty is not sovereignty at all, only the commoditization and sale of affects and services that are provided, for a fee, within the parameters of a structured sociability that is defined by the restaurant industry itself. It is, in a sense, the means by which the leisure economy convinces consumers of the value of what it sells. While many accounts of restaurant servers' work address this primarily as the purchase of a form of social superiority, I find the idea of purchasing a sense of sovereignty more compelling, the idea of buying an ephemeral sense of being in charge.[230] By positioning restaurant patrons as sovereign consumers, part of what is sold in

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[229] Korczynski and Ott, "When Production and Consumption Meet," 587.
[230] One of the most studied elements of service provision—monitored even more meticulously than even the tip—is the service recovery, where a server must find a means to return to customers' good graces after a late meal, a forgotten drink, or a wrong order. These are central in such accounts because such mistakes reveal, suddenly, the limitations of customers' authority in the service encounter.

restaurants is the social relation of situational sovereignty. The performance of good service, then, consists of producing a service relationship that is at once grounded in a social affiliation or bond, and thus capitalizes on the gestures of mutuality described by Carlone, while also incorporating servers' deferential displays so that customers feel entitled to their labours. In restaurants, regimes such as eclipsed exertion and the illusion of spontaneity facilitate this kind of production by creating a moral space where these kinds of social relations can be consumed while remaining a social relationship; with the eclipse of exertion, by erasing the labour that goes into sustaining the mutuality of the social relation and the status of this labour as labour, restaurant patrons can enjoy consuming the social relations of service, with all its attendant deference, without feeling like they are exploiting the servers with whom they share this relationship in so doing. Many of the social relations underlying good service described in this dissertation, such as the objectification of waitresses' bodies and sexuality or mandatory and unilateral deference, would be considered unacceptable behaviour in much of polite society; however, the myth of consumer sovereignty and server enunciations such as "it's my pleasure," with which exertion is erased, makes this kind of consumption seem ethically grounded. Thus, the myth of the sovereign consumer serves as a substitute for the Marxist commodity fetish by making the exposure of some of service labour's structural relations morally acceptable to its consumers.

Good service is thus constituted in the consumption of a very particular kind of social relationship, one premised upon positioning the consumer as sovereign so that he or she might more comfortably enjoy the performances of deference and the

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congenial social relationship produced by restaurant servers alongside and to facilitate the dining experience. To "work," both of these must seem authentic and spontaneous. The next chapter focuses on the figure of the tip with which customers reward their servers for the effective production of good service, an income stream that disciplines servers to perform services according to their perceptions of customer desires.

Chapter Three: Tipping and the Political Economy of Affect

> For most of human history, the only instrument needed to induce employees to complete their duties energetically and adroitly was the whip. So long as workers had only to kneel down and retrieve stray ears of corn from the threshing-room floor or heave quarried stones up a slope, they could be struck hard and often, with impunity and benefit. But the rules of employment had to be rewritten with the emergence of tasks whose adequate performance required their protagonists to be to a significant degree content, rather than simply terrified or resigned. Once it became evident that someone who was expected to remove brain tumours, draw up binding legal documents or sell condominiums with convincing energy could not profitably be sullen or resentful, morose or angry, the mental well-being of employees commenced to be a supreme object of managerial concern.[231]
>
> – Alain de Botton

As ever more of capitalist expansion occurs in the service sector, organizations have needed to evolve new systems to motivate, measure and reward the subjective and intersubjective labours of workers. In restaurants, as the last chapter showed, some management models have been rendered obsolete by service mores; thus, organizations had to find other means to inspire commitment and enthusiasm, as well as to measure, penalize and reward workers' performances.

Good service is nebulous and difficult to quantify. What we desire as customers appears to be self-evident, since we have all been the recipients of good and bad service at one time or another. The very ubiquity of service gives it a certain subjective invisibility. As the last chapter addressed, for the most part evaluations of good service are established in comparison to legions of past encounters, appraised against an existing standard for service decorum. While many of these expectations are difficult to communicate—some being almost subconscious, compared against memories of past experiences or mediated fictional representations—some

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[231] Alain de Botton, *The Pleasures and Sorrows of Work* (New York: McClelland and Stewart, 2009), 244.

measure of the evaluation of service is available to us in the case of restaurant

service through the figure of the tip. In this chapter, I look at the cultural institution

of tipping in North America,[232] drawing heavily upon studies of tipping behaviours

in hospitality management literature in order to better understand the role that

tipping plays in the recognition of and compensation for good service. This section

will also address how tipping figures into what we might call a political economy of

affect, or how the affective labour of restaurant servers is organized by the gratuity.

The affective and remunerative dimensions of the interaction between table

servers and their clients converge dramatically in this signature element of the

restaurant service encounter, the gratuity, where the bonds between obligation,

habit, affect and money become ambiguous. To what degree, for example, do we

leave a generous tip because of the taste of the food, the delight of the overall

experience, or because we find our charismatic waitress likeable, to impress those

we're dining with, or out of class guilt? While the previous chapter looked at the

contours of the social relationship of restaurant service in order to better

understand what we mean when we talk about good service, this section attends

more to what tipping practices reveal about customer expectations of this

relationship and how these are imbricated into institutional and individual practices

by those who provide it. Furthermore, it addresses how tipping functions as a

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[232] Tipping is structured very differently in various cultural geographies, so the analysis here is necessarily concentrated on North America alone. In Europe, for example, tips are already included in bills as a percentage of the total price, although some clients will leave a few additional coins. For more on the differences on tipping by location, see Ofer H. Azar, "The Implications of Tipping for Economics and Management," *International Journal of Social Economics* 30:10 (2003): 1086-7; Karen Cure, Melissa Klurman and Matthew Lombardi, *How to Tip* (New York: Fodor's, 2002); Naveen Donthu and Boonghee Yoo, "Cultural Differences on Service Quality Expectations," *Journal of Service Research* 1:2, (1998): 178-86; Lynn, "Geodemographic Differences"; Anna S. Mattila "The Role of Culture in the Service Evaluation Process," *Journal of Service Research* 1:3, (1999): 250-61.

means of delegating the management, supervision and compensation of workers'

affective performances to customers while securing workers' active participation in

such displays, displacing or amplifying more rigid disciplinary regimes.

If restaurants primarily produce and sell dining experiences as commodities,

then the tip reveals the part that servers are supposed to play within this exchange

by exposing what dimensions of good service are rewarded and, in turn, how diners

expect their servers to function as affective agents in the production of experience. I

argue that while tipping poses itself economically as merely a matter of just reward

for the *quantity* of service received, loosely quantified in currency as a proportion of

a table's bill size, the tip is really a financial component of, or complement to, the

affective relationship produced over the course of the service encounter and its

perceived sincerity. Tips can thus be read as a subjective measurement of

communicative quality on the part of clients, or how restaurant patrons rate servers'

ability to deliver on the affective relations promised by their employers and

expected as service.

Tipping in restaurants became commonplace in the early twentieth century,

more or less coinciding with two substantial shifts in the service climate. First, the

feminization of service after the Harvey Girls and the introduction of more female

servers during wartime saw a transition toward a more personable service style,

one distinct from both the formal mode of address used by the fine dining waiters

who took their cues from Victorian domestics, and the bawdy bartenders of working

class taverns. Secondly, both this feminized mode of interactivity and the practice of

tipping one's waiter or waitress became widespread and normalized during a

period of rapid expansion in the industry. A proliferation of new enterprises forced

restaurants to find novel ways to remain competitive by positioning the dining

experience on offer as unique and individual, so restaurants increasingly focused on

the quality of social relations as a central facet of the dining experience. Thus,

tipping emerged as a common practice at precisely the moment that culinary

entrepreneurs asked their employees to cater to the psychical and emotional desires

of consumers as a point of business competition. While the relationship between

tipping and the feminization of service is not causal—each was driven by different

historical processes and social relations—I argue that tipping and affective labour

were articulated in the space of the service encounter in order to compel workers to

willingly produce and display the cheery at-work personae required of them in

order to commoditize the practice of dining out as a leisurely experience. Thus,

tipping became the restaurant organization's response to the problem framed by de

Botton at the outset of this chapter, when driving workers with a whip is no longer a

feasible solution to industrial relations. Exploring this enables us to stage a further

investigation into what gratuities *do* to this structure—to the kinds of discursive

constructions of managers, clients and servers that tipping gives rise to.

Table servers are paid wages by their employers, but the majority of their

incomes are obtained as tips, which are of course wholly at customers' discretion.[233]

Due to this split in compensation, the server essentially has two bosses in any given

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[233] Azar, "Implications of Tipping," 1084; Suellen Butler and James K. Skipper Jr., "Waitressing,
Vulnerability, and Job Autonomy: The Case of the Risky Tip," *Sociology of Work and Occupations* 7:4
(1980), 489-90; Ehrenreich, *Nickle and Dimed*, 16; Bruce Rind and David Strohmentz, "Effects of Beliefs
about Future Weather Conditions on Restaurant Tipping" *Journal of Applied Social Psychology* 26:2
(2001): 2160-64; Jeffrey J. Sallaz, "The House Rules: Autonomy and Interests Among Service Workers in
the Contemporary Service Industry," *Work and Occupations* 20:4 (2002): 419.

service exchange: the restaurateur who pays a minimum wage and retains their services as well as delineating the basic contours of the work—scheduling, table assignations, side duties, uniform, general atmosphere of the dining environment, menu, food and drink prices, all of which have a distinct bearing on the percentage-based tips received—and the customers who receive and evaluate the service and, as an aggregate, pay the majority of the worker's income alongside their bills.[234] Since, in the "ad hoc" management system the restaurateur has in a sense delegated some of the normal responsibilities of management—the work of both monitoring and compensating workers—this social contract lets restaurant customers wield both the carrot and the stick: the promise of a good tip and the threat of complaining to the restaurateur, who can fire or discipline the server, withdrawing future wages and tips.

I argue that tipping makes an entrepreneurial subject of the restaurant server, who is taught to harness his or her personal resources to please customers, and, in so doing, earn more. Thus, servers are expected to act in their own interests as well as that of their employers and clients when they give good service. Where a service is premised upon the quality of experience, while it is the organization that promises personable or affective relations with the staff, it is of course service workers who must perform to produce these relations. Thus, restaurant organizations and managers needed to evolve new forms of discipline and compensation in order to secure their workers' compliance with the regime of affective service provision. The separate emergence of restaurant tipping as a

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[234] Whyte, *Human Relations*, 19; Urry, *Tourist Gaze*, 66.

standard practice and the feminization of service labour were more or less

concurrent in North America, and I argue that the two elements have effectively

been harnessed to work in tandem in order to produce the desired attitudes and at-

work behaviours on the part of service workers, with the added benefit of rerouting

potential sites of worker dissatisfaction or antagonism away from organizations and

management as more of the tangible dimensions of both their working conditions

and compensation are set by their clientele.

Tips Between "Friends"

Tipping appears to be merely a financial transaction in which a customer

compensates a service worker for his or her labour. While composing the majority

of restaurant servers' incomes, gratuities are officially non-mandatory in most

North American service milieus and are left to customers' discretion. The status of

tipping as a financially necessary part of the server's income is underlined by the

tipping wage or "server's minimum" standard in Canada and in many American

states, an exception to the minimum wage that enables employers to pay tipped

employees a lower rate that is to be compensated for by their tips.[235] Thus, tipping

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[235] Michael Conlin, Michael Lynn and Ted O'Donoghue, "The Norm of Restaurant Tipping," *Journal of Economic Theory and Organization* 52 (2003)" 297-321. For instance, in the state of Arizona, minimum wage is $6.90 an hour, while the waitressing minimum is $2.75 (Taylor, *Counter Culture*, 94). The gratuity's status as legitimate income has been mired due to its composition as a series of small, often cash, transactions between individuals. While it is considered a legitimate form of income, being legally taxable, gratuities are not taken into account in other income assessments, such as social insurance and calculations of credit ratings and exposure. As Segrave notes, tip income was made legally taxable in 1920 in the US and shortly thereafter in Canada, however restaurant employers were resistant to the idea of institutionalizing this income in a manner that would impact their financial obligations to employees in terms of disability insurance, Social Security and employment taxes. See Azar, "Implications of Tipping," 1088; Entrepreneur Press and Jacquelyn Lynn, *Start Your Own Restaurant and More* (Madison, WI: Entrepreneur Media, 2009), 49; 190-91; Kerry Segrave, *Tipping: An American Social History of Gratuities*

effectively depresses servers' pre-tip wages.[236] Tipping can also be read as a

delegation of the surveillance and remuneration of service workers by restaurateurs,

for through the tip, customers both monitor and reward service performances.[237]

Most restaurant patrons, with surprisingly few exceptions, adhere to the tacit

contract of tipping fifteen to twenty per cent based on the service rendered,

although the centrality of tips as wages are not equally apparent to all.[238] As Ditton

notes, "a conflict arises in the ambiguity of the word 'tip,' which means 'wages' (and

thus something routinely and regularly collected) to the employee, and 'gratuity' to

the customer."[239] The tip thus occupies a hazy position, hovering mostly

unmentioned around exchanges between customers and workers.[240]

 For the most part, gratuities are calculated as a percentage of bill size.[241] Thus,

the tips that a given server earns are fundamentally based on her place of work and

its menu prices that will influence the overall bill size and, thus, what fifteen percent

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(Jefferson: MacFarland, 1998), vii, 63-5, 97, 131; Howe, *Pink Collar Workers*, 123-4; John Walter Wessels, "The Minimum Wage and Tipped Employees," *Economic Inquiry* 35:2 (April 1997).

[236] Wessels, Ibid.

[237] William J. Boyes, William Stewart Mounts Jr. and Clifford Sowell, "Restaurant Tipping: Free-Riding, Social Acceptance, and Gender Differences," *Journal of Applied Psychology* 34:12 (2004): 2617, 2624.

[238] Õrn Bodvarsson and William A. Gibson, "Economics and Restaurant Gratuities: Determining Tip Rates," *American Journal of Economics and Sociology* 56:2 (1987), 198; Boyes, Mounts and Sowell, "Restaurant Tipping; Cure, Klurman and Lombardi, *How to Tip*; Michael Lynn, "Geodemographic Differences,"; Richard Martin, "Hot tip: Social ritual of tipping is fraught with anxiety, guilt, even criminal charges," *Nation's Restaurant News* 2004; Steven G. Rogelberg et. al., "Using Policy Capture to Examine Tipping Decisions," *Journal of Applied Social Psychology* 29:12 (1999), 2582; Tibbett L. Speer, "The Give and Take of Tipping," *American Demographics* 19:2 (Feb 1997).

[239] Jason Ditton, "Perks, Pilferage, and the Fiddle: The Historical Structure of Invisible Wages," *Theory and Society* 4:1 (1977): 46.

[240] John A. McCarty et. al., "Tipping as Consumer Behavior: A Qualitative Investigation," *Advances in Consumer Research* 17 (1990): 723-28.

[241] Rogelberg et. al., "Using Policy Capture," 2582; Butler and Snizek, "The Waitress-Diner Relationship: A Multimethod Approach to the Study of Subordinate Influence," *Sociology of Work and Occupations* 3:2 (1976): 209-22.

of that bill equals, as opposed to any other factor.[242] However, empirical studies of tipping practices have fastidiously tracked tip sizes alongside various gestures obliquely related to "service" but more closely linked to displays of intimacy—such as manners of touch, smile and address—and have concluded, decisively, that such gestures can augment tips by as much as five percent.[243] For servers, this is no small chunk of change—a five percent increase to a fifteen percent tip adds more than a quarter to their tipped income—making this fact profoundly relevant to the lives and livelihoods of service workers. This upward flexibility in compensation also betrays something of consumers' desires about what kinds of experiences diners wish to obtain by engaging in service encounters by exposing what kinds of service behaviours are rewarded.

The evolution of the tip is hazy, materialized in millions of small and short transactions between individual servers and their clients, giving it a certain historical invisibility.[244] Additionally, the practice was established and took hold unevenly, such that a tip would be quite standard in one industry or geographical area at some time, while remaining relatively unknown or exceptional elsewhere. Tipping is generally held to have begun in eighteenth century European coffee houses, where a box marked "To Insure Promptness" was hung on the wall in order

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[242] For discussions of pricing and compensation in various kinds of restaurants, see Finkelstein, *Dining Out* and Cure, Klurman and Lombardi, *Fodor's How To Tip*.

[243] Michael Lynn and Jeffrey Graves, "Tipping: An Incentive/Reward for Service?" *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Research* 20:1, (1996): 25; John S. Seiter and Robert H. Gass, "The Effect of Patriotic Messages on Restaurant Tipping," *Journal of Applied Social Psychology* 35:6 (2005): 1201-2; Taylor, *Counter Cultures*, 41.

[244] Bodvarsson and Gibson, "Economics and Restaurant Gratuities," 201.

to ensure good service,[245] although other accounts also situate it within the lineage

of upper classes leaving "vails" in Tudor England, packets of cash left by houseguests

for their hosts' domestic workers.[246] In both cases, the money was a special reward

for exceptional performance, not remuneration for performing the standard tasks

associated with one's post.[247]

Kerry Segrave undertook a comprehensive history of tipping, however his

account almost exclusively tells the history of the anti-tipping movements that arose

sporadically over the course of the 20th century.[248] Tipping has been most and best

documented in the polemics against it, which were critical of its seeming to be a

form of charity,[249] an ethically dubious threat to female servers left vulnerable to

sexual exploitation by the men who tip them,[250] a risky and unsure wage,[251] a

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[245] Ofer H. Azar, "The history of tipping—from sixteenth-century England to United States in the 1910s" *The Journal of Socio-Economics* 33 (2004), 752; Mark L. Brenner, *Tipping for Success: Secrets for How to Get in and Get Great Service* (Sherman Oaks, CA: Brenmark House, 2001), 133; Gregory Dicum and Nina Luttinger, *The Coffee Book: Anatomy of an Industry from Crop to the Last Drop* (New York: New York Press, 1999), 14; Segrave, *Tipping*, 4; Taylor, *Counter Culture*, 91.

[246] Boas Shamir, "Between Gratitude and Gratuity: An Analysis of Tipping" *Annals of Tourism Research* 11 (1984): 62; Segrave, *Tipping*, 1; Michael Lynn, George M. Zinkhan and Judy Harris, "Consumer Tipping: A Cross-Country Study," *Journal of Consumer Research* 20 (1993): 479; David Fisher, "Grid-Group Analysis and Tourism: Tipping as Cultural Behavior" *Journal of Tourism and Social Change* 7:1 (2009): 39-40; Horn, *The Rise and Fall of the Victorian Servant*, 129; Hecht, *The Domestic Servant Class in Victorian England*, 89, 158-68.

[247] See Bodvarsson and Gibson, "Economics and Restaurant Gratuities," 192. Ditton argues that there have always been "perks" to work, tracing the notion back to workers' access to the medieval commons, and that as the commons have been appropriated and privatized, so too have certain kinds of bonuses that accompanied the rise of waged labour as former peasants were cast off their land and sent to work for wages. Today, he argues, the perk, pilfer and theft can be thought of as "the lingering vestiges of the annexation of customary rights by the ruling class." He thus discusses the contexts of perks (legal or allowed bonuses or advantages, such as the waitress' tip), pilferage (the tacitly tolerated plunder of work resources, such as nicking supplies or eating food) and theft (where things are outright stolen from an employer in an act for which the worker would be fired, disciplined or prosecuted) as articulations of management control, in their ability to define the boundaries between these three types of activity. The problem, then, is that the worker is left with no legitimate claim to access. The perk, that which concerns us here, has a clear legal standing; he calls the perk system "the mature outcome of a long history of legitimizing a wage-pilferage system," giving it an institutionality as legal entitlement. Ditton, "Perks, Pilferage, and the Fiddle," 45-6.

[248] Segrave, *Tipping*.

[249] Ibid., 23-4.

[250] Owings, *Hey Waitress*, 14-15.

perpetuation of subservice of service staff,[252] and a delegation of the management

and pay of service workers to their clients by restaurant entrepreneurs.[253] By 1916

the custom was ten percent in fancier establishments and five percent in humbler

milieus. By the 1940s, tipping was a nationally established practice in America,

where the norm that had grown to twelve percent by the 1940s and ascended to the

current rate, fifteen to twenty percent, by the time dining out was established as a

common practice in the 1950s,[254] the same period as feminized service styles

became the standard as more women were engaged in service work.

Since gratuities are left to patrons' discretion, regardless of the service

provided, and a server is left no recourse to complain of an inadequate tip, it is an

unbalanced equation: the server must provide service with no guarantee of the tip

at its end (he or she *advances* the customer good service based on the expected

gratuity),[255] while the customer receives the good service without necessarily

having to pay for it. The fact that the vast majority of customers do, in fact, tip,

rather than "free riding" or stiffing, often without risk of repercussions (for example

in an out-of-town restaurant where one might never expect to return), provides

something of a puzzle to some economic scholars. Ofer Azar, for instance, notes that

"tipping by non-repeat customers is not consistent with the economic paradigm of

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[251] Suellen Butler and James K. Skipper, Jr., "Waitressing, Vulnerability, and Job Autonomy: The Case of the Risky Tip," *Work and Occupations* 7:4 (1980): 488; Whyte, *Human Relations.*
[252] Segrave, *Tipping*, 28; Daniele Archibugi, "Tips and Democracy," *Dissent* (Spring 2004), 59-60.
[253] Segrave, *Tipping*, 67; Dowling, "Producing the Dining Experience," 128; Ditton, "Perks, Pilferage, and the Fiddle," 52; Panikkos Constanti and Paul Gibbs, "Emotional Labour and Surplus Value: The Case of Holiday Reps" *The Service Industry Journal* 25:1 (January 2005), 106.
[254] Cobble, *Dishing It Out*, 40-3.
[255] Mars and Nicod, *World of Waiters,* 11; Azar, "History of Tipping," 745, Boyes, Mounts and Sewell, "Restaurant Tipping," 2617; Butler and Skipper, "The Waitress-Diner Relationship," 15-6; Gatta, "Balancing Trays and Smiles," 116.

fully rational and selfish customers," who, if acting in their "actual" best interests, would presumably not bother.[256] As one study argues, tipping is one of few if any markets in which the price of the service is set by consumers, rather than by the service provider.[257] However, given the extensive evidence showing that tips are determined with little deviation as a percentage of bill size, it seems more likely that tip size is seen by restaurant patrons to be contractual in nature, a part of the anticipated cost of consuming this kind of leisure experience. This is given further evidence by histories of tipping, which show a considerable degree of resistance to the practice at its inception which declined as tipping became enshrined as a standard practice.[258] Economists addressing service labour tend to view the transaction as strictly a matter of utility, as an "implicit tipping contract with the server" in which "a customer demands service because he derives utility from service. Therefore, the tip payment will reflect his valuation (utility) of service received in the previous period."[259] Thus, the tip can be read as a tacit contract recognized by both servers and customers to reward service workers for engaging in a particular communicative regime.[260]

The field of hospitality and tourism management has produced an abundance of quantitative studies evaluating the minutiae of service elements—number of trips to the table, tokens of personal warmth, stock phrases and gestures—in order to assess their effectiveness when servers perform them, and when clients perceive

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[256] Ofer H. Azar, "The Social Norm of Tipping: A Review," *Journal of Applied Social Psychology* 37:2 (2007): 384.

[257] McCarty et. al., "Tipping as Consumer Behavior," 723.

[258] See Segrave, *Tipping*.

[259] Orn B. Bodvarsson and William A. Gibson"Gratuities and Customer Appraisal of Service: Evidence from Minnesota Restaurants," *Journal of Socio-Economics* 23:3 (1994).

[260] Ibid.

them to augment service quality, as reflected by the size of the tip left behind. The conclusiveness of the field's findings is occasionally suspect, particularly to readers well-versed in the practice of receiving service and leaving tips, who do not perceive themselves to be so easily taken in by affective overtures. However, since the conclusions of these studies are taken as gospel within the literature of hospitality management, they are given a certain gravity or reality due to the fact that they are read as truthful and acted upon as such.[261] In short, what servers are taught to think of as good service becomes a part of their practices when they attempt to provide it. If several generations of servers are taught, for example, that drawing a smiley face on the back of the check will increase their tips and act accordingly (ostensibly by drawing a smiley face on the back of each and every check), then this gesture does in some respects come to be a salient aspect of good service in a restaurant milieu. As one researcher notes, "Waiters' beliefs about the relationship between service delivery and tip size may guide their provision of service to customers. If they believe that certain characteristics of service lead to larger tips and others do not, they may alter their behavior to match their perceptions."[262]

    Using a survey of social psychological research directed toward hospitality management trainees, I will show that the space between a mediocre and a munificent tip, after a bottom threshold of compensation, is determined by the affect produced over the course of the service encounter between servers and served. Put differently, restaurant customers tip well based on the quality of the communication

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[261] See Slavoj Zizek, *The Sublime Object of Ideology* (London and New York: Verso, 1989), 28-30.
[262] Mary B. Harris, "Waiters, Customers, and Service: Some Tips about Tipping" pp. 725-744 in *Journal of Applied Social Psychology* 25:5 (1995), 727.

and the authenticity of the warmth they perceive their servers to produce, or their ability to sustain the illusion of spontaneity. In practice, this means that tipping serves as a means of securing service workers' affective loyalties and inducing them to willingly engage in creating positive dining experiences for their customers, and to do so "authentically."

Social scientific research on tipping assesses tip values based on the characteristics of the dining party and the gestures made by servers in order to determine which elements of the service experience statistically result in a larger tip. These researchers, and particularly the prolific Michael Lynn, undertake their studies with the goal of improving workers' earning tactics and reducing turnover, while offering a pleasurable dining experience for clientele and humane working environment for employees.[263] Taken together, these studies show that the gestures that are rewarded with tips are almost all grounded in workers' performances of intimacy and care.[264] These gestures vary widely—and, it should be noted, not all depend entirely on the actions of workers, such as a potential boost when a customer believes that the weather will be nice[265]—but most depend fundamentally on sustaining a connection with a table that appears to be sincere rather than routine. In other words, they seem to depend on producing the impression that there is some extra connection, something "more" that is produced on top of the

[263] Michael Lynn, "Seven Ways to Increase Servers' Tips," *Cornell Hotel and Restaurant Administration Quarterly* 37:24 (1996), 24-5.
[264] Lynn & Graves, "Tipping," 11; Michael Lynn and Bibb Latané, "The Psychology of Restaurant Tipping," *Journal of Applied Social Psychology* 14:6 (1984), 560.
[265] Michael R. Cunningham, "Weather, Mood and Helping Behavior: Quasi Experiments with the Sunshine Samaritan," *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 37:1 (1979); Bruce Rind, "Effects of Beliefs About Weather Conditions on Tipping" *Journal of Applied Social Psychology* 25:9 (1996): 138-47; Amy S. Ebusu Hubbard, et. al., "Effects of Beliefs About Future Weather Conditions on Restaurant Tipping," *Journal of Applied Social Psychology* 33:11 (2003), 2427-2438.

expected service—the illusion of spontaneity. Tips, we learn, might be increased by any of the following gestures: touching customers;[266] providing a friendly introduction at the outset of the service encounter;[267] telling jokes;[268] squatting near the table while serving to be at the same height as customers served;[269] giving compliments;[270] writing messages on the check;[271] offering candy with the bill, or better candy than the anticipated dull mint;[272] giving customers a small task to perform;[273] and smiling with an open rather than closed mouth.[274] All of these are shown in the research to have positive relation to the rate of gratuities, augmenting the money left on the table by as much as five percent.[275]

[266] April H. Crusco and Christopher G. Wetzel, "The Midas Touch: The Effects of Interpersonal Touch on Restaurant Tipping," *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin* 10:4 (1984); Jacob Hornik, "Tactile Stimulation and Consumer Response," *Journal of Consumer Research,* 19 (December 1992), 449-458; Hubbard et. al., "Effects of Touch," 33; Michael Lynn, Joseph-Mykalle and David S. Sherwin, "Reach Out and Touch Your Customers," *Cornell H.R.A. Quarterly*, 39 (June 1998); Renee Stephen and Richard L. Zweigenhaft, "The Effect on Tipping of a Waitress Touching Male and Female Customers," *Journal of Social Psychology*, 126 (February 1986).

[267] Kimberly Garrity and Douglas Degelman, "The Effects of Server Introduction on Restaurant Tipping," *Journal of Applied Social Psychology* 20:2 (1990).

[268] Nicolas Guéguen, "The Effects of a Joke on Tipping When it is Delivered at the Same Time as the Bill," *Journal of Applied Social Psychology* 32:9 (2002).

[269] Michael Lynn and Kirby Mynier, "Effect of Server Posture on Restaurant Tipping," *Journal of Applied Social Psychology* 23:8 (1993).

[270] John S. Seiter, "Ingratiation and Gratuity: The Effect of Complimenting Customers on Tipping Behavior in Restaurants," *Journal of Applied Social Psychology* 37:3 (2007); John S. Seiter and Eric Dutson, "The Effects of Compliments and Tipping Behavior in Hairstyling Salons," *Journal of Applied Social Psychology* 37:9 (2007); John S. Seiter and Harry Weger Jr., "The effect of generalized compliments, sex of server, and size of dining party on tipping behavior in restaurants," *Journal of Applied Social Psychology*, 40:1 (2010).

[271] Rind and Bordia, "Server's 'Thank You'"; Seiter and Gass, "Effect of Patriotic Messages"; Bruce Rind and Prashant Bordia, "Effect on Restaurant Tipping of Male and Female Servers Drawing a Happy, Smiling Face on the Back of Customers' Checks," *Journal of Applied Social Psychology* 26:3 (2006); Bruce Rind and David Strohmetz, "Effect on Restaurant Tipping of a Helpful Message Written on the Back of Customers' Checks," *Journal of Applied Social Psychology*, 29 (1998).

[272] David B. Strohmetz et. al., "Sweetening the Till: The Use of Candy to Increase Restaurant Tipping," *Journal of Applied Social Psychology* 32: 2 (2004).

[273] Bruce Rind and David Strohmetz, "Effect on Restaurant Tipping of Presenting Customers with an Interesting Task and of Reciprocity," *Journal of Applied Social Psychology* 31: 7 (2001).

[274] K.L. Tidd and J.S. Lockard, "Monetary Significance of the Affiliative Smile: A Case for Reciprocal Altruism," *Bulletin of the Psychonomic Society,* 11 (1978), 344-6.

[275] Lynn, "Seven Ways to Increase Servers' Tips," 25; Seiter and Gass, "Effect of Patriotic Messages," 1201-2.

Studies counting the number of trips taken to a given table, the amount of time

spent with customers, and other "objective" measures of the quantity of service,

show that these elements have an extremely weak relationship to the size of a

gratuity.[276] The execution of these titular job responsibilities is not entirely

insignificant—one can't ignore a table for an hour, then offer them mints and

compliments in exchange for twenty percent. Materially productive work is still

important, but only up to a basic threshold, while the flexibility of tipping, the room

for upward expansion, lies in the appearance of intimacy. Conversely, there is a

threshold after which nothing can increase the size of the tip; in what is comparable

to an affective law of diminishing returns, each gesture adds to the value of a tip, but

only to a certain point, after which the value stabilizes. So, these gestures to increase

tips are not additive; as the tip size goes up, so too do customers' resistances to

further increases.[277] From these studies, then, we can conclude that after a certain

minimum threshold that seems to be based in a fundamental recognition of the

server's labour,[278] tipping is about servers' ability to sustain the illusion of

spontaneity by nourishing a rapport with customers that seems sincere. As Azar

notes, the results of his own research "suggest that people tip more—sometimes

significantly more—when the waiter behaves in a way that increases the

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[276] Archibigi, "Tips and Democracy," 61; Lynn and Latané, "Psychology of Restaurant Tipping," 560; Dowling, "Producing the Dining Experience," 128; Michael Lynn "Restaurant Tipping and Service Quality—A Tenuous Relationship," *Cornell Hotel and Restaurant Administration Quarterly* (2001): 14-20; Steen Videbeck, "The Economics and Etiquette of Tipping," *Policy* 20:4 (2004): 38-42.

[277] Lynn, "Seven Ways to Increase Servers' Tips," 29. Seiter and Gass (2005) also note a rise in customer resistance to messages that are repeated or become familiar, thus failing to reproduce the affective gains that they used to (1203).

[278] Speer, "Give and Take of Tipping."

interpersonal connection between himself or herself and the customer."[279] Tips,

then, effectively function to encourage and reward positive emotional and affective

displays by restaurant servers in their interactions with restaurant customers by

compensating these displays on a tacit contractual basis. The point may seem

pedantic, but it is a real factor in millions of North American service workers'

livelihoods. Advice about augmenting tips thus suggests that being overtly friendly

with customers will directly benefit restaurant servers by increasing their incomes.

This, it is argued, will furthermore benefit the restaurant in turn by lowering

employee turnover and minimizing the cost of training restaurant servers to

produce the kinds of affective relations that will produce satisfied return customers,

both increasing sales and lowering overhead.

Tipped Subjectivity and the Entrepreneurialization of Restaurant Workers

Today, in North America at least, there seems to be a general consensus among

journalists and economists alike that the tipping system is necessary to incite

hospitality workers to provide warm and attentive service.[280] Typical is Orn

Bodvarsson's assertion that tipping "is very important toward getting good service…

If we didn't have such a system, as was the case in communist countries, we'd get

lousy service."[281] While this position seems easily debunked by the scores of

interactive jobs where personable service is provided without any additional

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[279] Azar, "The History of Tipping," 395.
[280] Bodvarsson and Gibson, "Economics and Restaurant Gratuities," 188; Conlin, Lynn and O'Donoghue, "Norm of Restaurant Tipping," 298; McMarty, et., al., "Tipping as a Consumer Behavior," 726; Owings, *Hey Waitress!*, 18; Emmanuel Ogbonna and Lloyd C. Harris, "Institutionalization of Tipping as a Source of Management Control," *British Journal of Industrial Relations* 40 (2002), 731-9; Videbeck, "Economics and Etiquette of Tipping," 38-41.
[281] Bodvarsson quoted in Speer, "Give and Take of Tipping," 51.

financial reward—such as in fast food, many retail positions, care work and other

fields of customer service—the restaurant is differentiated from this kind of work

by the role that tipping is held to play as a supervisory regime in restaurants. It is

argued that tips work well as a disciplinary apparatus in the service encounter,

where customers can more efficiently monitor the quality of the service than can

management.[282] It is argued that tipping emerged to promote efficiency where

market systems have failed to do so:

> While service quality is an integral part of the customer's dining experience,
> service quality requires effort on the part of the server, and hence an appropriate
> compensation scheme with monitoring is required to induce the optimal level of
> effort. Because the customer is in a better position to observe the quality of
> service than is the restaurant owner... social optimality requires that the
> customer and the server write a service contract. However, since writing a service
> contract upon every visit to a restaurant would involve prohibitive transaction
> costs, the norm of restaurant tipping may serve as a substitute.[283]

Thus, it is argued that tips are a necessary mechanism to ensure that servers deliver

on the good service that restaurants promise their customers as a means of

rewarding the additional emotional or affective labour required to produce it.

Within this "contract," though, the customer is not merely in a better position

to assess the value of service, but is the *only* one who can evaluate it. Management

can't appraise the subjective value of a non-quantifiable, individualized and

intangible product like the quality and sincerity of communication. Boas Shamir

argues that this dimension is another facet of tipping's miraculous efficiency:

> the service-giver cannot standardize the 'production' or emission of such
> elements... the value of these nontangible elements is bound to vary

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[282] Boyes, Mounts and Sowell, "Restaurant Tipping," 2617; Lynn and Graves, "Tipping," 2; Videbeck,
"Economics and Etiquette of Tipping," 38-9. Videbeck notes, however, that customers seeming
unwillingness to "stiff," or not tip, might decrease its efficiency as a solution to the economic problem of
monitoring agents.
[283] Conlin, Lynn and O'Donoghue, "Norm of Restaurant Tipping," 304-5.

considerably due to individual differences among customers. The obligations of the service-giver cannot be fully specified and his or her performance cannot be fully controlled. The tip, from this viewpoint, is the mechanism which complements the regular fixed market mechanism in situations where the sold commodity (service) contains nonstandardized and unmeasurable components.[284]

In fact, as discussed in the previous chapter, it is the apparent lack of standardization or routinization that customers seek out in their interactions with servers. Service quality appears to be immune to extensive managerial interference, since customers constitute an unpredictable and unmanageable element in every transaction, giving servers a high relative level of at-work autonomy from their managers. The ad hoc management style necessitates that organizations and managers establish rules and frameworks for employees' at-work personae and behaviours, but they cannot hover behind workers on the service floor and intervene in their interactions with customers, for the very act of being 'caught' interjecting into workers' affective performances dispels the illusion of spontaneity.[285] Like the hidden kitchens discussed in the previous chapter, management is kept in the "backstage" of the restaurant until there is a crisis or service failure, so as not to interfere with the displacements that underlie these fetishized relationships. Thus, organizations must find other means of securing workers' active participation in the affective regime of the experience economy in order to ensure that they will do the affective work to produce the good service of a

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[284] Shamir, "Between Gratitude and Gratuity," 62. Dowling (2007), however, contests this supposed immeasurability of affect. She argues that institutional mechanisms such as the tip and the "mystery diners" who anonymously consume and evaluate restaurant services demonstrate the measurability of affective work, inasmuch as, "in order to increase productivity, workers were measured in relation to an ideal standard of what they should be doing and how they should be behaving," (127). See also Linda Fuller and Vicki Smith, "Consumers' Reports: Management by Customers in a Changing Economy," pp. 74-90 in Cameron Lynne MacDonald and Carmen Sirianni (eds.), *Working in the Service Society* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1996).

[285] Crang, "It's Showtime," 309-10. For a discussion of ad hoc management, see Chapter Two.

positive restaurant experience for customers. Tipping, as it is in use today, has evolved as a response to the advent of the commoditization of experience within some sectors of the service economy as a means of responding to the inadequacy or inability of traditional forms of discipline, managerial surveillance and regulation that have worked well in other productive milieus.

Post-service surveys of clients have shown that restaurant patrons themselves believe that they determine their tips based on the quality *and* quantity of service they receive. Perhaps more significantly, they regard the affective dimensions of this service to be important, but less so than servers' speed and attentiveness.[286] While service scholars mostly arguing in favour of tipping's efficiency as a supervisory regime, many of the same researchers find that tipping has a weak statistical relationship to the quantity of service, measured in terms of trips to and time spent at a table (themselves problematic measures of service quality).[287] In short, while customers perceive themselves to tip more or less based primarily on the quantity of labour performed, studies that document their actual behaviours show that it is in fact the perceived quality of the relationship with their servers that drives tip augmentations. Thus, the claim that tipping is an efficient economic system is a contradictory one: while ostensibly acting as a mechanism to ensure and evaluate service, it bears little relation to many of the more utilitarian aspects of the performance or provision of the service itself. And, since in the management literature, industrial training manuals and the social at-work cultures of servers

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[286] Segrave, *Tipping*, vii.
[287] Ibid.. Lynn, "Restaurant Tipping and Service Quality," 14-20; Michael Lynn, "Restaurant Tips and Service Quality: A Weak Relationship or Just Weak Measurement?," *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, (2003) 22.

emphasize the degree to which these affective gestures *do* augment tips, restaurant

servers are inclined to perform additional affective gestures that imply a sincere and

authentic interpersonal connection with their customers regardless, and

organizations and customers are inclined to demand them as a constituent part of

service decorum.

The stated goals of this literature are to simultaneously improve both the

earning potential and at-work happiness of servers—and, indeed, the two are neatly

equated to be one and the same in many accounts—as well as the desire to make

businesses more profitable by creating loyal patrons and reducing costly worker

turnover.[288] Michael Lynn, for instance, writes that,

> Attracting and retaining a good wait staff is a key element in attracting and
> retaining customers. Attentive and courteous servers can enhance customers'
> dining experiences, lead to positive word of mouth, and increase repeat
> patronage…. Consequently, staffing wait positions is among the most important
> tasks restaurant managers perform…. People work primarily to make money,
> and dissatisfaction with income is one cause of turnover. Restaurant managers
> can attract and keep competent servers by promising and delivering them a
> high income. Raising wages substantially is often prohibitively costly, however.
> On the other hand, since servers receive the largest part of their income in the
> form of tips, not wages, knowledgeable managers can help their servers boost
> their tip percentages. Managers who know what servers can do to increase their
> tips can pass that knowledge on to the servers.[289]

Thus, while the literature on tip-earning strategies does keep servers' interests in

mind, it ultimately does so with an eye toward the long-term profitability of

organizations.

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[288] Seiter, "Ingratiation and Gratuity," 478; See, for example, Obgonna and Harris, "Institutionalization of Tipping," 738-9; J.D. Pratten, "The Importance of Waiting Staff in Restaurant Service," *British Food Journal* 105(11), 2003, 826-834; Rind and Bordia, "Effects of Servers' 'Thank You,'" 746.
[289] Lynn, "Seven Ways to Increase Servers' Tips," 24-5. See also Michael Lynn, "Increasing Servers' Tips: What Managers Can Do and Why They Should Do It," *Journal of Foodservice Business Research,* 8:4 (2005).

The authors of these studies of tipping are largely affiliated with tourism and

hospitality management schools, which also publish many of their findings in

journals like *The Journal of Hospitality Research, Cornell Hotel and Restaurant

Adminstration Quarterly* and *The Academy of Management Review*.[290] In short, the

primary readers are not, in fact, restaurant servers, but their present and future

bosses. While the studies are largely produced and initially consumed within

management schools, their findings circulate beyond them, onto websites and blogs

offering tips on earning tips, and as conventional wisdom passed between service

workers, such that even where management is not *au courant* with the latest

developments in hospitality studies, it can still be reasonably argued that many

servers are aware of their findings.[291]

The conflation of these concerns—the earning potential and at-work

happiness of workers as a means of securing loyalty and thus profitability—places

these accounts squarely within the body of new management styles such as the

Human Relations school, Excellent Management and the Quality of Working Life

movement.[292] These approaches seek to foster at-work happiness on the part of

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[290] The most prolific tipping researcher, Michael Lynn, is Burton M. Sack Professor in Food & Beverage Management at the Cornell University's School of Hotel Administration. Many of the other accounts cited here on tipping emerge from scholars of finance and economics. While the following section is critical of some aspects of the discourses surrounding management school literature on tipping, it is simultaneously clear, to this reader at least, that the majority of these, including Lynn's, are undertaken with a sincere interest in the working lives of tipped workers.

[291] For more on the circulation of tipping behaviors and knowledge between workers, see P.J. Dumbrowski, Karthik Namasivayam and Bart Bartlett, "Antecedents of Tips and Servers' Ability to Predict Tips in a Restaurant Setting," *Journal of Foodservice Business Research* 9:1 (2006); Christine Mallinson and Zachary W. Brewster, 2005, "'Blacks and Bubbas': Stereotypes, Ideology and Categorization Processes in Restaurant Servers' Discourse," *Discourse and Society* 16:6 (2005), 787-807; Mars and Nicod, *World of Waiters,* 117-123; Sosteric, "Subjectivity and the Labor Process."

[292] See du Gay, *Consumption and Identity at Work*, 51-5; Kyle Bruce, "Henry S. Dennison, Elton Mayo, and Human Relations Historiography," *Management & Organizational History* 1 (2006): 177-199; Thomas

servers as a strategy for producing more efficient and compliant employees by equipping them with the tools to make their at-work life more profitable and fulfilling and, in so doing, encouraging workers to invest more of themselves in their organizations. This shift, toward producing fulfilled, happy workers, marks a turn toward focusing on the subjectivities of workers as a competitive strategy. This does not mean, however, that restaurant organizations are willing to give their staffs complete at-work autonomy. As Paules notes, the "rationalization of the worker's interactive stance is achieved by transferring control over the decisions of work from employee to service 'expert.'"[293] Thus, discourses about how to increase tips can be read as a system for securing workers' compliance in the provision of affective relations by providing them with "expert" information on strategies that claim to improve their at-work performance, yet are conducive to organizations' own goals and agendas.[294]

Entrepreneurializing servers situates service work such that workers themselves become responsible for their earnings, making the server into a self-motivated entrepreneur. As one writer puts it, "The tipping system requires that a waitress have an entrepreneurial spirit because ultimately she is responsible for how much she earns."[295] This tendency is exaggerated by discourses, such as those

J. Peters and Robert H. Waterman, Jr., *In Search of Excellence: Lessons from America's Best-Run Companies* (New York: Harper & Row, 1982).

[293] Paules, "Resisting the Symbolism of Service," 282.

[294] For an extensive consideration of how tipping structures management control over service workers, see Obgonna and Harris, "Institutionalization of Tipping."

[295] Taylor, *Counter Culture*, 96. See also Bodvarsson and Gibson, "Economics and Restaurant Gratuities," 188; Cobble, *Dishing It Out*, 43; Stephen F. Davis et. al., "Restaurant Servers Influence Tipping Behavior," *Psychological Reports* 83 (1998); Fred Davis, "The Cabdriver and his Fare: Facets of a Fleeting Relationship," *American Journal of Sociology* 62:2 (1959):164; Mary Gatta, "Restaurant Servers, Tipping and Resistance," *Qualitative Research in Accounting and Management* 6:1/2 (2009); John P. Henderson, *Labor Market Institutions and Wages in the Lodging Industry* MSU Business Studies (Michigan: Bureau of

on tipping behaviours, that make tipped earnings into something that can be managed and refined, casting them as the result of servers' actions rather than clients' whims; receiving tips becomes a technique servers can work on and learn how to do better.

The entrepreneurial server recalls the homo œconomicus theorized by Foucault, which he defines as "entrepreneur of himself, being for himself his own capital, being for himself his own producer, being for himself the source of his earnings."[296] The entrepreneurial subject behaves rationally, harnessing his or her understanding of the situation at hand and the skills, aptitudes and competencies acquired over a lifetime, what Foucault terms one's "human capital," in the pursuit of income.[297] This is consistent with Emma Dowling's consideration of her own work as a waitress, during which she found that, "A substantive element of the investment on me on behalf of the company was in the training of my affective skills in line with the requirements of the restaurant and the script provided, although the service provision also relied extensively on my social skills, on 'being myself' for success."[298] Thus it relies both on the server's personal charisma and a familiarity

Business and Economic Research, Michigan State University, 1965), 61; Mills, *White Collar*, 183; Connie Mok and Sebastian Hansen, "A Study of Factors Affecting Tip Size in Restaurants," *Journal of Restaurant and Food Service Marketing* 3:3/4 (1999); Richard Morales, "Contending Tradeoffs: IRCA, Immigrants, and the South California Restaurant Industry," *Policy Studies Review* 11:2 (1992), 148; Obgonna and Harris, "Institutionalization of Tipping," 728; Paules, *Dishing It Out,* 23-47, 77-104; Owings, *Hey Waitress!*, 272-3, 324; Segrave, *Tipping*, 104; Sherman, *Class Acts*, 110-34; Walker, *The Restaurant*, 319; Whyte, *Human Relations*, 213-4.

[296] Michel Foucault, *Birth of Biopolitics: Lectures at the Collège de France 1978-1979* trans. Graham Burchell (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2008), 226.

[297] Ibid., 231.

[298] Dowling, "Producing the Dining Experience," 120. One study also argues that giving servers this freedom and autonomy serves to make her more confident in her position, while "the less control management allows the waitress over the execution of her work, the more vulnerable and less satisfied she is with the tipping/wage arrangement." Butler and Skipper, "Waitressing, Vulnerability and Job

with the service decorum expected by restaurant patrons.

For Foucault, homo œconomicus or the entrepreneurial subject emerged as a result of a decentralization of power in neo-liberalism, in which subjects are motivated to attend to their own best interests rather than being directly disciplined from above. As Jason Read argues, subjects motivated to attend to their own best interests rather than being directly disciplined from above are effective in today's business climate:

> The contemporary trend away from long term labor contracts, towards temporary and part-time labor, is not only an effective economic strategy, freeing corporations from contracts and the expensive commitments of health care and other benefits, it is an effective strategy of subjectification as well. It encourages workers to see themselves not as "workers" in a political sense, who have something to gain through solidarity and collective organization, but as "companies of one."[299]

This system works particularly well in contractual or case-by-case (or, here, table-by-table) evaluations, where there is a need for a system that rewards singular performances (tips) as well as securing long-term compliance (retaining one's job). By producing subjects who are self-motivated to act in their own best interests—in this case, by doing the affective work of establishing rapport with customers in order to earn more tips—this system simultaneously engenders subjects who are less likely to engage in collective activism and more likely to optimize their own at-work performance without extensive managerial interference, the ad hoc management style described in previous chapters.

The entrepreneurial subject is one who, as Nikolas Rose puts it, "calculates

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Autonomy," 487. See also Yiannis Gabriel on training and employee loyalty, in "Beyond Happy Families: A Critical Reevaluation of the Control-Resistance-Identity Triangle," *Human Relations* 52(2), 1999.
[299] Jason Read, "A Genealogy of Homo Economicus: Neoliberalism and the Production of Subjectivity" *Foucault Studies* 6, pp. 25-36, 2009, 30.

about itself and works upon itself in order to better itself,"[300] in this case by performing certain affective gestures in order to earn more tips. Knowledge—for instance techniques or strategies to earn more tips—becomes part of the human capital of the worker, to be deployed in their at-work engagements. Du Gay writes that, "expertise is constitutive of subjectivity. Its language permeates people's ways of thinking, its judgments enter into people's evaluations, and its norms into their calculations."[301] With tipping knowledge, the server takes responsibility for his or her own income by knowing how to act; it produces a "tipped subjectivity," that of a subject who acts in ways most likely to increase their tipped income. It is thus an opportunistic subjectivity, one that looks for opportunities in which to use this knowledge in order to profit from it.[302] The knowledge that the server uses is what kinds of personable or affective performances are monetarily compensated by their clients, based on discourses that circulate among servers as well as their own expertise gleaned from past encounters. In short, tipping produces a self-motivated affective worker.

Thus, the tipped subjectivity delegates both self-monitoring and the maximization of their own earning potential to workers, while still ensuring that they act in the interests of the enterprise. As Paules puts it in her study of waitressing, "tipping relieves management of the burden of motivating employees to work."[303] Additionally, discourses about increasing tips relieve organizations of having to police workers' social interactions with customers, since they do so

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[300] Nikolas Rose, Governing the Soul: The Shaping of the Private Self. London: Routledge, 1990, 7.
[301] Du Gay, Consumption and Identity at Work, 64.
[302] See Virno, "The Ambivalence of Disenchantment." For a discussion of opportunism, see Chapter One.
[303] Paules, Dishing It Out, 55.

themselves because it is in their own best interests to nourish rapport. It is a response to the additional demands placed upon restaurant servers as the industry evolved toward the more personable service style required by the commodification of experience, intensifying the demands placed upon them by requiring that they perform emotional labour as well as the productive or physical labour of the material aspects of service. The tip serves as an effective way of governing the affective encounter; a system where industry, in Miller and Rose's work, "recruit[s] the self-regulating capacities of the worker, the desires of the worker for his or her personal goals, for its own ends."[304] Crucially though, the kinds of skills that are marshaled in these at-work roles are social aptitudes that are primarily acquired outside of the workplace, such as the ability to supply "authentic" smiles on demand, stay calm under stress and address customers with situationally appropriate friendliness. Thus, much of the skill set needed for successful employment in the service industry is acquired and cultivated on workers' own time, and is not compensated.

The tipped subjectivity bears a specific engagement with the organization that employs them. As discussed in earlier chapters, service workers simultaneously sell their labour to the capitalist enterprise and to the customer who uses the service. Where gratuities provide the majority of workers' income, wages are derived from both the organization that employs, pays and controls many of the structural determinants of the conditions of their labour (such as the menu, atmosphere, pricing of goods, assignation of hours and tables and the like), and the

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[304] Miller and Rose, Governing the Present, 47. See also du Gay, Consumption and Identity at Work, 62-3.

clients who receive the service, interact with the worker and contribute, collectively, to his or her financial well-being.[305] Thus, while workers are invested in maintaining good relations with the restaurant establishment and its management, they also recognize that their rapport with customers as an aggregate, as a series of contractual payments, contributes even more directly to their incomes.

Entrepreneurialization, Antagonism and the Intensification of Labour

Both tipping and feminized service emerged in North America during a period of tremendous worker antagonism, when Canada and the United States rippled with wildcat strikes, major union drives and other displays of worker solidarity.[306] This is the same period when the restaurant industry really came into its own and dining out became a standard social practice, with the result that ever-greater numbers were hired into service employment. Yet the burgeoning restaurant industry faced comparatively little collective action compared to other sectors. Trade unionism has had a famously abysmal history in the interactive service industry and especially in restaurants, which is generally chalked up to the dispersion of most workers amongst small independent enterprises instead of the large numbers of co-workers present in factories, servers' desire to protect their tip earnings, and the autonomous ethos of employees who view themselves as entrepreneurs.[307]

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[305] Obgonna and Harris (2002) argue that this produces a "mutual instrumentality" in service relations, where management, service workers and customers alike all see one another instrumentally.
[306] See Priscilla Murolo and A.B. Chinty, *From the Folks Who Brought You the Weekend: A Short, Illustrated History of Labor in the United States* (New York: The New Press, 2001); Cobble, *Dishing It Out*; Cobble, "The Promise of Service Worker Unionism."
[307] Dorothy Cobble, *Dishing It Out*; Paules, *Dishing It Out*, 174-5; 9-10; Shamir, "Between Gratitude and Gratuity," 75; Sherman, *Class Acts*, 261-7. In one study, the servers at a chain of British restaurants cited

By placing control over interactive service workers' wages in the hands of customers, the service outlet can continue to push their employees on other fronts, such as speed, labour intensity, duration of work, paucity of breaks, privacy and freedom of expression. The service industry and particularly restaurants are characterized by a laxness of the traditional boundaries of a standardized working shift—fast-paced rushes, unpredictable breaks, unusually long days and split shifts being some of the most salient features of restaurant labour.[308] Additionally, since the number of tables taken on is a direct corollary to the amount of tips earned, servers are made to welcome more tables and thus more work, becoming complicit as well in the intensification of their labours.[309] Since servers tend to view themselves as independent entrepreneurs operating under the auspices of the restaurant space, competitiveness between service workers for tables acts as an impediment to worker solidarity. I argue that the real reason for the lack of collective action on the part of restaurant workers is that much of servers' incomes and a fair share of their misery lies at the hands of consumers, so that collective bargaining with employers would seem to do little to improve their lot. The institution of tipping can thus be read as capital's response to the new demands it places upon workers in the commoditization of services, where the production and marketing of consumer experiences places increased demands on interactive service workers, but does so in a way that is resistant to extensive organizational

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the desire to receive tips as their main reason for rejecting two major unionization drives. See Obgonna and Harris, "Institutionalization of Tipping," 740.

[308] Paules, *Dishing It Out*; Ehrenreich, *Nickle and Dimed*, 56-8.

[309] See Paules, *Dishing It Out*; Owings, *Hey Waitress*; Mary Gatta, "Restaurant Servers, Tipping and Resistance," 73.

interference. Tipping is capital's solution to the problem of producing workers who at least seem to authentically enjoy serving their customers with a smile—a much more effective mechanism for inspiring friendly enthusiasm than de Botton's whip.

The feminized service style constructs the consumer as sovereign, a sovereign who recognizes and rewards servers' emotional labour by paying for it with a tip. The tip, in turn, compels the worker to provide the showy displays of affect that, at least according to management literature and lore, are sure to increase their incomes, while also subsidizing its production. Restaurant customers, since they are paying their servers a sum on top of the bill and thus separate from it, feel that they are entitled to such treatment as a constitutive element of their service experience.[310] While all parties enjoy certain advantages from this arrangement—several theorists, for example, highlight the pride and pleasure that some service workers take from giving good service to even the most truculent customer[311]—ultimately the greatest beneficiaries of this schema are the service providers, restaurants as establishments and as an industry. And, as Dowling reminds, it is still capital that gives form to the relations between clients and servers in restaurants.[312]

Because servers are simultaneously employed by a service organization of some sort (in the present case, a restaurant), paid and answerable to a clientele, while seeing themselves as entrepreneurial agents, interactive service work creates a triangle of shifting alliances between customers, managers or organizations and

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[310] See Sherman, *Class Acts.* This is also apparent in the habitual linguistic constructs of restaurant service, such as "my pleasure," as discussed in the previous chapter.

[311] Bolton and Boyd, "Trolley Dolly"; Korcynski, "Understanding the Contemporary," 73-4; Owings, *Hey Waitress!*, 324.

[312] Dowling, "Producing the Dining Experience," 125; Kimberley Eddleston, Deborah Kidder and Barrie Litzky, 2002, "Who's the Boss? Contending with Competing Expectations from Customers and Management," *Academy of Management Executive,* 16(4), 85-95.

staff.[313] Each forms alliances with the others in what they perceive to be their own

interests. So, servers sometimes side with customers—for example, a waitress

might "comp" or freely give out items for which she is supposed to charge, either out

of a sense of justice or to curry favour with a table. Alternately, a service worker

might side with management and/or the establishment, for instance by taking a

stand against a belligerent customer demanding special treatment. Finally,

customers and management might align themselves, for instance by penalizing a

server for a courtesy not rendered. In this kind of triangular setup, employment

relations cannot easily be plotted along a model of power in which control is

exercised only from the top down, proving more fluid than those predominating in

many industrial relations. As Paules argues, "In transferring control over the

waitress' income to the public, the tipping system divests management of a

traditional source and symbol of managerial authority and detracts from the

employee's sense of obligation toward the company and those who represent it."[314]

However, establishments are able to recoup this sense of duty elsewhere.

While there has historically been a great deal of resistance to tipping, Segrave

contends that the practice has largely been retained because it was in the best

interests of the only people who could change it, the restaurateurs themselves, to

retain it.[315] The institution of tipping affords organizations a number of advantages

in the disciplinization, monitoring and motivation of employees. Tips allow them to

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[313] Archibugi, "Tips and Democracy," 61; Benson, *Counter Cultures,* 6, 284; Leidner, *Fast Food, Fast Talk*, 128; Sallaz, "The House Rules," 396; Cas Wouters, "The Sociology of Flight Attendants: Hochschild's *Managed Heart*," *Theory, Culture and Society* 6, 1989.
[314] Paules, *Dishing It Out*, 54.
[315] Segrave, *Tipping*, 130.

outsource the task of monitoring employees' at-work behaviour, while

simultaneously delegating a portion of their overhead to customers, since the low

server's minimum wage they pay their workers is subsidized by gratuities.[316] This

lower wage further reduces organizations' overhead in terms of payroll taxes and

the benefits accorded to the employees of an extremely labour-intensive industry,

since these, too, are calculated by the server's minimum, even though tipped servers'

incomes are actually much higher.[317] Because a part of the total cost of eating out is

"hidden" in the final bill as an add-on, that part which is the wage payment

delegated to customers in the form of the tip, this institution has the effect of making

menu items look cheaper than they actually are, since some of the labour costs of

service workers are not factored into prices.[318] Beyond the regime of

subjectification outlined in the last section, the tip serves an additional disciplinary

role, inasmuch as most tips are calculated as a percentage of sales. This induces

servers to "upsell," or increase the size of their sales and total bill in order to earn

more tips. Thus, the interests of entrepreneurs and servers are aligned in their

desire to tempt customers to buy and spend more because, as Taylor puts it, "the

more they sell the more they make."[319] This link directly aligns the servers' own

personal interests with those of the establishment by rewarding them—with the tip

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[316] Dowling, "Producing the Dining Experience," 128; Segrave, *Tipping*, 105.

[317] Segrave, *Tipping*, 131. The dubious legal status of tip revenue has created numerous problems for service workers. As Segrave notes, while governments were quick to claim the right to tax tip income, they were much more hesitant to include this income in assessments of social service rights such as employment insurance or social security benefits (vii), and many service workers whose income was relatively high have had difficulty in securing recognition for this income, creating problems, for example, with securing adequate credit ratings or mortgages (97).

[318] Fisher, "Grid-Group Analysis and Tourism," 40-1.

[319] Taylor, *Counter Culture*, 96. See also Butler and Snizek, "Waitress-Diner Relationship," 210; Fisher, "Grid-Group Analysis and Tourism"; Paules, *Dishing It Out*, 24; Patti T. Schock, John T. Bowen and John M. Stefanelli, *Restaurant Marketing for Owners and Managers* (Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley and Sons, 2004), 116; Videbeck, "Economics and Etiquette of Tipping," 39.

the customer pays—for increasing a restaurant's sales. Furthermore, since the more

tables a server takes, the more tips received, he or she is inclined to take on greater

numbers of customers simultaneously. This enables establishments to reduce their

labour cost overhead by making servers complicit in the intensification of their own

labours, for their income increases when they work harder (by serving more

customers), so restaurants can extract more labour from fewer workers, and can do

so with their consent (this only works to a certain point, though, after which their

workload becomes too great and service quality suffers). Finally, making servers

into self-motivated, self-monitoring entrepreneurs is cheaper for restaurant

organizations, as disciplining their staffs requires less managerial intervention, so

that managers can be tasked with other responsibilities. As Eric Sallaz notes,

"tipping systems [work] to regulate the labor process as a means of both lowering

labor costs and inducing workers to perform service with a smile."[320] As one study

notes, systems that outsource the monitoring of workers' performances to clients

serve "to simultaneously exclude workers from exerting genuine control yet secure

their participation in the process of production."[321] Tipping thus introduces

numerous efficiencies into the smooth operation of the restaurant.

By entrepreneurializing servers, tipping also subjects restaurant service work

to the logic of what Michael Burawoy calls "making out." Burawoy describes the

labour processes of machinists who are paid by piece-rate, a pay regime that, like

tipping, "inserts the worker into the labor process as an individual rather than as a

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[320] Sallaz, "The House Rules," 422; See also Bayard de Volo, "Service and Surveillance," 359.
[321] Fuller and Smith, "Consumers' Reports," 77.

member of a class."[322] Burawoy's primary concern is how organizations elicit

workers' consent in their participation in the labour process. He argues that Marx's

analysis assumes that the expenditure of effort in labour is "decided by coercion,"

which fails to account for "the necessity to elicit a willingness to cooperate in the

translation of labor power into labor." Instead, he posits, "coercion must be

supplemented by the organization of consent," which in his account is effected by

the workers' participation in choosing the conditions of their work, by making their

piece rates into a game.[323] Importantly, this consent must be produced at the point

of production, and cannot be imported from outside work. Participation, even

choosing to play, thus produces workers' consent. The rules of the game are

simultaneously established by management and adapted and interpreted by the

workers themselves, who impose their own logics on the labour-process-as-game;

thus, the concept of the game "represents the link between individual rationality

and the rationality of the capitalist system."[324] The entrepreneurialization of the

server functions similarly, producing service workers' consent to engage in the

creation of experience by exerting their affective labour, "gaming" customers to

establish a rapport that will ostensibly earn them higher tips, selling more to

increase the bill size and corresponding gratuity and intensifying their own labour

by taking on more tables.[325] However, as Amy Sherman reminds, "the tipping game

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[322] Michel Burawoy, *Manufacturing Consent* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1979), 81. See also du Gay, *Consumption and Identity at Work*, 16-18; Sherman, *Class Acts*, 110-153.
[323] Burawoy, Manufacturing Consent, 27.
[324] Ibid., 92.
[325] Paules, *Dishing It Out*, 30-33.

is organized around income maximization, but that is not its central function. The game encourages the worker's mind and structures his investment in the work."[326]

Tipping facilitates the intensification of the demands made by restaurant organizations of their employees by requiring them to perform the emotional labour of giving good service, while relieving businesses of the obligation to pay them for it. As one study notes,

> In service engagement, where service charges are implicit (tips) or explicit (service charges), the customer bears some of the expense of the emotional labour and the decision as to the extent of the additional value for the service the employee has rendered. Price is thus not proportional to value and the difference accrues as surplus value to be allocated to management. These demands allow for exploitation both by the customer, who can have unrealistic expectations, and the management, by encouraging unrealistic service delivery given the price payable to the front-line employee, before the customer assesses the additional value.[327]

While it is service industry entrepreneurs who promise the affective dimensions of the restaurant experience, it is service workers who perform them and clients who subsidize them, but it is the restaurant itself that accrues the surplus value gleaned between the low wage paid to interactive workers and the cost of the bill itself. Workers create value with their affective, emotional and communicative labour: "There is a value which this generates for the customer and the organization and, where this is in excess of the payment to the emotional labourer, it creates surplus value."[328] Thus, by mandating the emotional labour of providing good service, restaurant organizations demand an additional level or modality of exertion from their employees, while simultaneously divesting themselves of responsibility for its provision and compensation.

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[326] Sherman, *Class Acts*, 124.
[327] Pannikos and Gibbs, "Emotional Labour and Surplus Value," 107.
[328] Ibid., 104. See also Segrave, *Tipping*, 105.

The way that good service is structured in restaurants thus drives a proliferation of modes for the creation of surplus value. Furthermore, as the review of quantitative studies of tip motivations reveals, higher tips are paid by customers for gestures of affection or intimacy that seem to go above and beyond normalized intersubjective performances of good service—they tip more when the illusion of spontaneity is sustained. The literature on service standards teaches us that service quality is evaluated based on past experiences and the expectations they have produced; in short, service quality is always evaluated against existing service norms. But if higher tips are gleaned primarily by exceeding these norms by performing gestures of intimacy that exceed expectations, then workers are compelled to continually amplify their emotional labour in order to earn their tipped incomes. Hochschild speculates that, as customers grow more acclimatized to the promises of good service, they begin to "subtract the commercial motive and collect the personal remainders matter-of-factly, almost automatically," in order to "ferret out the remaining gestures of a private gift exchange."[329] If she is correct, then systemic structures such as the tip that reward service workers for extraordinary emotional or affective gestures threaten to continuously intensify the emotional demands made upon restaurant servers in order to secure their incomes.

The emotional labour of giving good service is often alienating for the service worker, both because it is underlined by a dissimulation of emotional expression, as argued by Hochschild and Wharton, or, as Dowling holds, because capital intervenes in it so that it is performed under command and automated rather than being

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[329] Hochschild, *Managed Heart*, 192.

autonomous or spontaneous.[330] Either way, value is created in the affective

performances of service workers in ways that can sometimes be alienating or

exploitative. While marketing dining out as a leisurely experience intensifies the

demands made by restaurant organizations upon their staffs, by delegating the

payment for this element of restaurant service to customers, they are

simultaneously able to shift one potential site of worker antagonism, wages, onto

their clientele, so that wages no longer account for a possible site of conflict with the

organization that employs them. Put differently, because the majority of restaurant

servers' wages are paid directly by customers, both the evaluation of the quality of

emotional labour and its compensation are determined by its consumers, making

both of these sites of discord in the server-served relationship, rather than an issue

debated between service workers and the organizations that employ them. The

tipping system thus effectively displaces worker antagonism onto consumers, away

from the organizations that collectively determine the structure of this relation.

Restaurants as institutions thus supplant several of the major sites of potential

conflict in organization-employee relationships onto relations with customers:

wages become tips left by clients; labour intensity becomes the number of tables

served; discipline becomes the self-regulation needed to exceed customer

expectations; and even quality of work has much to do with the nature of the

interaction engaged in with patrons. This structure is doubly beneficial to

organizations. First, the displacement of worker antagonism from employers to

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[330] Carlone, "Contradictions of Labor in Service Work"; Hochschild, *The Managed Heart*; Dowling, "Producing the Dining Experience," 125; Pannikos and Gibbs, "Emotional Labour and Surplus Value," 103-8; Wharton, "Service with a Smile."

customers makes their engagements with their employers less fraught and removes

working conditions, discipline and compensation from the table as terms of

negotiation. Labour conditions appear to be external to the organization of the

restaurant industry, even though they are wholly structured by it. Secondly, in so

doing, worker loyalty is divided between the organization, which offers the long-

term contract of employment, and the customer, with whom the server is engaged in

a social relationship for the duration of the service encounter. As Carlone argues,

communication in the services paradoxically relies on "authenticity, reciprocity, and

interdependence. Yet, these operate alongside, and as, instrumental tools."[331] He

finds this to be one of the major sites of worker dissatisfaction in interactive service

work, as many experience role ambiguity or conflict about using the commonplaces

of mutuality and sincerity to objectify or instrumentalize customers.[332] He holds

that, "In an age of the sovereign customer, the dual technologies of self/other and of

objectification illustrate that a customer cannot always be right if a producer wishes

to generate revenue and, better, profit."[333] Displacing potential sites of worker

antagonism onto consumers serves to normalize the exploitation of customers—for

example by playing along with their desires for one regime of affective engagement

or another, or by upselling—by making the service fetish directly profitable for

workers, who in turn are made to feel more comfortable with exploiting their

customers and, to some measure, themselves.

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331 Carlone, "The Contradictions of Communicative Labor in Service Work," 173.
332 Ibid., 164.
333 Ibid., 167.

Political economy philosophers from the operaista tradition are insistent on the notion that capital is forever reformed and informed by cultural trends, that it is shaped by its responses to polemics against it. The tendency toward good service in an ever-expanding number of fields, what Lazzarato calls the trend towards an immaterialization of labour, has produced new structures and forms for capital that enable it to magnify and extend the ways in which it exploits labour. In this case, capital has taken two elements of service—gratuities and affective relations with the clientele—and merged them. This conflation serves simultaneously to deflate workers' wages, delegate some of the payment and monitoring of employees to clientele, all while securing the cooperation necessary to incite workers' willingly supplied communicative labour. Furthermore, by entrepreneurializing workers through the formation of the tipped subjectivity, restaurant organizations impel servers' complicity in the intensification of their own labour, both by working harder affectively to exceed customers expectations for good service and by taking on more tables and increasing their own workloads to earn more gratuities. Together, these structures not only demand workers' affective labour, but also align the interests of workers with those of service providers, as both incomes are chained to the same horse.

The tip conforms to a trend noted by the autonomist tradition, for capital to harness alternative forms of payment as its demands integrate ever-greater levels of workers' passions, intellects and language into the productive process. As Marazzi has argued, post-Fordism strives to eliminate the disconnections between capital and labour that were implicit in Fordist compensation schemes by tying workers'

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incomes to the processes of capitalist accumulation, serving to make workers "*co-interested* in the 'good operation' of capital."[334] He argues that this structure works to "overcome the Tayloristic separation, sanctioned by the employment contract, of work and worker, between the work performed and the body of the worker,"[335] which becomes necessary wherever greater portions of workers' minds and personalities are integral to the production of value. Thus, by articulating servers' incomes with customers' perceptions of the affective experiences they are having, the restaurant industry secures workers' active complicity in the exploitation of their affective labour in providing good service.

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[334] Marazzi, Capital and Language, 37.
[335] Ibid., 42.

Chapter Four: Gender, Sexuality and Skills in Restaurant Service

> "There are striking similarities between suckling and serving; breasts remain a factor, as does the urge to mollify as quickly as possible."[336]

In her best-selling account of an experiment in making a living at a series of working-class positions, Barbara Ehrenreich confesses her surprise at the difficulty, as a well-educated and intelligent person, she had upon taking on a number of low-wage, ostensibly low-skill jobs, including two as a waitress:

> You might think that unskilled jobs would be a snap for someone who holds a Ph.D. and whose normal line of work requires learning entirely new things every couple of weeks. Not so. The first thing I discovered is that no job, no matter how lowly, is truly 'unskilled'… None of these things came as easily to me as I would have liked; no one ever said, 'Wow, you're fast!' or 'Can you believe she just started?' Whatever my accomplishments in the rest of my life, in the low-wage work world I was a person of average ability.[337]

That even Ehrenreich, a well-known champion of the working class and the socially marginalized, would fall prey to the notion that "unskilled work" is unchallenging, reveals the degree to which our considerations of labour in interactive services assumes that the work doesn't require much skill or intellect. Attending to what kinds of emotional, affective and bodily labour are performed in service work denaturalizes the norms of good service that were established alongside restaurant service's feminization over the course of the 19th and 20th centuries, outlined in Chapter One, providing a platform from which to think about how service labour is culturally valued and how this might be thought politically.

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[336] Owings, *Hey Waitress!*, 7.
[337] Barbara Ehrenreich, *Nickle and Dimed: On (Not) Getting by in America* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 2001), 193-4.

While many service industry jobs are widely considered to be low-skill,[338] such categorizations rely on particular considerations of what does and does not constitute a skill, and these are in turn affected by who tends to perform jobs. Restaurant service's status as "women's work" may effectively undermine the skill sets required to perform it by casting its affective or emotional exertions as coming "naturally" to those who perform them and by undermining the considerable degree of coordination and physical discipline that the work also entails. Women are disproportionately represented throughout the service industries,[339] and, as numerous critics have argued, jobs themselves can be gendered, and in casual dining, service is decidedly female.[340]

Because of the gendered status of different kinds of restaurant labour, men and women occupy service posts differently. Traditionally, there has been a rather rigid division between the more professionalized, masculine, formal style of service in fine dining, where the majority of jobs were held by men, and the homey, familiar

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[338] Howe, *Pink Collar*, 126; Caitlin Kelly, *Malled: My Unintentional Career in Retail* (New York: Penguin, 2011), 79; Colin Lindsay and Ronald W. McQuaid, "Avoiding the 'McJobs': Unemployed Job Seekers and Attitudes to Service Work," *Work, Employment and Society* 18:2 (2004); Whyte, *Human Relations in the Service Industry*, 283.

[339] Adkins, *Gendered Work,*8; Beardsworth and Keil, *Sociology on the Menu*, 115; Benson, *Counter Cultures*, 177; Victor Fuchs, "An Agenda for the Research on the Service Sector," pp. 319-325 in Robert P. Inman (ed.), *Managing the Service Economy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 320; Howe, *Pink Collar*, 94; LaPointe, "Relationships with Waitresses," 379; MacDonald and Merrill, "Intersectionality in the Emotional Proletariat," 119; Paules*, Dishing It Out*, 19; Juliet Webster, "Clerks, Cashiers, and Customer Carers: Women's Work in European Services." In Debra Howcroft and Helen Richardson (eds.) *Work and Life in the Global Economy: A Gendered Analysis of Service Work* (London: Palgrave MacMillan, 2010), 186.

[340] Adkins, *Gendered Work*; Hall, "Smiling, Deferring and Flirting;" Heidi Hartmann, "The Unhappy Marriage of Marxism and Feminism: Toward a More Progressive Union" pp. 1-42 in Lydia Sargent, ed. *Women and Revolution: A Discussion of the Unhappy Marriage of Marxism and Feminism* (Cambridge: South End Press, 1981), 18; Hochschild, *Managed Heart*; Andrew W. Jones, "Caring Labor and Class Consciousness: The Class Dynamics of Gendered Work," *Sociological Forum* 16:2 (2001); LaPointe, "Relationships with Waitresses"; Webster, "Clerks, Cashiers, and Customer Carers," 188.

style deployed in more casual milieus where women predominate.[341] While these fields have come a long way toward integration, there are lingering habitual expectations about what kind of service customers might expect depending on the gender status of the service provider and the milieu where it is consumed. This distinction holds true for the familiarity and congeniality of service and what kinds of service scripts are deployed, but it also marks the bodies of service workers, where the physicality of service work often slips easily into sexuality or an aestheticized eroticism. Early 20th century moralists sought to block honourable young women from waitressing due to their unescorted proximity to men in public, and often men who were drinking, and they found that the tip in particular placed waitresses in a vulnerable position. As a 1912 Juvenile Protection report frets,

> A young girl who under any other circumstances would not dream of accepting money from a man will accept it in the guise of a tip. In the hands of a vicious man this tip establishes between him and the girl a relation of subserviency and patronage which may easily be made the beginning of improper attentions. The most conscientious girl, dependent on tips to eke out her slender wage, finds it difficult to determine just where the line of propriety is crossed.[342]

The hand-wringing morality of the time may strike us now as almost quaint, but there is a kernel of truth to the idea that a woman's sexual status and attractiveness is implicated in her capacity to earn tips when performing one's gender becomes a part of the job itself, often in a way that blurs care and service with sex work.

While management literature on tipping focuses on the myriad ways that servers can tweak and modify the quality of their communication to improve earnings, their perspectives on hiring practices tell a different story, that the

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[341] Cobble, *Dishing It Out*, 17; Gallus, *Dish*; Hall, "Waitering/Waitressing," 330; Lapointe, "Relationships with Waitresses," 379.
[342] Owings, "Hey Waitress!" 14-5.

"service personality" is inborn, that one cannot train friendliness and caring.[343] This explains, in part, the preferential hiring of women in many service posts, as women are popularly deemed to innately possess the qualities prized in personable service, which can then be honed through the repetitive performance of table service.[344]

This chapter explores the construction of skill in restaurant service work alongside gender, to address how affective and emotional labour draws upon the workers' social skills and aptitudes gained both outside the workplace and on-site. Much of performing good service in interactive work is about performing gender, and when servers do this gendered work, it doesn't necessarily look like "work" or "skill. "For female servers, the imperative to embody, for customers, what one account describes as a "geisha-nurse-mother,"[345] is accompanied by an elision of the physical labour, for in the service fetish, as Sherman describes, interactive labour "is supposed to appear voluntary on the part of the worker; noninteractive labor is supposed to remain invisible."[346] Thus the emotional labour of service work is hidden by the illusion of spontaneity, seeming like a talent rather than labour, while the sexualized body is highlighted at the expense of the work it's doing, staging the service body primarily as a (hetero)sexualized object. Investigating how gender and skill play out in service may act to determine whether and how to accord greater recognition of service labour's status *as labour*, given the various ways by which work is effaced by the conventions of good service.

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[343] Shock, Bowen and Stefanelli, *Restaurant Marketing*, 113.
[344] It is also maintained that service work is a natural fit for women due to its flexible shift allocation, assuming that this better frees them to work the "second shift" of care work at home. See Howe, *Pink Collar*; Butler and Skipper, "Waitressing, Autonomy and Vulnerability."
[345] Elder and Rolins, *Waitress*, 16.
[346] Sherman, *Class Acts*, 44.

Gendered Jobs and Skills

There is a familiar trope in cinematic depictions of servers, in which the defining feature of the characters' relation to the job is their desire and inability to escape it, and the culmination of the film's plot is often their departure from service work. The job's undesirability is presumed not to need any explanation, and the films largely don't articulate the causes for the characters' dissatisfaction with service work to the audience.[347] The variants are manifold, but the theme is consistent: service work is a temporary stopover, useful for generating funds to recover from some mishap or plan the next move, but it is not satisfying or skilled work in and of itself, and the status differential between service workers and their customers is frequently made prominent. The work is incidental to the grander trajectory of the character's life, and most of the stories take place elsewhere and are concerned with other issues, often heterosexual romantic relationship problems, showing little of service working life onscreen.[348] More often, the waitress is the object of a male character's desire in film, a convenient way of scripting in a sudden romantic encounter given the public nature of her work.[349]

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[347] This trope is common to other popular filmic representations of feminized service professions perceived to be low-skill and low-status, such as cleaning. See, for example, Jennifer Lopez in *Maid in Manhattan* (Wang, 2002), and, of course, the quintessential film of the woman-dating-her-way-out-of-a-crap-job genre, *Pretty Woman* (Marshall, 1990).

[348] The non-portrayal of work-life is not unique to restaurant jobs, however. As one account of service work in film addresses, "Work is not generally shown, and if it is shown, it is there as a means of working out personal problems." Jane Collings, "The Hollywood Waitress: A Hard-Boiled Egg and the Salt of the Earth," pp. 264-283 in David E. James and Rick Berg (eds) *The Hidden Foundation: Cinema and the Question of Class* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1996), 279. The exception to this is *Waiting…* (McKittrick, 2006), where the workplace culture and social life are the focus of the film, and in a sense the problem the film's protagonist must overcome (see the third section of this chapter, "Service, Masculinity and Heteronormativity" for an extended analysis of *Waiting…*).

[349] Collings argue that waitress characters in film are frequently used as figures allowing male characters to deal with their anxieties about women working in public rather than being defined publicly by men outside

In 2007's *Waitress*, the protagonist Jenna is a pregnant server who, upon

delivering her baby, realizes that she can escape the profession by opening her own

bakery, since her real passion is making pies. The feminine entrepreneurialism of

cookery as an out from service work similarly features in both the 1945 and 2011

adaptations of James M. Cain's *Mildred Pierce*, where newly-divorced Mildred

supports her family first by filling occasional baking orders, then by taking on a

waitress position and gradually building the two into a lucrative chain of

restaurants. Another former housewife down on her luck, in *Alice Doesn't Live Here*

Anymore, meets a suitor at her diner job and then quits to marry him.[350] Jennifer

Aniston's character in *Office Space* isn't so lucky; she cashes in her chips at one

restaurant, only to take a job at another chain outlet just down the street, which she

will presumably hate equally. Cora in *The Postman Always Rings Twice* is willing to

commit murder to take ownership of the diner where she works, while Bridget

Fonda's character in *It Could Happen to You*, forced to serve after her husband leaves

her and empties their bank account, buys the restaurant she works at after a fluke

encounter nets her half a winning lottery ticket's revenues.[351] For Justin Long's

character Dean in *Waiting…*, the culmination of the film's plot is his decision to leave

of domestic spaces: "Because waitressing is such a common and highly visible form of work for women, films dealing with this occupation inevitably deal with the whole 'problem' of women who work. The domestic nature of the work itself is particularly useful for pointing to the conflict being worked out with regard to the image of women as workers in a public setting versus women as wives, girlfriends, and moms within the private ownership context of the home." Ibid., 265. An excellent example of this is in *As Good As It Gets* (1997), where the waitress's public status and service role enables Jack Nicholson's misanthropic and obsessive-compulsive character to overcome his emotional problems by creating a situation in which he is comfortable relating to her on a personal level. Thanks to Doug Hanes for pointing out the aptness of this example.

[350] As Collings notes of both *Alice Doesn't Live Here Anymore* and *Mildred Pierce*, the housewife-cum-waitress is "a waitress of sorts within her private home, [who] finds it difficult to make the transition to working in public and with the public." "Hollywood Waitress," 276.

[351] She continues waitressing, but her retention of this job is intended to convey the character's fundamental moral worth in the story.

the service industry, even though he has no other specific path or profession in mind. In each of these cases, the primary tension resolved over the course of the film is the serving character's disdain for his or her job and aspiration to do something more lucrative, status-laden and self-fulfilling.

The implicit denigration of serving jobs in popular film mirrors a broader social discounting of service work, its status and its skills.[352] Rather than seeing the emotional intelligence, manual dexterity, mental organization and physical discipline required in service work as forms of cultural capital that might serve workers as well outside of service milieus as they do in them, it is cast as unskilled labour. These representations instead focus on the considerable amount of often highly gendered deference to customers that service work entails, and thus depict the work as undesirable, unfulfilling and even demeaning. The eclipse of exertion functions to further hide the emotional labour that servers do, such that it seems like an organic sociable interaction rather than the product of a skilled emotional manager's work. Classifying service work as unskilled considers the material skills of production and the creative skills of conception to the exclusion of all else, failing to acknowledge the distinctive nature of the *kinds* of skills applied in even the most "unskilled" service work, such as fast food or retail counter work.[353] As Robin

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[352] Howe describes how many working waitresses see and describe themselves as "not really" waitresses because they feel that people look down upon the work. *Pink Collar*, 126.

[353] Veronica Beechey, *Unequal Work* (London: Verso, 1987); Debra Howcroft and Helen Richardson, "Introduction." In Debra Howcroft and Helen Richardson (eds.) *Work and Life in the Global Economy: A Gendered Analysis of Service Work* (London: Palgrave MacMillan, 2011), 6; Diane Perrons, "Reflections on Gender and Pay Inequalities in the Contemporary Service Industry." In Debra Howcroft and Helen Richardson (eds.) *Work and Life in the Global Economy: A Gendered Analysis of Service Work* (London: Palgrave MacMillan, 2011), 169; Ronnie J. Steinberg and Deborah M. Figart "Emotional Labor Since *The Managed Heart*," *The ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Sciencei,* 561 (1999), 449-50; Vicki Smith, "Braverman's Legacy: The Labor Process Tradition at 20," *Work and Occupations* 21:4 (1994), 411; Webster, "Clerks, Cashiers, and Customer Carers, 185.

Leidner argues, the expansion of service labour calls for a more capacious notion of the word "skill," since "many of the capacities required to accomplish such work appear to be the features of personality or attitude, dimensions usually considered to be distinct from work skills."[354]

The deskilling perspective espoused by Harry Braverman, which holds that in contemporary capitalism skills have been stripped from workers and invested in management, has been critiqued in feminist accounts for its privileging of the masculine, material skills of manufactory labour.[355] Several theorists posit that the exclusion of these emotional skills is due in part to the focus in the past on manufactory skills, and in part to a broader cultural denigration of the kinds of work that had historically typically been done by women, which are then cast as "talents," rather than as "skills."[356] As Ronnie Steinberg and Deborah Figart convincingly argue, "Hegemonic notions of skill have relied on increasingly outdated assumptions about work based on nineteenth- and twentieth-century craft and manufacturing work. Yet the expansion of the service sector has intensified the necessity of expanding the definitions of skill to include emotional labor."[357] These theorists thus advocate greater recognition of care work as *work* where the erasure of eclipsed exertion denies it the status of recognizable labour. Steinberg holds that, "recognition of emotional labor as skilled, demanding, and responsible work is

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[354] Leidner, Fast Food, Fast Talk, 176.

[355] Smith, "Braverman's Legacy"; Ronnie J. Steinberg, "Social Construction of Skill: Gender, Power and Compatible Worth," *Work and Occupations* 17 (1990).

[356] Marjorie L. DeVault, *Feeding the Family: The Social Organization of Caring as Gendered Work* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991); Howcroft and Richardson, "Introduction," 6; Perrons, "Reflections on Gender and Pay Inequalities," 170.

[357] Steinberg and Figart, "Emotional Labor," 14.

ultimately about the achievement of long-term shifts in power relations in the labor market."[358]

Key to this, as Lisa Adkins explains, is understanding that, "the exploitation of women's labour differs from that of men's in the labour market."[359] This sometimes takes the form of job assignment—for example, men are far more likely to be found working in kitchens than on the service floor,[360] and some service positions, such as the bartender, and all of the service posts in fine dining are far more likely to be filled by men—remarkably, these are the most status-laden positions in dining establishments and service.[361] This is not to say that men are not employed in "women's" jobs in lower-end markets; they are, however they inhabit them differently and the service they provide is not evaluated in the same way. Adkins argues that where men are occupied in positions typically associated with women, they and their work are treated as "special," leading to a cultural construct wherein men's service and deference is cast as more valuable than women's. As Eleanor LaPointe notes, "Waiters are often considered more prestigious and skilled, but waitresses are seen as simply doing a job that comes 'naturally' to them."[362] The assumption that women are "naturally" good at giving good service makes the work that goes into providing it go unrecognized, making it yet another form of shadow labour in restaurants—the personable elements of women's service are not

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[358] Ronnie J. Steinberg, "Emotional Labor in Job Evaluation: Redesigning Compensation Practices," *The ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 561 (January 1999), 155. See also Jeffrey J. Sallaz, "Service and Symbolic Power: On Putting Bourdieu to Work," *Work and Occupations* 37 (2010) for an account of South African hospitality workers' struggle to have their interpersonal labour cast as "service," rather than self-motivated politeness.
[359] Adkins, *Gendered Labour*, 40.
[360] LaPointe, "Relationships with Waitresses," 379-90; Fine, *Kitchens*.
[361] Daniels, "Invisible Work," 409.
[362] LaPointe, "Relationships with Waitresses," 387.

necessarily recognized as work. Hochschild worries about this, noting that women

generally tend to do "extra emotion work—*especially emotion work that affirms,*

enhances, and celebrates the well-being and status of others" as a part of their daily

lives.[363] Furthermore, because good service in restaurants is rewarded by tips, this

assumption about women's inherent gift for emotional labour may lead to their

being paid less than men for doing the same work.[364] Arlene Kaplan Daniels writes

that, "interpersonal and caring skills are *not* seen as natural for men. They receive

more credit for showing these skills accordingly."[365] Continuing, she writes, "The

idea that emotional work should be natural for women contributes to the idea that

their work is less skilled—or that this part of their work should get less reward."[366]

Thus women may have to perform extra emotional labour in order to be perceived

as occupying service jobs adequately. As one study concludes, "While the

feminisation of labour in the industry reflects the more general process through

which gendered subjects are interpolated into the labour market, management will

also seek to engage or develop female gendered labour in its own image of

femininity."[367] The "good service" of feminized service labour thus reflects and

reproduces constructions of femininity in the culture at large, and stereotypes about

gender feature prominently into the performance of good service, whether they are

recognized as such or not.

Elaine Hall finds that restaurants gender their workers through hiring and task

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[363] Hochschild, *Managed Heart*, 165. Italics in the original.
[364] Numerous studies have shown that female servers earn less tips than their male counterparts. See LaPointe, "Relationships with Waitresses," 391.
[365] Daniels, "Invisible Labor," 409.
[366] *Ibid.*, 410.
[367] Filby, "'Figures, Personality and Bums,'" 27.

allocation, and by using gender stereotypes to structure and rationalize workers'

assignments.[368] She writes that, "Having defined waiting and other service jobs as

needing stereotypical feminine characteristics, employers prefer to hire women

who have been socialized to possess the social and domestic skills needed to

perform nurturing, housekeeping, cleaning, and waiting work."[369] This is one sense

a boon to women, giving them greater access to a fast-growing labour market, but it

also takes a toll on them, because it mandates their displays of heterosexualized

feminine deference and care. The feminization of service labour in the restaurant

industry has been characterized by a greater emphasis on creating an environment

of care and on the production of experience, so that ever more of service labour has

become defined by what we might consider emotional or affective work, and

particularly that which extends the kinds of care work traditionally performed by

women in the home.[370] There is no necessarily correlation between the provision of

food and drinks and the relations of care and displays of emotional labour and

sexuality that circumscribe them, yet the ways in which gender and class are

imbricated into "good service" displays what kinds of subjective positions are

privileged in different kinds of service encounters, as well as who might be excluded

from them.

Serving tables well requires a tacit understanding of service decorum. This

entails not only the capacity for the modulation of emotional displays required to

perform the correct demeanor, but also being able to predict what the disposition of

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[368] Hall, "Smiling, Deferring and Flirting," 455.
[369] Ibid., 456.
[370] Braverman, *Labour and Monopoly Capital*, 359; Hochschild, *Managed Heart*; Spradley and Mann, *Cocktail Waitress*, 4, 27; Whyte, *Human Relations*, 47.

a given dining party might be, to guess what kind of service relationship they desire

and then enact it.[371] The waitresses themselves, as Cobble argues, see the ability to

do affective labour as their greatest and most valuable skill: "Waitresses claimed to

be skilled craftswomen despite the larger societal view of their work as unskilled

and despite the fact that they acquired most of their training and experience on the

job. For them, 'skill' encompassed social abilities. 'Nurturing' and 'caring'… deserved

respect and compensation just as did physical strength and 'technical' know-

how."[372]

Where social skills become one's labour skills, this changes the notion of what

constitutes labour, training and value in the workplace. As Spradley and Mann point

out,

> each of the waitresses had learned the wider cultural rules for these
> encounters from years of participation in social life at home, at school, at
> church, with friends, and in other places of employment. Often outside of
> awareness, they still knew that their demeanor must be less aggressive than
> males, that their speech should be less direct and cutting, that their
> movements should be more graceful. These and hundreds of other bits of tacit
> cultural knowledge had been learned previously and could easily be adapted
> to life in this bar. As each girl *learned* the more superficial level of the culture
> they also *used* the deeper, underlying principles they had learned as part of
> the wider culture.[373]

The skill of predicting customer desires is learned by doing, through

experimentation with different modes of address and playing with the service

scripts, however much of servers' insight into what constitutes good and bad service

is learned off the job, as consumers. In their influential account of monopoly capital,

Baran and Sweezy posit that today "consumption becomes a sort of extension and

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[371] Sherman, *Class Acts*; Gatta, "Balancing Trays and Smiles,"122.
[372] Cobble, *Dishing It Out*, 5.
[373] Spradley and Mann, *Cocktail Waitress*, 27.

continuation of the process of earning a livelihood,"[374] and consumption has become

just another way that people today labour. In the case of the restaurant, people gain

aptitudes and knowledges about restaurant service decorum by consuming

restaurant service, accumulating skills before being engaged to do the work. This

generates additional benefits for the service provider who thus outsources this cost

rather than investing capital in training.[375] Access to service etiquette relies on the

ability to observe it as a consumer, affording a class prerogative of familiarity for

those in a pecuniary position to consume different registers of service, versus those

who cannot. This is part and parcel of the idea of living labour; today, whatever we

consume outside of work acts in composite as our ability to be socialized in such a

way as to make our subjectivities (and bodies) productive for capital, and by

extension, ourselves. Furthermore, access to service decorum relies on the ability to

consume service, to learn how it is done; thus, exclusions from consumption can be

reproduced at the level of labour by making familiarity with service standards

unattainable.

Michel Foucault's development of the neo-liberal concept of "human capital,"

enables us to consider more of the workers' lifetime of aptitudes as skills and thus

avoid excluding the feminized nature of emotional labour from them.[376] He

describes human capital as made up of "innate elements and other, acquired

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[374] Paul A. Baran and Paul M. Sweezy, *Monopoly Capital: An Essay on the American Economic and Social Order* (New York and London: Monthly Review Press), 345.
[375] Constanti and Gibbs, "Emotional Labour," 106.
[376] Throughout this work I have eschewed the term "human capital" in favour of "living labour," given the former's sometimes troubling deployment in neo-liberal discourses, however I have retained "human capital" here since this is the term Foucault uses.

elements,"[377] as "the set of investments we have made at the level of man himself,"

from the "investment" of a mother's care for her child to his social adroitness to his

at-work skills and aptitudes to the garments with which he dresses himself

professionally.[378] We can thus think of the whole of one's accumulated life

experience, all of one's aptitudes and skills and experiences, as one's human capital,

"which in practical terms is inseparable from the person who possesses it."[379]

Foucault's human capital is thus very much like Bourdieu's habitus. Like habitus, the

concept attends to how a lifetime's worth of experience adheres, however, in

Foucault's account we see how this adherence or tenacity of experience is put into

the service of labour as the ability to generate value—both for the worker, as

income, and for the capitalist organization that employs the worker and absorbs the

surplus capital thus produced.

The skills required to provide good service in the restaurant industry

conform to the autonomists' perspective on capital's appropriation of the general

intellect, where social competencies and communicative skills become directly

productive for capital. As Marazzi describes it, capital today works "to *fuse* work and

worker, to *put to work the entire lives* of workers. Skills, rather than professional

qualifications, are put to work and with them workers' emotions, feelings, their

after-work lives."[380] In providing good service, all of the worker's affects, aptitudes

and personality are made productive. As Dowling argues, "it is evident that the

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[377] Michel Foucault, *The Birth of Biopolitics: Lectures at the Collge de France 1978-1979* trans. Graham Burchell (London, Palgrave MacMillan, 2008), 227.
[378] Ibid., 231.
[379] Ibid., 224.
[380] Marazzi, *Capital and Language*, 50. Italics in the original.

inherent and learned emotional and interpersonal skills, i.e. the workers' ability to create affective relations, are exploited in the valorization process. But in turn, they are also manipulated and transformed for the purpose of surplus value extraction."[381] Servers' personalities, their ability to read situations, anticipate customer demands and to nourish rapport, become productive for capital. Crang argues that the skills harnessed in restaurant service are "indeterminate" ones, that fall "somewhat outside the scope of deskilling, not least because managers, and in the abstract, capital, need it to be incompletely rationalized and replicable."[382] In short, because servers perform affective labour that harnesses their own idiosyncratic charms while interacting independently with the clientele, they cannot be perfectly or completely monitored, as described in Chapter Two, and must be trusted to act autonomously in the enterprise's interests. However, as discussed in Chapter Three, the gratuity system of compensation produces the "tipped subjectivity" of the entreprenuerialized worker, who understands that he or she will earn more with greater sales, aligning the workers' interests with the organization's to produce a trustworthy autonomous worker. The service worker thus deploys their living labour in the provision of service, and this human capital is in turn fed by the kinds of relationships they have at work, folding back onto the worker and adding to the value of their labour and the skills they require to do it. Service work thus acts to produce a service subjectivity, a stance that is inevitably reproduced outside the sphere of the restaurant.

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[381] Dowling, "Producing the Dining Experience," 131.
[382] Crang, "It's Showtime," 310.

Personhood itself becomes part of the capital for securing income; Hochschild herself puts it succinctly when she argues how a smile becomes an emotional worker's "asset."[383] Part of this, and implicit in much of the research on emotional and aesthetic labour, is that vast elements of the "skills" of contemporary labour are developed on one's own time outside of the workplace. Thus, workers are not paid for time devoted to gaining these skills. However, this dimension of emotional labour can be read slightly differently using Virno or Lazzarato, who would argue that what is developed in the worker is a capacity for language, the general intellect, which both inheres in the individual worker and enriches us all. While this kind of capital inheres in the workers, at the level of the collected skills and aptitudes they have, it is still denied any kind of accrediation or recognition in the broader world as "skill." Thus, while a server's capacity for emotional labour and reading consumer-audiences may serve her well in earning tips, once she leaves the world of customer service this doesn't translate into something that can be added to a CV, in the way that a foreign language, college degree, or other accredited skill might be; serving skills only have currency in restaurants, and cannot be applied elsewhere. This is key, since, as this chapter shows, women in particular are raised to carry these kinds of attributes and skills, which may not thereafter be appreciated as such on the labour market.

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[383] Hochschild, *The Managed Heart*, 4.

The Bodily Work of Service and Sexuality

Service work is eminently bodily labour.[384] As Lorraine Bayard de Volo writes,

"bodies in the service sector are not necessarily separate from the service itself."[385]

In addition to the emotional labour of pleasing customers, servers engage in a great

deal of highly physical labour: lifting and carrying heavy trays and plates through

the space of the restaurant, often during long and intense shifts.[386] Since customers

are seated and servers circulate at full height, their bodies at work are quite visible

and displayed to clients, making them obvious targets for observation should

anyone care to watch.[387] At the same time, many dimensions of the physicality of

service labour are obscured. For example, no matter how busy, servers are

discouraged from running on the service floor,[388] as this would betray how hard

they are working, and the decorum of service requires that the physical work of

service be eclipsed while its affective dimensions are showcased. So, while servers'

bodies are on display for customer scrutiny while they work, this does not mean

that all of the work that they are doing is apparent.[389]

In Ehrenreich's experiment in waitressing, she describes her difficulty

adapting to both the physical demands of the job—long hours of walking between

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[384] Erickson, "Bodies at Work"; Bayard de Volo, "Service and Surveillance," 391; Gatta, "Balancing Trays and Smiles," 118. As Carol Wolkowitz argues, the focus in sociological literature on the emotional labour of service work since Hochschild's *The Managed Heart* was published has elided attention to the physical work that servers do. *Bodies at Work*, 79, 87. See also Anne Witz, Chris Warhurst and Dennis Nickson, "The Labour of Aesthetics and the Aesthetics of Organisation" *Organisation* 10(1) (2003): 33-54.
[385] Bayard de Volo, "Service and Surveillance," 371.
[386] Elder and Rolins, *Waitress*, 19-20, 51; Gatta, "Balancing Trays and Smiles," 118; Paules, *Dishing It Out*, 7-8; Taylor, *Counter Culture*, 7, 38-40.
[387] Erickson, "Bodies at Work," 84; Taylor, *Counter Culture*, 19-20; Wolkowitz, *Bodies at Work*, 83.
[388] Crang, "Communicative Labor," 318.
[389] Additionally, while servers do perform a great deal of cleaning work on the floor, but this largely happens in the lulls between rushes and is not generally witnessed by most customers, known as "side work" by servers. See Elder and Rolins, *Waitress*, 47; Gallus, *Wait*, 7:15; Owings, *Hey Waitress!*; Paules. *Dishing It Out*, 143-4.

the kitchen and floor, often carrying heavy plates, and the discipline of doing so quickly without dropping or messing up orders. A similar learning curve appears in *Mildred Pierce*, in which a middle class housewife takes on work as a waitress in order to feed her family. There is a telling scene in the HBO mini-series adaptation, in which Kate Winslet, playing Mildred, is dancing to the radio, her arms loaded with several pie plates each, laden with rocks. She is training for the physical rigours of waitressing work, not just the technical difficulty of balancing five plates without dropping them or damaging their contents, nor even bearing their weight—what Mildred strives toward, dancing alone in her room, is to do so *gracefully*, without ever betraying the work this feat entails to her customers as their orders are delivered from kitchen to table.[390]

As Karla Erickson notes, the server's body is "staged" and plays a central role in how service work is "evaluated and rewarded."[391] However, it is important to note that women's bodies in public space mean differently than men's do, such that part of the display of women's bodies in public entails some performance of sexuality. In many service milieus, women's bodies are used to adorn the restaurant, and their uniforms reflect this. As one account notes, "Employees become 'walking billboards… who are deliberately aestheticized into becoming organization artefacts

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[390] Haynes, "Part Two," *Mildred Pierce*, HBO 2011, 45s-60s. This scene is also significant because of why Mildred practices service alone in her room: she is so ashamed of having to take work waitressing, even during the Depression, that she hides the job from her haughty daughter Veda in order to protect the girl's sense of their (middle) class identity. Erickson also compares service work to a "dance," but she does so in reference to the backstage work that takes place in prep stations and ordering computers, where servers must avoid one another's bodies while doing backstage work in cramped service stations. "Bodies at Work." For a discussion of the technique and discipline of carrying multiple plates, which can take years to learn, see Taylor, *Counter Culture*, 37-9.
[391] Erickson, "Bodies at Work," 84.

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that are also intended to evoke sensory affect in customers."[392] For waitresses, often the sexualized body is highlighted, at the expense of displaying the work it's doing. Adkins holds that the performance of feminine sexuality in the workplace is mandated, such that sexuality in women's work can be seen as "constituting a force of production in terms of capitalist production."[393]

In her ethnographic account of working in a restaurant/bar, Erickson describes what happened when there was a change of uniform. The establishment in question had employed the same uniform for both genders, a shapeless polo that was "so plain, so unfashionable" that "it made it difficult to objectify women's bodies."[394] Reminding that, "uniforms are meant to and do flatten out differences between bodies," she recounts the adoption of a new uniform for women, a tight T-shirt in a pale colour that mandated servers' thinness and highlighted the breasts, which she argued functioned to "stage the waitresses as women first and workers second."[395] The change in uniform serves to stage waitresses' bodies as women's bodies, although femininity is also performed in the social relations surrounding service provision.

Consumers have "service gender stereotypes," and when these expectations are not met they are likely to perceive the service as being poor. The performance of femininity thus becomes mandatory for women as part of good service, and "women

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[392] Chris Warhurst and Dennis Nickson, "'Who's Got the Look?' Emotional, Aesthetic and Sexualized Labour in Interactive Services," *Gender, Work and Organization* 16:3 (2009), 390; Cobble, "Dishing It Out," 22; Erickson, "Bodies at Work," 84; Hall, "Smiling, Deferring and Flirting," 29; LaPointe, "Relationships with Waitresses," 383; Valerie Zeithaml and Mary Jo Bitner, *Services Marketing* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 2003), 318.

[393] Adkins, *Gendered Work*, 51. See also Filby, "'Figures, Personality and Bums;'" Hall, "Smiling, Deferring and Flirting."

[394] Erickson, "Bodies at Work," 83.

[395] Ibid., 83-5. See also LaPointe, "Relationships with Waitresses," 382.

who do not display traits stereotypically associated with femininity tend to be

criticized for their performance in jobs despite being competent."[396] This includes

not only the emotional relations of care and friendliness discussed elsewhere, but

also a disciplinization of kinetic technique that enforces what Wolkowitz calls "tacit

but learned" embodied practices at work.[397] Feminine demeanour in service is thus

part of the server's habitus, Bourdieu's term for the embodied subjectivity or

embodied social history as it plays out in day-to-day life, consciously or not, to

maximize its performance in a social field.[398] For instance, Tyler and Hancock

describe how, on airlines, stewardesses are instructed to display a feminized body,

to "always *walk softly* through the cabin, always *make eye contact* with each and

every passenger and always *smile* at them."[399] Thus, restaurant service is rooted in

the expectation of a performed femininity, and this work, like the work that goes

into Mildred Pierce's graceful delivery of plates, is obscured by the assumption that

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[396] Eileen Fisher, Brenda Gainer and Julia Bristor, "Sex of the Service Provider: Does it Influence Perceptions of Service Quality?" *Journal of Retailing*, 73(3), 1997, 371. See also Susan Tufts Fiske et. al., "Social Sciences on Trial: Use of Sex Stereotyping in 'Price Waterhouse v. Hopkins,'" *American Psychologist* 46 (1991). Forseth finds, in the context of the bank, that falling back on gender stereotypes is particularly central at moments of customer disillusionment, when "women workers were not constituted as professional representatives of the bank, but as gendered and embodied personas. The female customer representatives were transformed into nothing but women, from 'little darlings' to 'old bitties.' These expressions carry symbolic meaning and and relate to discourses of femininity and masculinity, subordination and superiority." Ulla Forseth, "Gender Matters? Exploring How Gender is Negotiated in Service Encounters," *Gender, Work and Organization* 12:5 (2005). 455.
[397] Wolkowitz, *Bodies at Work*, 70.
[398] Pierre Bourdieu, "Program for a Sociology of Sport," *Sociology of Sport Journal* 5 (1988): 153-61; Pierre Bourdieu, "Sport and social class," trans. Richard Nice, *Social Science Information* 17:6 (1978): 819-40; Pierre Bourdieu, *The Logic of Practice*, trans. Richard Nice (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1990), 56; Jonathan Sterne, "Bourdieu, Technique and Technology," *Cultural Studies* 17:3/4 (2003): 367-89. Habitus is of course related to Mauss's concept of the same name, which he defines as "the ways in which from society to society men know how to use their bodies." Marcel Mauss, *Sociology and Psychology: Essays* trans. Ben Brewster (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1979), 97. Bourdieu's account better attends to how these dispositions are made distinctive, or how they differ and are accorded value in different social fields.
[399] Melissa Taylor and Phillip Hancock, "Flight Attendants and the Management of Gendered 'Organisational' Bodies," in Kathryn Backett-Muilburn and Linda McKie (eds) *Constructing Gendered Bodies* (London: MacMillan, 2001), 31. Italics in the original.

it is innate. Even the heavy lifting of service work, of carrying loaded trays and plates of food, must be softened and made feminine in order to seem "correctly" performed. As Wolkowitz reminds, "the body work that this takes is naturalized by being equated with what women are, by nature, rather than something (extra) they do," grounded as it is in the performance of gender.[400]

Since waitressing involves the prominent display of the body and a mode of address grounded in deferral in an atmosphere where women's sexual attractiveness is implicated in her capacity to earn money, the care work of service blurs easily into sex work.[401] This subtle reorganization of workers is part of a long history of women's objectification as sexual objects in service work, which Kirby describes as part of "a culture of enjoyment that has mystified and obscured skills demanded by workers while simultaneously rendering their workplace a space for sexualized encounters they have both to repel and attract."[402] Flirtation is imperative in interactions with male customers, should they care to engage with their servers in this way; while the male customer has the prerogative to not flirt, the waitress does not.[403] Thus, not only is women's service work feminized, but it is also (hetero)sexualized. Wolkowitz writes that, "the packaging of customer service exploits the expectations of normative heterosexuality and locks women into

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[400] Wolkowitz, *Bodies at Work*, 82. See also Melissa Tyler and Phillip Hancock," "Flight Attendants and the Management of Gendered 'Organisational' Bodies." In Kathryn Backett-Milburn and Linda McKie (eds.), *Constructing Gendered Bodies* (London: MacMillan, 2001).
[401] As one study wryly notes, it is intriguing "how quickly discussions of service work begin to resemble discussions of sex work." Erickson, "Bodies at Work," 85.
[402] Kirby, *Barmaids*, 205.
[403] Hall, "Smiling, Deferring and Flirting," 464; Spradley and Mann, *Cocktail Waitress*, 44.

subservient, hyper-feminine roles focused around 'being nice to jerks.'"[404]

While unlike some sex work, there is little physical contact and customers for the most part understand that servers are not actually sexually available to them as part of the service on offer, the imperative to flirt with male customers leads waitresses, especially in bars, to develop tactics for responding to male cupidity that are flirtatious, without being leading:

> Each girl learns to demurely respond to taunts, invitations, and the physical invasions of her personal space. She smiles, laughs, patiently removes hands, ignores the questions, and moves coyly out of reach. These qualities of her response serve to complement the performance of male customers; for sexual identities are defined in social interaction and masculinity can only acquire its meaning in contrast to femininity.[405]

The sexualization of service thus also produces a certain kind of male consumer, one who is entitled to exercise the prerogative of flirtation. And, as Kirby notes, many women have embraced this heterosexual flirtation as a means of earning more tips.[406]

The sexualized nature of waitresses' contact with male customers has ramifications in terms of their relations with their female clientele as well, since, unlike most sex work, restaurant service mostly takes place in gender-integrated public space.[407] Where waitresses serve mixed parties of men and women, they are

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[404] Wolkowitz, *Bodies at Work*, 81. See also Warhurst and Nickson, "Who's Got the Look"; Hall, "Smiling, Deferring and Flirting"; Simon Cross and Barbara Bagilhole, "Girls Jobs for the Boys? Men, Masculinity and Non-Traditional Occupations," *Gender, Work and Organization* 9:2 (2002), 212; Lynne Segal, *Why Feminism?* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1999), 63.

[405] Spradley and Mann, *Cocktail Waitress*, 148.

[406] Kirby, Barmaids.

[407] An exception to this is in strip clubs and "sexy server" themed restaurants, where women are either banned from entry or seldom go, and must do so with the understanding that it is a specifically (hetero)sexualized space. For discussions of waitressing in these spaces, see Meika Loe, "Working for Men at the Intersection of Power, Gender and Sexuality," *Sociological Inquiry* 66:4 (1996) (an ethnography of work at "Bazooms," a thinly-veiled Hooter's); Anne Allison, *Nightwork: Sexuality, Pleasure and Corporate Masculinity in a Tokyo Hostess Club* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994) (in a Japanese hostess club), Kari Lerum, "Sexuality, Camaraderie and Power," *Gender and Society* 18:6 (2004)

required to perform additional deference to the female customers in order to

display their non-competitive status.[408] As one server attests,

> If I serve a table with a man and a woman I'll look for eye contact and
> complicity from the woman. A man would not do that, he wouldn't deal with it
> in the same way. I'll look to the woman because I can't become her rival, so she
> has to become my accomplice. As long as all goes well with the woman, all will
> go well with the man.[409]

Thus, even in their interactions with other women, when men are present the

waitress is primarily framed and staged within a compulsorily heterosexual regime.

Regardless of her comportment, the waitress is always-already staged as a sexual

object, who must conspire with the female customer to diffuse any potential sexual

threat she might pose to her client, rather than trying to inspire some other

complicity with female patrons to stage a social relation grounded in another kind of

amity, such as feminine homosociality or sharing gastronomic knowledge.

The imperative for women to display a sexualized body in service work also

means that female servers may be called upon to perform the additional work of

self-maintenance off-the-job, performing what might be termed "beauty labour,"

rituals that involve developing or maintaining a body that is culturally deemed to be

attractive—thin, epilated, and young—in a sexually objectifying workplace.[410]

Furthermore, it accords a decided advantage to "attractive" waitresses, who, as in

(a strip club); Gallus, *Wait* (a Hooter's knockoff and Cavalli, a Montreal restaurant known for hiring "serving models" rather than "waitresses"); Warhurst and Nickson, "Who's Got the Look?" (in retail outlets).

[408] Spradley and Mann, *Cocktail Waitress*, 81, Gallus, *Wait*.

[409] Kathya, Maître d' at Le Boeuf sur le toit restaurant, quoted in Gallus, *Wait*, 31:00.

[410] See Sheila Jeffreys, *Beauty and Misogyny: Harmful Cultural Practices in the West* (New York: Routledge, 2005), 22-4; Monique Wittig, "The Category of Sex," pp. 24-29 in Diana Leonard and Lisa Atkins (eds) *Sex in Question: French Materialist Feminism* (London: Taylor and Francis, 1996). Bourdieu rightly notes that such deployments of girls' "beauty capital" is one route that female members of the working class can use toward gaining greater social and professional mobility. Bourdieu, "Sport and Social Class," 832.

other job markets, are likely to have more employment options.[411] As Wolkowitz reminds, "employers are not after unisex bodies but seek to recruit particular masculinities and femininities and exclude others, such as the loutish man and the procreative or aging woman."[412] But maintaining this ideal, she notes, requires female servers to "internalize the gaze of others in managing her own body… women are expected to serve as a repository for male desires, in turn necessitating particular ways of dressing up and making-up that ensure that they are seen as heterosexually available"[413]—although, in some cases, management may also intervene when a waitress no longer conforms to the organizational image, for example by suggesting that she lose weight.[414]

The western cultural emphasis upon youthful beauty also exposes a bizarre paradox at the heart of waitressing work, one that betrays the degree to which it is perceived to be unskilled: while older waitresses have done the job longer and thus have greater experience, they are often excluded from the more desirable service positions in favour of younger girls. As Toronto diner owner Ash Farrelly puts it,

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[411] Hall, "Smiling, Deferring and Flirting," 456; Daniel S. Hamermesh and Jeff E. Biddle, "Beauty and the Labor Market," *The American Economic Review* 84(5) (1994), pp. 1174-94; Hanser, *Service Encounters*, 17; Barry Harper, "Beauty, Stature and the Labour Market," *Oxford Bulletin of Economics and Statistics* 62:51 (2000); Milford Prewitt, "Critics say 'good looks' win job advantages while others shut out," *Nation's Restaurant News* 39:19 (2003). Even in fast food, Leidner notes a marked preference to put the prettiest girls up front doing counter work, while boys and less attractive women worked cleaning and cooking details. *Fast Food, Fast Talk*, 78.
[412] Wolkowitz, *Bodies at Work*, 88.
[413] Ibid., 81-2. This system is also compulsorily heterosexual and gender binary. As Judith Butler writes, gender identity is produced against prohibitions such as that against displayed homosexuality, making it able to "produce identity along the culturally intelligible grids of an idealized and compulsory heterosexuality. The disciplinary production of gender effects a false stabilization of gender in the interests of the heterosexual construction and regulation of sexuality," in this case by appearing sexually desirable, available, deferential and straight. Judith Butler, *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity* (New York and London: Routledge Classics, 1990), 184-5.
[414] See Adkins, *Gendered Work*; Owings, *Hey Waitress!*, 137; Melissa Tyler and Pamela Abbott, "Chocs Away: Weightwatching in the Contemporary Airline Industry," *Sociology* 32(3), 1998: 433-50; Wolkowitz, *Bodies at Work*, 82.

"people want the waitresses to be young, good looking people… You need to be able to get the men in to get them to spend money."[415] The demand for sexy servers and cultural disregard for older women's physical beauty means that as servers age, they are frequently forced to move down the hierarchy of service jobs, rather than up, to positions in institutional foodservice or diners where the prices and tipped incomes are lower.[416] Thus, a waitress's capacity to earn decreases as she becomes more experienced (and older). These milieus service also call upon a different heterosexist stereotype of femininity: while waitresses are still to some degree cast as sex objects, they are also cast as mothers. As Collings notes, "the waitress has powerful connotations of a public sphere mother."[417] Thus service still mandates that women in low-end service to perform their gender, but it deploys a different figure of archetypal femininity to do so.

Because service consumers are purchasing an experience, one that includes a certain level of interaction with service workers, both the quality of that interaction and the persona of the server herself become a part of what is consumed. As Paules puts it, "quality of service is increasingly bound up with the personal qualities of the employee: her ability to smile sincerely, to project an appropriate image (sexy, sophisticated, fun-loving), to harness or suppress private emotions and so cultivate a desired mood in the customer. In assessing the caliber of service, therefore,

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[415] Interviewed in Gallus, *Wait*, 8:47-51. See Taylor, *Counter Culture*, for discussions of experience and skill for older waitresses; the waitresses themselves claim that it takes years to become an adept waitress (32).
[416] Gallus, *Wait*, 8:55; Hanser, *Service Encounters*, 193.
[417] Collings, "Hollywood Waitress," 266. See also Cobble, *Dishing It Out*, 45; Elder and Rolins, *Waitress*, 16; Owings, *Hey Waitress!*

customers also appraise the personality of the server."[418] Much of this is decidedly

sexual or flirtatious in nature. While in some service milieus, such as bars, service is

overtly about a sexualized or flirtatious relationship, service scholars are

unanimous that all restaurant service depends heavily upon the performance of

compulsorily heterosexualized gender roles.[419] Where service work is about

performing gender, it appears as a culturally naturalized performance, and

therefore it doesn't look like "work" or "skill."

When considering skills as part of human capital or living labour, then these

skills become part of the property of the worker, something they bring with them to

work. While feminist labour scholars are interested in considering emotional labour

as skilled, there is some question as to the usefulness of so doing. As Jonathan Payne

notes,

> the customer-handling skills that management requires, in relatively
> standardized service contexts at least, are such a common property across
> large tracts of the population that employers simply do not have to pay a
> wage premium to obtain them. Indeed, where is the empirical evidence that
> non-certified social skills or emotional labour attract any pay rewards.[420]

He argues that since there is a large body of workers who can be conscripted to do

interactive labour, conferring it the status of "skilled" labour is unlikely to improve

the pay and conditions of those who perform it. Furthermore, he holds that

emotional labour *shouldn't* really be considered a proper skill, in terms of its

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[418] Paules, "Resisting the Symbolism of Service," 41.
[419] Spradley and Mann, *Cocktail Waitress*; Erickson, "Bodies at Work,"; Deborah Kerfoot and Marek Korczynski, "Gender and Service: New Directions for the Study of 'Front Line' Service Work," *Gender, Work and Organization* 12:5 (2005), 393; Forseth, "Gender Matters?" 443; Tyler and Abbott, "Flight Attendants," 82.
[420] Jonathan Payne, "Emotional Labour and Skill: A Reappraisal," *Gender, Work and Organization* 16:3 (2009), 361.

learnability, certifiability and complexity.[421] While it is true in that such skills are difficult to quantify and certify, that does not mean that there is no merit in according emotional labour's status as labour and as a capacity or skill. To do so might not necessarily afford better working conditions for servers, who are after all rewarded for their affective exertions through the tip, however it would serve to make these kinds of skills more visible and transferable in other contexts.

As an example, I am forced to resort to the anecdotal in order to make a point about the transferability of affective skill. While acknowledging that the example is imperfect and my experience perhaps unique, the story at least suggests some possibility for finding other uses in the labour market for the kinds of emotional skills that adhere in doing service work. At the time of my first foray into white-collar labour, I held half of a bachelor's degree and had no office experience of any sort on my resumé. I was applying for co-op placements, and finally obtained one at the now-defunct software company Corel as a junior technical writer, after submitting my CV and conducting a short phone interview. Upon being hired, I asked my manager why she'd chosen my application out of a thick stack of prospective hires' CVs (knowing I had several more rounds of co-op placement applications ahead of me before my degree was done), and she told me it was because I had held several waitressing jobs. While my good grades, writing samples and English degree-in-progress told her that I was competent to perform intellectual and creative aspects of the job, my experience as a waitress told her that I had the social skills to deal with the often obstreperous software engineers I

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[421] Ibid., 355-8.

depended upon to do so. She valued my service experience, although of course she would never have hired me without the university credentials as well, but it does serve to indicate how thinking of service as "skilled" could be made mobile, recognized in other fields as a value-adding quality.

Traditionally, what is formally trained is considered "skill," but what is acquired by a lifetime of communication and caregiving, as habitus or as emotional aptitude, is considered natural or innate. By viewing the affective skills of hospitality or care work as productive, we might also be better able to recognize and compensate them, as well as working toward correcting historical myopia about the value of "women's work."[422] Furthermore, this could lead to means of finding greater recognition for emotional labour as skilled in such a way that it becomes transferable to other milieus, making service skills more portable as capital in order to facilitate its usefulness and recognition in other fields of labour and life.

Service, Masculinity and Heteronormativity

The homey social relations of casual dining are sharply contrasted by another key regime of service, the austere formality of fine dining. As Hall reminds, traditionally there have been "two work roles segregated into different kinds of restaurants; male servers performed a formal service style in upscale restaurants, and female servers gave friendly service in family restaurants," and she notes that "the familial waitressing service style of family restaurants continues to be

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[422] Grandey and Brauburger, "Emotion Regulation," 266; Constanti and Gibbs, "Emotional Labor," 115.

devalued."[423] Long the last masculine bulwark in table service, by Hall's estimation American fine dining was two-thirds integrated by the mid-nineties,[424] although this process has been much slower in Europe. The slow gender integration of fine dining service also serves to contrast the different ways that men and women deal with difference in gendered work, for, "while women's strategies to a varying degree often involve compromising their individual gender identity to the demands of masculine work, male strategies give primacy to the preservation of masculine identity."[425] Regardless of whether a fine dining server is male or female, the service style and workplace culture remains very masculine, bearing a remarkably different orientation toward service than the personable style adopted in other restaurants. As Hall puts it, "A formal service style requires servers to appear dignified and reserved and is gendered as masculine, whereas home-style service promotes a casual, familial form of interaction and is gendered as feminine."[426] Where women are employed in formal service, they dress like men, adopting a modified suit and tied-back hair.[427]

Maya Gallus's (2010) documentary of waitressing, *Dish*, follows two female

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[423] Hall, "Waitering/Waitressing," 334. See also Cobble, *Dishing It Out*, 17; Gallus, *Wait*; Howe, *Pink Collar*, 94; Hall, "Smiling, Flirting and Deferring," 457; LaPointe, "Relationships with Waitresses," 379-80; Mars and Nicod, *World of Waiters*, 28-32; John R. Walker, *The Restaurant: From Concept to Operation* 5th ed. (Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley and Sons, 2008), 315.

[424] Hall, "Waitering/Waitressing," 336. This integration has not played out at the level of food preparation, which still remains overwhelmingly male at all but the lowest level of food preparation, namely industrial foodservice (such as institutional cafeterias) and small cafés and luncheonettes. As Fine notes, the occupational statistics find that 57.2% of all cooks are female, but he argues that "this statistic is deceptive when considering restaurant life, as it includes those areas of cooking in which females predominate—institutional cooking, diners, and local cafés," and that men predominate in restaurants. He finds that "women, while sometimes accepted, are a small minority, remaining outsiders," (*Kitchens*, 241). Significantly, the institutions he lists are among those with the least cachet within the cooking profession, leaving the more status-laden jobs for men.

[425] Ben Lupton, "Maintaining Masculinity: Men Who Do 'Women's Work,'" *British Journal of Management* 11:1 (2000), S36.

[426] Hall, "Waitering/Waitressing," 330.

[427] See Gallus, *Wait*.

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workers at a haughty French restaurant, Le Boeuf sur le toit: Sonia, a server, and

Kathya, the restaurant's maître d'hotel. Sonia's male co-workers confess that they

feel that men are better suited, physically and emotionally, to the rigours of service

work, and one haute cuisine restaurateur admits his resistance to allowing female

servers at his establishment at all.[428] Kathya, who Sonia describes as only the second

female maître d' she's seen, refuses to cast her crossing of gender boundaries as a

"feminist fight," describing it as merely doing her job.[429] What is interesting in the

film's treatment of women working as a maître d', the highest position on the

restaurant floor, is the degree to which the job bears similarities to that of the

hostess in less refined establishments. As LaPointe notes, while in haute cuisine or

fine dining restaurants the position tends to be assigned to men, who are referred to

as maître d', in more casual restaurants this job is often assigned to young women

who are known as "hostesses," a far less status-laden title.[430] Like the host or

hostess, the maître d' confirms and provisions for reservations, greets customers

and assigns tables.[431] While in casual restaurants the host/hostess seats people and

this work is comparable in status and earnings to and may even share

responsibilities with bussers, the maître d'hotel is considered a high-status role, one

that functions in a manner almost akin to the bourgeois domestic host welcoming

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[428] Taillevent manager Jean-Marie Ancher, interviewed in Gallus, *Wait*, 13:00.
[429] Gallus, *Wait*, 22:27.
[430] LaPointe, "Relationships with Waitresses," 386.
[431] Entrepreneur Press and Lynn, *Start Your Own Restaurant*, 17; Walker, *Restaurant*, 318; Whyte, *Human Relations*, 272. Furthermore, the maître d' is often tipped directly, while hosts are paid an hourly wage and, in some establishments, receive a tip-out from servers. Direct compensation by customers, for being seated at a particular table, is unusual, and would more likely be cast as a "bribe," rather than a "tip," something offered in order to secure an extraordinary service (such as sniping a better table) in advance of its provision, rather than as compensation for the personable service rendered after the fact.

guests into the home.[432] In many high-end restaurants the maître d'hôtel plays a key role in screening and hierarchizing the status of dining guests, and is considered one of the most prestigious positions in the restaurant, overseeing the entire dining floor and acting, effectively, as manager of the restaurant's aestheticized frontspace.[433] Shore describes a cult of the maître d' in some fine dining restaurants, where the position is considered nearly as lofty and important as the chef and "coddling famous favourite patrons and snubbing the less-than-glamorous" is part of the job.[434] In these cases, the position is more akin to the work performed by the server, as the maître d' establishes the restaurant's social atmosphere, specifically one of refined urbanity, and confirms customers' sense of their own status by mediating the relative social distinction of the restaurant's clientele, gauging the importance of various dining parties and assigning them tables that match their status. Thus we might associate an establishment's sense of its own gastronomic and social gravitas with the status of those who orchestrate the assignation of tables and the kinds of affective labour they are expected to perform in so doing. As Finkelstein posits, male deference is considered more valuable than female deference, which is taken for granted.[435] Thus, greater status accrues from the consumption of male service labour in a dining environment than that of female labour. Since men and women's status at work varies, it is important to tease out how gender and sexuality colour assessments of the labour, value and skill that accrue in service work.

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[432] Mars and Nicod, *World of Waiters*, 39.
[433] Walker, *Restaurant*, 323.
[434] Shore, "Dining Out," 325.
[435] Finkelstein, *Dining Out*, 49.

While casual dining service is considered women's work, this is not to say that

men do not work in these jobs, if sometimes reluctantly. As manufactory jobs

increasingly move offshore, the domestic service industry continues to expand:

> Female domination of many growing areas of low-level service work presents a
> major challenge to the low-skilled men displaced by de-industrialization and
> technological change because historically, men have rarely substituted for
> women in the labour market and have been highly reluctant to enter 'women's
> work' as it may 'compromise' their masculinity.[436]

Men seem particularly disinclined to take work in lower-end restaurant service jobs,

clustering instead in higher-end establishments where the tips are higher.[437]

Numerous studies have demonstrated working class men's resistance to entering

service jobs, seeing it as conflicting with their habitus of masculinity.[438] The

deference required in customer service is seen as an affront to working class social

mores, both a threat to their masculinity and, as several studies note, entailing a

kind of emotional regulation that many working class men had not be trained to

perform or to value. In one study, Darren Nixon describes how "in their everyday

lives the young men would 'front up' or become aggressive when confronted or

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[436] Darren Nixon, "'I Can't Put a Smiley Face On': Working-Class Masculinity, Emotional Labour and Service Work in the 'New Economy,'" *Gender, Work and Organization* 16:3 (2009), 308. Cynthia Cockburn, "The Gendering of Jobs." In Sylvia Walby (ed.) *Gender Segregation at Work* (Milton Keynes: Open University Press, 1988); Cross and Bagilhole, "Girls Jobs for the Boys?"; Lindsay and McQuaid, "Avoiding the 'McJobs'"; Lupton, "Maintaining Masculinity"; Linda McDowell, "The Trouble with Men? Young People, Gender Transformation and the Crisis of Masculinity," *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 24:1 (2000); Dennis Mumby, "Organizing Men: Power, Discourse, and the Social Construction of Masculinity(s) in the Workplace," *Communication Theory* 8:2 (1998); Dennis Nickson and Marek Korczynski, "Aesthetic Labour, Emotional Labour and Masculinity," *Gender, Work and Organization* 16:2 (2009); Darren Nixon, "'I Just Like Working with my Hands': Employment Aspirations and the Meaning of Work for Low-Skilled Unemployed Men in Britain's Service Economy," *Journal of Education and Work* 19:2 (2006); Taylor and Tyler, "Emotional Labour."
[437] See Gallus, *Dish*, 11:40; Cobble, *Dishing It Out*, 17.
[438] Cross and Bagilhole, "Girls Jobs for the Boys?"; Leidner, *Fast Food, Fast Talk*, 197-211; Lindsay and McQuaid, "Avoiding the 'McJobs'"; Lupton, "Maintaining Masculinity"; McDowell, "The Trouble with Men"; Mumby, "Organizing Men"; Nickson and Korczynski, "Aesthetic Labour, Emotional Labour and Masculinity"; Nixon, "I Just Like Working with my Hands"; Nixon, "I Can't Put a Smiley Face On"; Taylor and Tyler, "Emotional Labour and Sexual Difference."

challenged. Yet, within the service encounter 'the customer is always right' and

therefore the young men often had to be docile and deferential within that

encounter. But they simply couldn't do it."[439] Male socialization thus poses a

potential threat to working class men's adaptation to the labour market:

> Older forms of acceptable 'macho' behaviour among working-class men, once
> a key feature of male manual employment, are now a positive disadvantage in
> the labour market. Instead, deference and docility are highly valued skills in
> the bottom-end jobs in the service sector, and yet male socialization in
> schools and in localities continues to emphasize traditional male ways of
> doing things, increasingly excluding young men from the only labour market
> opportunities that are open to them.[440]

While working class men have proven resistant to taking interactive service work,

several accounts note a tendency for middle-class men to accept it, albeit often on

the side of pursuing a college diploma or formal training in another field, while

seeing the work as temporary.[441]

As Ben Lupton notes, when men enter into feminized work, their strategies of

assimilation "give primacy to the preservation of masculine identity," often by

"engaging in discourses which reinforce masculinity in relation to others, for

example women and homosexuals."[442] While the women working in high-end

service conform to the gender stereotypes of this service by adopting a formal and

masculine demeanor at work, men do not necessarily have to perform gender,

sexuality or care in the same way that women do when they enter feminized jobs.

Like women, men perform their gender at work, but not in the same way; while

waitresses perform femininity through displays of deference and a sexualized or

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[439] Nixon, "I Can't Put a Smiley Face On," 315.
[440] McDowell, "The Trouble with Men," 206.
[441] Nickson and Korczynski, "Aesthetic Labour, Emotional Labour and Masculinity," 293-4; Nixon, "I Can't Put a Smiley Face On."
[442] Lupton, "Maintaining Masculinity," S36.

maternal staging of a feminine body for their customers, waiters perform their

masculinity for one another within the context of the workplace culture, if not in

their interactions with the clientele. This often takes the form of an exaggerated

heterosexual engagement and the adoption of alternative regimes of masculine play

and display, such as pranks, teasing and horseplay, with other straight men at the

work site.[443]

Waiting… (2006), an independent comedy written and directed by Rob

McKittrick, can be read almost in its entirety as a mediation of the anxieties around

masculinity that come from working at a low-status job in a feminized field. The

film chronicles a single workday at one outlet of the fictional chain restaurant

Shenaniganz, beginning with a new (male) trainee's hiring and ending with a party

at the shift's end. In it, we see several strategies for coping with threatened

masculinity in feminized work roles: an exaggerated heterosexuality, horseplay and

an assumption of the work's temporary nature, as well as a warning, in the figures of

an emasculated waiter and the ineffectual manager, of the dangers of men

associating too closely with this feminized work. The service staff of Shenaniganz is

gender-integrated, although the kitchen is entirely male. All three of the male

waiters are shown negotiating their masculinity at work in one way or another. The

protagonist, Dean, agonizes over his class and social status as a restaurant server,

worrying that he will get "stuck" there. Another, Monty, displays his masculinity

through an aggressive heterosexuality, coming on to customers and co-workers

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[443] Victoria Bishop, Catherine M. Cassell and Helge Hoel, "Preserving Masculinity in Service Work: An Exploration of the Underreporting of Customer Anti-Social Behaviour," *Human Relations* 62:5 (2009); Cross and Bagilhole, "Girls' Jobs for the Boys?"; Lupton, "Maintaining Masculinity"; Mumby, "Organizing Men"; Nixon, "I Can't Put a Smiley Face On," 310; Segal, *Why Feminism?*, 157.

alike and frequently making reference to his sexual prowess and conquests. The third male waiter in the film, Calvin, can be read as failed masculinity—he ingratiates himself by doggedly pursuing a woman who is clearly uninterested and subordinates himself to her, and he is so emasculated that he is literally incapable of peeing. They are joined on the service floor by three female servers, who are not portrayed as having gender-related troubles, although one, Naomi, clearly suffers from burnout and barely restrained chronic anger, the fallout from performing emotional labour.

Dean, played by nice-guy Apple spokesman Justin Long, is an adept server and trustworthy employee who is well-integrated into his workplace social network. His embarrassment at seeing an old friend with a college degree, white collar office job and higher income makes him question his place there, and his friend humiliates him by leaving an extravagantly generous tip and casting it as charity. His uneasiness is exacerbated when he is offered the position of assistant manager and must decide whether or not to accept the promotion. Meanwhile, Dean serves a table of men in suits, who he assumes are businessmen. Their boss seems quite taken with Dean, repeatedly complimenting the service and mock-threatening to hire him away. At the end of the night, he tells Dean, "You're obviously a very intelligent young man. Let me give you my card. If you ever get tired of this place, you're looking for a new opportunity, you give me a call."[444] Dean is crushed when he sees that the business card is for another restaurant, that he is only wanted for another serving job. His agony that it was just his good service, and not some other

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[444] McKittrick, *Waiting*, 1:01:21.

unrelated talent or intelligence that was appreciated by his table helps him to decide not only turn down the assistant manager position, but to leave his wait job and the restaurant business entirely, even though no alternative professional calling is on hand.

Dean enjoys the lifestyle of restaurant work, but sees himself as having outgrown waitering, a position that he took to support himself through college, seeing it as temporary. But as he stalls in finishing his degree, he is unwilling to take on a management role, which he thinks will cement him permanently in the service industry and is thus beneath him. Waiting is thus appropriate in sustaining an extended adolescence, but not a career option, and in the end he deems doing nothing to be better than long-term work in a restaurant. Thus, the middle class men described in sociological accounts as being more amenable to service work, in this mediation at least, only deem service work as acceptable for so long as there is an alternative identification, such as post-secondary education, in which to ground one's masculinity and social status. *Waiting…* is exceptional in featuring a middle-class white man in a low-status, feminized field as its protagonist, and this tension drives Dean's story arc. It is unsurprising to find, in the DVD extras, that writer/director Rob McKittrick wrote and pitched the script while working in a similar restaurant, and producing this film was his ticket out of the industry.

The film successfully represents many of the inner workings of typical restaurant workplace cultures—the tensions between kitchen and floor workers, widespread inter-employee dating, the entire staff's annoyance at any kind of interference whatsoever by their incompetent manager, and the frustration of both

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male and female servers at deferring to truculent customers. It showcases the social

environment of Shenaniganz, including the sexualized banter between employees,

and the ways in which the male co-workers enunciate their masculinity and

sexuality through horseplay in one of the major running gags of the film, "The Penis

Game." The rules of the game are revealed as the newly hired waiter is introduced to

them: the premise is that each of the men in the restaurant tries to trick his male

coworkers into unintentionally catching him displaying his testicles and scrotum in

various configurations (e.g., "the bat," "the goat") according to a points-based system.

Having thus apprehended the other man, unaware, looking at his genitalia, the first

worker then kicks the man he surprised into observing him on the behind while

berating him and repeatedly calling him "fag." The Penis Game is certainly

disturbing and problematic on many, many levels: its blatant paranoid homophobia

is oppressive of gay men,[445] there is something allusive to rape in its staging, and it

systematically excludes women. At one point Naomi lifts her skirt to expose herself,

seemingly the first time a woman has attempted to play, and her male co-workers

are disgusted and mock the appearance of her private parts.[446] While this particular

game seems a hyperbolic parody of the real shenanigans taking place in actual

restaurants, it is indicative of the anxieties surrounding the place of masculinity and

male sexual prerogatives in spaces of feminized service work characterized by

deference and convivial care. One character, the sage-like dishwasher-philosopher,

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[445] The almost delirious homophobia of *Waiting…* is not confined to the Penis Game. The only "out" character in the film is a lesbian bartender, Tyla, who's not shown to be a part of the Shenaniganz workplace social culture and is portrayed trying to seduce or "recruit" straight women. She is the target of repeated homophobic barbs from Monty, without provocation (i.e., it was not part of "their" joke) or repurcussions.

[446] This scene, and the co-workers' reaction, is included in the film's trailer. Available at http://is.gd/JYL3LW.

describes how the Penis Game gave the restaurant its "soul" and made it a happy and productive workplace. The centrality of the game in *Waiting*… thus begs the question: what alternative regime of socialization might provide the same outlet for anxieties and momentum for morale, while being a more egalitarian and less oppressive game to others?

While the film itself dialogically notes that the game is a bit, um, weird, it is argued to work because it makes Shenaniganz a convivial place to work for its (male) staff. Banter, practical jokes and horseplay are integral parts of restaurant work cultures, which are also widely described as sexually charged workplaces.[447] As Erickson explains, "the physical demands of the job and the closeness of bodies in space lend themselves almost inevitably to sexual play, producing an overtly sexualized workplace."[448] While the Penis Game is disturbing to say the least, it is not the presence of these sorts of games in the workplace that is oppressive to those excluded from them, but their framing. For instance, Kari Lerum—while noting the ease with which it slips into sexual harassment—argues that sexualized banter can be a shared joke that provides an outlet for stress to make working life more congenial and enhance workers' well-being and morale under the right circumstances. She points out that, "sexuality is a social formation; as such, it is not a natural, predicable, and potentially destructive force (as the business scholars imply), nor is it always a vehicle of male domination (as some feminists imply)."[449]

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[447] Patti A. Giuffre and Christine L. Williams, "Boundary lines: Labeling sexual harassment in restaurants." *Gender and Society* 8 (1994): 271-98. As Lerum notes, inter-staff dating is exceedingly common in restaurant organizations. "Sexuality, Power, and Camaraderie," 765.
[448] Erickson, "Bodies at Work," 81.
[449] Lerum, "Sexuality, Power, and Camaraderie," 757.

She studies sexualized banter in female-dominated service organizations, with an interest in "women's participation in consensual nonharassing workplace sexual interactions" outside of the heteronormative practices of male dominance and where there is a relatively hierarchical equality between participants,[450] and concludes that "in some circumstances, sexualized banter between coworkers can assist a process of heightened morale and worker camaraderie, just as in other circumstances, it can facilitate sexual harassment, cultural isolation, and the societal control and exploitation of workers."[451] Such a positive "queering" of restaurant working culture provides one outlet for confronting the enforced heteronormativity imposed, if differently, on men and women alike in service work, if only a the level of relationships between co-workers. This would not only be productive for female and queer workers, as the very need for or presence of the aggressive hetero-masculinity of games like the Penis Game point to the degree to which straight men also feel out of place or are "not feeling oneself," to recall Marx's framing of alienation, in the heterosexualized space of restaurant service.

While still understudied, Taylor and Tyler posit that queer identity might provide an alternative point of identification at work, describing how several lesbian stewardess use their sexual orientation to create distance from their at-work care roles:

> These women are strongly heterosexualised by the various organisational discourses (which are embedded in managerial prescription, supervision and evaluation of the labour process) on feminine sexuality. However, there was evidence that these women played with sexuality and gender, almost as a subversive strategy of resisting organisational identification and the

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[450] Ibid.
[451] Ibid., 758.

production of sexual difference(....) We also observed several male flight attendants playing with the stereotype of the 'cabin crew queer.' Some gay employees were able to 'cope' with the job by literally parodying their roles and the rules which govern them. One female flight attendant in particular suggested that she was able to use her lesbian identity as a strategy for resisting organisational identification and the wholesale manipulation of her feelings and identity; as a means of distinguishing between her own (private) sexuality and her (public) heterosexualised role.[452]

Such a destabilization finds support in Judith Butler's work, where she argues that such destabilizations work to undo normative constructions of gender identity and compulsory heterosexuality.[453] Exploring alternative subjective gender positions could provide an out for the oppressive norms of mandatory heterosexualized femininity for women, which might in turn lessen the injury to male service workers' sense of their own masculinities in the workplace. While the banter described above would be a strategy to limit the power of heterosexist regimes between co-workers, it points to the need to question the centrality of heterosexual social relationships to the mores of good service.

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[452] Taylor and Tyler, "Emotional Labor and Sexual Difference in the Airline Industry," 90.
[453] Butler, *Gender Trouble*, 184-6.

Chapter Five: Co-production and the Division of Labour and Compensation

> Often the boss will simply give in to our desire to run things ourselves. The more disorganized and inefficient the restaurant, the more likely this is to happen. He'll let the hostess deal with problem customers. He won't buy enough supplies or fix machinery, and we'll have to fix machines or bring in supplies ourselves. He'll leave a cook alone with 10 orders at once, or a waitress with 10 tables at once saying "You work it out." And we have to push ourselves instead of being pushed directly. In fact, part of being a good restaurant employee is having internalized the rhythm of production, and being able to push yourself hard enough that management doesn't have to push you. In these situations we try to help each other out and do bits and pieces of each other's jobs—our solidarity with our co-workers is used against us as a way to get us to work harder.[454]
>
> *– Abolish Restaurants*

This work has thus far addressed the social encounters with servers that frame the consumption of experience in restaurants, however these are underlined and made possible by the different labours of many others. While the server is the face of a restaurant to its customers, he or she relies on a team of title-specific work processes tightly interwoven to function in tandem. Servers depend on a cadre of workers who co-produce good service on the floor, the bussers, bartenders and hosts who coordinate and organize service so that a waiter or waitress can engage with customers without betraying the degree to which service is rationalized.[455] Even more so, they depend on the kitchen staff who produce the comestibles, organize and refine raw materials and reproduce the conditions of food preparation:

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[454] Prole.info, *Abolish Restaurants: A Worker's Critique of the Food Service Industry*. (n.d.) Available online at http://libcom.org/library/abolish-restaurants. Accessed 23 March 2012.

[455] I borrow Bolton and Houlihan's term "co-production," for the interdependence and complementarity of workers' tasks goes beyond just cooperation, and this term better reflects servers' fundamental dependency on their coworkers' exertions in order to do their jobs. Sharon C. Bolton and Maeve Houlihan, "Bermuda Revisited?: Management Power, and Powerlessness in the Worker-Manager-Customer Triangle," *Work and Occupations* 37 (2010), 388. See also Loe, "Working for Men."

the cooks, cleaners and dishwashers who do the dirty behind-the-scenes work.[456]

The focus of studies of service labour, and particularly accounts of immaterial and affective work, all too frequently undermine the degree to which this is grounded in materially productive labour, that work which is elided in the eclipse of exertion that showcases hospitality at the expense of more regulated manual labour, the conditions of which are hidden from service consumers.[457] Thus, this elision at the level of critical studies of intersubjective work and hospitality risks reproducing the erasure of the very labour relations that are obscured in the restaurants' performance of service.

In many respects, the work in kitchens and dining rooms is similar: it requires multitasking, is structured by the temporality of responding to frenzied mealtime rushes, and it is at once physical labour while requiring substantial mental organization and emotion management, particularly of stress. Work on both sides of the kitchen door is serialized, requiring the repetitive production of staggered labour processes that happen in cyclic loops. However, the division of labour in restaurants splits material and affective work into two different spheres of workers with disparate workspaces and pay structures. The division between front-of-house and back-of-house mimics the broader process of offshoring materially productive labour in the post-Fordist economy, but it does so within the space of the restaurant itself, situating affective labours in the front of the house and hiding productive labours in the back. Thus, the restaurant acts as a sort of microcosm of globalized

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[456] Mars and Nicod, *World of Waiters*, 43; Bolton and Houlihan, "Bermuda Revisited"; Gatta, "Balancing Trays and Smiles," 124-5.

[457] See Nick Dyer-Witheford, "Empire, Immaterial Labor, the New Combinations, and the Global Worker," *Rethinking Marxism* 19:3/4 (2001), 70-80; Gatta, "Balancing Trays and Smiles," 117.

capital, bearing many of the traits of its organization within the space of a single service outlet.

Restaurant service is premised upon an initial division of labour, between the people who cook food and the people who serve it, and the industry has evolved disciplinary and pay structures that are peculiar to each highly segmented position on both sides, producing just enough discipline and reward to stimulate sufficient compliance for the worker to adequately perform the tasks specific to that particular job. Both service and production work in restaurants are furthermore highly individualized; no two people, even if they hold the same position, are doing the same thing at the same time. Restaurants individualize work processes and contracts, while structuring their co-dependence to create a polished product.

Studying restaurant labour other than that performed by servers shows how the affective performances of good service are supported by production models and labour processes that bear more in common with manufactory work than with the immaterial labours performed by restaurant servers, and this contrast in turn underlines the point that subjective work demands alternative disciplinary and compensatory regimes to secure compliance. In short, it shows the degree to which immaterial labour, while typically read to be implicated in a post-Fordist regime of circulating affects, still depends heavily on highly Taylorist, repetitive manual labour. In fact, as I will argue, the management system deployed in restaurants bears considerable similarity to Toyotism, the just-in-time production system that deploys workers' creativity and intelligence to decrease management intervention and increase investment in their jobs, reducing the numbers required for

production, increasing their engagement, and structuring individual wages

singularly and competitively.[458] The coproduction required in service reveals the

degree to which all of these jobs are interdependent, making the social relations

between coworkers a site of potential conflict, antagonism and the intensification of

labour in restaurants.

George Orwell, writing about his pre-fame labours as a dishwasher in the

kitchen of a Paris hotel, describes how,

> You cannot, for instance, grill a steak two hours before it is wanted; you have to
> wait till the last moment, by which time a mass of other work has accumulated,
> and then do it all together, in frantic haste. The result is that mealtimes everyone
> is doing two men's work, which is impossible without noise and quarrelling.
> Indeed the quarrels are a necessary part of the process, for the pace would never
> be kept up if everyone did not accuse everyone else of idling. It was for this
> reason that during the rush hours the whole staff raged and cursed like
> demons… But we were not losing our heads and wasting time; we were just
> stimulating one another for the effort of packing four hours' work into two
> hours.[459]

Orwell's depiction of hotel kitchen life nicely encapsulates many of the themes of

this chapter: how the rush serves to intensify restaurant labour by telescoping the

work to meet the sudden intensity of customer demand, effectively shifting the site

of labour intensity onto this demand itself rather than as the outcome of

management decisions about the distribution of labour and staffing for a given shift,

displacing the apparent source of the intensification of their labour from the

organization onto customers and co-workers. . It also illustrates how the

interconnectedness of different workers' labour processes leads them to self-

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[458] Knuth Dohse, Ulrich Jürgens and Thomas Nialsch, "From 'Fordism' to 'Toyotism'? The Social
Organization of the Labor Process in the Japanese Automobile Industry," *Politics Society* 14:2 (1985).
[459] George Orwell, *Down and Out in Paris and London* (New York: Penguin Books, 2001), 79-80.

discipline and coax one another in order to get the orders out in time, making co-operation with co-workers simultaneously a site of relief and of tension.

Restaurant servers are reliant upon kitchen workers and bar staff to produce the raw materials of their work, for while good service may be evaluated by customers for its communicative quality, this still depends on the delivery of a material product, food and beverages. While servers may see themselves as autonomous entrepreneurs in securing tips, their performance depends their co-workers' labours, from whom servers are thus in a position to place demands upon, but over whom they exercise no power to induce acquiescence. This has led the industry to innovate novel regimes to incite cooperation, such as the tip-out, the portions of tipped income distributed by servers amongst the auxiliary workers who assist them. These systems mediate servers' relationships with the workers who co-produce good service on the floor. Servers are thus enmeshed in several different and sometimes conflicting relationships of power without a clear hierarchy, beyond just the customer-manager dyad that most accounts of interactive labour tend to focus on,[460] making it possible to read restaurants as a site of proliferation of modes of discipline, reward and responsibility in postindustrial capitalism. The similarity of restaurants' production and management model to Toyotism is thus significant, for while restaurants adapted this model independently from Japanese automobile manufacturers and several decades before them, both are premised upon the need for workers who are subjectively invested in a production process structured by time pressures and flexible co-operation.

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[460] See Bolton and Houlihan, "Bermuda Revisited"; McCammon and Griffin, "Workers and their Customers," 279.

Temporality and the Division of Labour in Restaurants

The defining feature of restaurant work, regardless of one's role, is the "rush": no matter a restaurant's hours of operation, most of the work to be done and money to be made happens during short bursts at habitual mealtimes, when customers flood in en masse but still expect fast service.[461] During the rush, restaurant workers are engaged in a form of intensified labour that Marx calls "exceptionally productive labour," because "it creates in equal periods of time greater values than average social labour of the same kind."[462] Because most food is prepared on-demand and the precise nature and volume of this demand can only be guessed at, however reliably, all restaurant work is structured to respond to the contingencies of the rush:

> A restaurant is a combination production/service unit, deals in a perishable commodity, which can usually be produced only a little in advance of its consumption, and it must serve customers whose numbers can never be exactly foreseen with any degree of precision. These unpredictable rates of production reflect an industry constantly attempting to strike a balance between standardization and innovation, between rigidity and flexibility.[463]

The contingency of customer demand—their numbers, timing and specific orders—means that restaurants are resistant to some of the kinds of industrial formations that have characterized rationalized manufactory processes. Fordism works well in food production systems like fast food outlets, where microsegmented labour processes and a reliance on partially prepared foods enables establishments to

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[461] Entrepreneur Press and Lynn, *Start Your Own*, 49; Fine, *Kitchens*, 19; Gary Alan Fine, "Organizational Time: Temporal Demands and the Experience of Work in Kitchens" *Social Forces* 69:1 (2000), 107-8; Paules, *Dishing It Out*, 83; Whyte, *Human Relations* , 3.
[462] Marx, *Capital,* 435. See also Paules, *Dishing It Out*, 7-8; 83-5; Elder & Rolins, *Waitress*, 21-2.
[463] Morales, "Contending Tradeoffs," 144. See also Bolton and Houlihan, "Bermuda Revisited?" 380.

function very much like the assembly lines of manufactory production.[464] However in sit-down dining, these labour processes would shatter the illusion of spontaneity and taint the quality of the experience on offer. In fact, where casual dining restaurants do make use of pre-prepared or frozen goods, kitchens will delay serving the food immediately to hide this fact and create the impression of its painstaking preparation.[465] In most restaurants the production aspects of casual dining bear a greater resemblance to Toyotism, even though in restaurants these labour processes predate both the term and its widespread application industrially.

Toyotism is the management system developed in the Japanese auto industry in the 1970s and 80s that enabled the country's remarkable development as a powerhouse of industrial productivity, surpassing American Fordist auto manufacturing by producing more units at a lower price.[466] Toyotism is characterized, most famously, by frequent and just-in-time deliveries of production materials, so that the production line must continuously shift to respond, calling upon "the optimization of job performance through distribution of work tasks (balancing the line) as well as flexible transfer of workers according to bottleneck requirements [which] is itself the object of a process in which the employees themselves participate."[467] Toyotism, unlike Fordism where as many skills and as

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[464] Leidner, *Fast Food, Fast Talk*, 47-50; Emily Raine, *Baristi and the One Best Way: Organizational Structures of Employment in Specialty Coffee Chains*, unpublished M.A. thesis, McGill University, October 2005, 23-43; Esther Reiter, "Life in a Fast-Food Factory." In Craig Heron and Robert Storey (eds.) *On the Job: Confronting the Labour Process in Canada* (Kingston and Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press); Esther Reiter, *Making Fast Food: From the Frying Pan into the Fryer* (Kingston and Montreal: McGill-Queens University Press, 1991); Eric Schlosser, *Fast Food Nation* (London: Penguin, 2002), 20; Bryan S. Turner, "Linearity and Liquidity in Consumer Cultures," *American Behavioral Scientist* 47:2 (2003).

[465] Lafever, *Restaurant Reality*, 113; Mars and Nicod, *World of Waiters*, 3, 29-40.

[466] Dohse, Jürgens and Nialsch, "From 'Fordism' to 'Toyotism'?" 116.

[467] Ibid., 119-121.

much at-work autonomy as possible are stripped from workers and divested in management,[468] highlights the importance of creativity and autonomy for plant workers, integrating them into the line as intellectual workers. For instance, Toyotist organizations need to employ fewer management staff because there is less oversight, and workers are charged with performing and organizing their own production, inspection and repair, as well as responding to contingencies caused by bottlenecks or production hitches. This, according to a much-cited study by Dohse, Jürgens and Nialsch, leads Toyotist production workers to engage more prolifically at work, as well as lowering turnover, sick leave and voluntary vacation time, while also making use of the many efficiencies inaugurated into production lines under Taylorism and Fordism. In their analysis, Toyotism is "not an alternative to Taylorism but rather a solution to its classic problem of the resistance of workers to placing their knowledge of production in the service of rationalization."[469]

The many similarities between the management structure under Toyotism and in restaurants are clear: like the just-in-time deliveries of parts that create bottlenecks in car manufacturing, the contingency of customer demand leads restaurant workers to slip between job descriptions and tasks to do whatever must be done in order for the restaurant to run smoothly. Similarly, the frenzy of the rush thus accords restaurant workers a degree of autonomy, for they cannot be constantly monitored or directed by management without it interfering with the

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[468] Ibid., Braverman, *Labor and Monopoly Capital*.
[469] Dohse, Jürgens and Nialsch, "From 'Fordism' to 'Toyotism?'" 128.

timely performance of their jobs.[470] This structure also suggests an additional

correspondence in restaurant workers' submission to the stress of the rush: because

they are charged with deploying their intellectual resources in adapting their

central positional foci to react to situations as they arise, it is possible that

restaurant workers, like Japanese auto workers, are less resistant to reading the

intensification of labour during the rush as a kind of organizationally-organized

exploitation or speed-up of their work. Thus, while this organizational system in

restaurants precedes its implementation in automobile manufacturing, we might

also read the at-work autonomy of affective and organizational performances in

restaurants as another example of capital's continuing evolution of work structures

that respond to the failures of Fordist production models. In this case, it harnesses

workers' abilities and intelligence to fill gaps and respond to organizational

problems.

Responding to the contingency of the rush has bred a highly structured

division of labour within restaurants, in which specific stages of production,

consumption and the reproduction of the conditions of production are performed

sequentially by task-specific positions, each of which is preoccupied with a specific

stage of food preparation or service, albeit with some flexibility and fluidity in tasks,

and restaurant workers' interdependence leads to their disciplining each other's

production.[471] As William Foote Whyte notes, "A breakdown anywhere in the chain of

production, transfer, and service sends repercussions through the entire organization.

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[470] Gordon Marshall, "Workplace Culture of a Licensed Restaurant," *Theory, Culture and Society* 3:1 (1986), 42.
[471] Fine, "Organizational Time," 99-100.

No one can fail to feel its effects, for the restaurant is an organization made up of highly interdependent parts. If one part fails to function, the organization can no longer operate."[472] So, in restaurants' backstages where customers cannot see, we find Orwell's kitchen staffs, who "raged and cursed like demons" to motivate one another's productive speed.

Gary Alan Fine points out that the division of labour in kitchens is sequential rather than simultaneous.[473] For example, the cooks and chefs depend on the prep cooks' cleaning and readying of ingredients in order to quickly prepare meals, and they also rely on the reproductive work of dishwashers to supply them with the materials to do so; dishwashers depend on the bussers' bringing them used dishes to clean for the next turnover; and servers depend on the entirety of the kitchen working together in order to present prepared orders to their customers for consumption. A sequential division of labour makes restaurant work more efficient, and the cooperative nature of this production process mandates that workers collaborate with and discipline one another, as well as to help when any one sphere of responsibility falls so far behind as to hold the others back, since none can do their jobs if any station lags and each depends on the others for the raw materials necessary to their own work.

Customers experience the trajectory of the dining experience differently than do workers, for while a given party goes through the stages of restaurant dining—ordering, consuming dishes in sequence, paying—the workers are engaged in each

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[472] Whyte, *Human Relations*, 4. See also Taylor, *Counter Culture*, 68; Fine, "Organizational Time."
[473] Fine, *Kitchens*, 78. This setup of cooperation through successive tasks is thought to be more efficient and faster than simultaneous cooperative production. See Marx, *Capital,* 14.

of the steps of service provision for several parties simultaneously. Since customers are unaware of the conditions of the eclipsed labour of the kitchen, their perception of the restaurant experience is mediated entirely by the server.[474] As the go-between for kitchens and customers, servers mediate customer demands and kitchens' output. Since patrons are unaware of what happens in the kitchen, it is servers who must account for delays in food production and communicate orders to the kitchen. This carries benefits for the organization, for servers can use their relationships with customers to deal with organizational problems, for instance dissuading them from placing a complicated order that risks putting the kitchen behind schedule or by "pushing" a dish containing overstocked or time-sensitive ingredients that must be sold quickly. Servers must also sometimes ask for favours from the kitchen to compensate for problems on the floor, such as a particularly pressed or demanding customer, one whose dietary requirements entail a special preparation for a dish, or to fix an error on the server's part, such as a forgotten order that must be prepared very quickly so that the customer doesn't discover the mistake.[475] Conversely, a server on bad terms with the kitchen might find his or her dishes coming up slowly or poorly prepared.[476] Thus the interdependence that characterizes restaurant service provision places servers in a position of direct reliance on their coworkers to do their jobs and earn their incomes, making the interactivity *between* coworkers an additional site of emotional labour in order to ensure the cooperation necessary to an establishment's smooth operation.

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[474] Crang, "It's Showtime," 319; Fine, *Kitchens*, 64; Gatta, "Balancing Trays and Smiles," 124-5; Paules, *Dishing It Out*, 102.
[475] Gatta, "Balancing Trays and Smiles," 124; Paules, *Dishing It Out*, 108.
[476] Lerum, "Sexuality, Power and Camaraderie," 764; Paules, *Dishing It Out*, 108-9.

Korczynski's theory of the customer-oriented bureaucracy, discussed in Chapter Two, holds that this model evolved to account for the coexistence of rationalized production and irrational consumption, mediated by the servers who pass in between.[477] Korczynski's model posits that the boundary-spanning role played by interactive service workers enables a rationalized production space while presenting a fantasy of consumer sovereignty for customers' delight, describing how it "structures the service interaction in such a way that the front line worker can guide the customer through the constraints of production, while at the same time encouraging the customer to experience a sense of being sovereign."[478] This set-up enables restaurants to maintain the illusion of spontaneity by giving servers sufficient time to interact with clientele, seemingly at their leisure, while numerous other workers are busy producing. This, again, I term eclipsed exertion, for while much of the productive and cleaning work of restaurants is hidden away, other kinds of productive labour, such as that of the bartender mixing drinks, are prominently showcased as part of the dining experience. We can consider irrational consumption to be the fetish of affective relationships produced to sustain the illusion of spontaneity, where a restaurant's clientele acts as if they don't know that the personable performances of service are the product of labour rather than an organic social relationship.

Visiting a restaurant kitchen, one might not immediately perceive this hectic space as the locus of rationalization—at first blush, it is hard to cast the seeming

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[477] Korczynski and Ott, "When Production and Consumption Meet," 575; Korczynski et. al., "Service Work in Consumer Capitalism: Customers, Control and Contradiction," *Work, Employment and Society* 14:4 (2000); Korczynski, "Understanding the Contemporary."
[478] Korczynski and Ott, "Cultural Contradictions," 577.

chaos of the industrial kitchen as "rational." Given that food is made to order and perishable, restaurants' production processes are contingent and last minute, premised upon cooks' ability to juggle demands and multi-task.[479] However, the rationalization of the restaurant kitchen is not determined in the space of any one individual worker's labour; each station is in itself chaotic, while it is the system, the specificity of the division of labour in restaurants that is rationalized. The kitchen and the floor must be constantly in communication with one another, creating a workforce whose at-work movements are tightly interwoven. This communication is restaurants' response to imperfectly predictable demand, and it enables the highly segmented division of labour on each side of the kitchen door to respond to the rush. Since the two separate spheres face different exigencies and objectives, even though they are interdependent, their interests are sometimes in conflict.

The Co-production of Service on Restaurant Floors

Servers' labours are circumscribed by the work of many others, whose labours are visible or accessible to restaurant clienteles to varying degrees according to how they fit into the restaurant's presentation of service.[480] While servers do most of the work of attending to customers, they rely upon the cleaning of bussers, who stock supplies, perform errands for servers and clear and reset tables, reproducing the conditions for service; hosts, who greet customers and assign them tables, managing turnover; and bartenders, who assemble drink orders,

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[479] Fine, *Kitchens*, 13.
[480] Goffman, *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life*; Kent Grayson, "Customer Responses to Emotional Labor in Discrete and Relational Service Exchange," *International Journal of Service Industry Management* 9:2 (1988), 129.

expediting beverage service.[481] This section attends to how each of these positions in turn are structured in their relationship to the server.

The rationalization of the restaurant is premised upon an individualizing division of labour, one that not only breaks up the productive, reproductive and interactive tasks that together make up the commodity sold, but that also engages restaurant workers as individually occupying singular posts, each with its own unique arrangement with management regarding responsibilities, status and pay. This enables the restaurant to negotiate with organizational employees singularly, parcelling out compensation packages and negotiating working conditions with employees as individuals, since their jobs are different enough to form internal hierarchies of skill, responsibility and compensation.[482] This individuation of employees changes the relationships that restaurant staff have with one another by institutionalizing their status differentials, as well as the ways in which money and affective labour are distributed between coworkers on the dining room floor. At the same time, however, these posts have a fluidity, as workers assist one another in carrying out the service process as a whole as smoothly as possible; here, restaurant work again echoes the adaptations of Toyotism, where wages are also staggered, as in restaurants, and "Individual wages are absolutely 'individual' to workers," such that individuals are willing to work harder to compete for wages and perks.[483]

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[481] In some restaurants, there might be additional positions, such as food runners, headwaiters or sommeliers. However, the setup described above is fairly standard in the industry and is representative of the labour organization in North American independent restaurants. These positions generally take some combination of the same forms as those described in terms of their discipline and compensation.

[482] See Whyte, *Human Relations*, 12.

[483] Ikuro Takagi quoted in Dohse, Jürgens and Nialsch, "From 'Fordism' to 'Toyotism'?" 138.

Simultaneously, the restaurant has formulated systems to generate greater

goodwill and cooperation between the discrete positions on the restaurant floor, the

busser, host and bartender, chief among them the tip-out. Tip-outs are sums

accorded either by servers' subjective assessments of the support staff's helpfulness

or as a standardized percentage of overall sales, depending on the set-up imposed

by the establishment.[484] In either scenario, it is paid directly to the staff by servers,

on top of their income of minimum minimum wage or slightly higher—the regular

minimum wage, not the deflated servers' minimum—paid by the dining

establishment. Food blogger and waiter Michael Procopio breaks down the tip-out

distribution in his San Francisco restaurant as follows: On a $500 sale, he would tip

out $15 (3-4%) to his busser, $5 (1%) each to both his food runner and hostess, and

$6.25 (1.25%) to his bartender.[485]

Tip-outs provide incentive for floor staff to work harmoniously together,

doing whatever they are able to ensure that servers earn good tips, as well as

recognizing the role that auxiliary workers play in the co-production of the overall

restaurant experience. It thus serves as a means of securing their cooperation, in

turn maximizing the smooth operation of the restaurant, and motivating even the

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[484] Rachel H. Adler, "¡Oye Compadre! The Chef Needs a Dishwasher: Yucatan Men in the Dallas Restaurant Economy," *Urban Anthropology* 34:2-3 (2005), 234; Egerton-Thomas, *How to Open*, 139; Ehrenreich, *Nickle and Dimed*, 38-9; Entrepreneur Press and Lynn, *Start Your Own*, 49-50; Mars and Nicod, *World of Waiters*, 128; Walker, *The Restaurant*, 464. Restaurants almost universally adopt one of two systems for managing cash: in the first, tables are billed by their servers and pay a central cashier, who manages all of the restaurants payments for sales. Tips for the servers are here either left on the table or with the cashier who processes payments. In the other system, servers tally and manage the bills of all of "his" or "her" tables over the course of the shift, being individually paid by each table severally (including their tips). At the end of the shift, they tabulate the total of all of their covers and pay the restaurant this total (plus any additional payouts), known in the industry as "cashing out," and keep the remaining funds as their tips.
[485] Michael Procopio, "Tipping: Down and Out," *Food for the Thoughtless,* http://foodforthethoughtless.com/2009/02/tipping-down-and-out/. Accessed 20 August 2011. The precise configuration of these values varies some by establishment.

subordinate workers who may come to interact with restaurant clientele to rally

their energies toward creating a hospitable environment. The tip-out functions to

reward workers who co-produce good service in restaurants, those who are directly

delegated work by the servers and who then share part of the spoils in recognition

of their contributions and to incite their collusion in sustaining the fetish of good

service.[486]

Support staff often play roles that help the server to hide some kinds of the

labour that takes place on the restaurant floor, as well as the way that the restaurant

has been rationalized. Concealing this rationalization is also key to the illusion of

spontaneity, which rests on the appearance of authenticity and artlessness on the

part of the server. Servers' implication in restaurants' rationality, as well as the

performance of certain kinds of eclipsed labour, such as cleaning work, is thus

displaced onto other workers. For instance, the host—or, more often, hostess[487]—

orchestrates the flow of the entire dining room, mediating between the restaurant's

productive cycle as a whole and its customers by regulating the timing and

distribution of tables and managing the overflow and waiting list during busy

periods.[488] Because customers are given as little information as possible about the

logistics of restaurants' organization, they cannot be relied upon or delegated with

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[486] Although, as one veteran busboy notes, the bussers and other auxiliary workers are aware that the need for them to work quickly was put in the direct service of generating more income for waiters and capital for restaurants with only a slight trickle-down for other workers, making their participation in service somewhat cynical. Thanks to Randolph Jordan for pointing this out.

[487] In fact—and granted, it is dated—Whyte's influential 1948 ethnography of restaurants *Human Relations in the Service Industry* uses gendered language to refer to busboys and hostesses, and never the reverse. These gender boundaries have since eroded somewhat, although in many restaurants this stereotypical casting of tasks still holds true. See the following chapter for an extended analysis of the gender relations surrounding the host/hostess/Maître D' position. I use the term "host" here because I find it to be the most gender-neutral of the three job titles.

[488] Whyte, *Human Relations*, 273, 281.

the task of ensuring that it runs efficiently. One of the major tasks of the host or hostess in restaurants is to ensure the even distribution of diners, or "covers" as they are known in industry parlance, between servers' sections, so that a given server's charges are staggered enough not to be overwhelming, while also giving everyone on shift the chance to earn tips by taking tables. If a host seats a given server with several tables at the same time, then that server is slammed, while the others are idle.[489] The host or hostess is thus integral to the rationalization of temporality that underlines restaurant service and has a degree of power over the server, who can be denied or overwhelmed with tables.

Furthermore, because hosts assign tables and organize turnover, they are often tasked with delivering unwelcome news to potential customers—that a party cannot be seated, or not as soon as hoped for, or that the patio is full but there is space inside—while still seeking to secure their loyalty and hopefully inducing them to stay and eat, giving their work the affective load of managing clients' reactions and expectations.[490] The host is the first person the restaurant clientele sees and interacts with, providing the initial impression of the establishment and setting the emotional tone for the dining experience,[491] so their performance influences customer assessments of service quality, while it simultaneously deflects any sense of its rationality away from the server, who can thereby remain in the realm of the service fetish. The figure of the Toyotist manufactory worker resonates with that of

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[489] Mars and Nicod, *World of Waiters*, 48; Walker, *Restaurant*, 318, 384; Whyte, *Human Relations*, 274-5.
[490] Lafever, *Restaurant Reality*, 119; Editors of R&I, "An Open Letter: Workers Tell It Like It Is" pp. 112-123 in Michael Bartlett ed., *Winning Food Service Ideas* (New York: John Riley and Sons, 1994), 114.
[491] Egerton-Thomas, *How to Open*, 139; Walker, *The Restaurant*, 331.

the host—he or she must respond flexibly to organizational problems, harnessing interpersonal skills and subjectivity to do so.

Bussers similarly perform a subset of servers' tasks that help to eclipse certain kinds of service labour, primarily those dealing with cleaning and waste. They clear finished plates from tables and take them to the dishwasher and reset cleared tables for the next round of customers, although they also run sundry errands for the servers such as refilling water glasses and occasionally running food, and they must exercise some discretion in determining whether and when servers need their assistance with service tasks.[492] Thus they are part of the cleaning staff, but also part of the service staff; they interact in an extremely limited fashion with customers, for instance fetching condiments, refilling water glasses and bussing finished plates, but they do not typically engage with them in an affective or sociable manner. In terms of the sociability of dining out, the busser is effectively a non-person, Erving Goffman's term for individuals who are present during performance-events, but not central to them and can thus be ignored.[493] They occasionally have conversational contact with tables ("Are you finished with that?"), but are not expected to engage in drawn-out conversations or to develop a relationship with them. Ultimately, the quality of the relationship with the busser is not constitutive of good service in restaurants, as it is in relations with servers and hosts, although bussers still need to engage in the emotional regulation of 'acting the part' since they

[492] Adler, "Oy Compadre!," 231; J.O. Dahl, *Restaurant Management: Principles and Practice*, 4th ed. (New York and London: Harper Books, 1944), 106-7; Walker, *The Restaurant*, 320; Whyte, *Human Relations*, 180.
[493] Goffman, *Presentation of Self in Everyday Life*, 95. Goffman describes cleaning workers as paradigmatic of the non-person. Interestingly, he casts waiters as well as sometimes falling into this category, although since we are discussing roles in the context of good service, of course the role played by servers is central.

work in the dining room and some of their labours are visible to diners. Bussers are primarily engaged with the dirtier work of service, freeing the server for more aestheticized service tasks such as meal presentation and engaging socially with customers while taking their orders. Bussing staff furthermore problematizes the front/back division since their work is desired to be as invisible as possible even though it must be done on the floor.

Bartenders are both productive workers and affective agents who help to create the dining experience. The job is typically considered to be slightly higher status than serving, in part because of the expanded skill set required to prepare a wide range of drinks. Most bartenders have worked (and may sometimes still) doing table service, and in many places this title is considered a step up the restaurant hierarchy toward management.[494] In many restaurants, the spatial design of the dining room is structured to aesthetically highlight the bar, and this often means that bartenders themselves are on display doing their work. Susan Willis describes such scenarios as "an instance where labor is truly rendered as performance, and hence, a commodity—customers consume the spectacle of work."[495] Such displays are crucial to the production of experience in restaurants, for while the dirty productive work of the kitchen remains hidden, part of the experience of

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[494] Restaurant servers (and many bartenders) don't typically see management positions as being inherently better than service work. While managerial positions carry greater status and authority, the hours are long, the work stressful, and managers frequently earn less money on salary than servers do making tips. Managerial turnover is consequently quite high in restaurants. One study recounts that, of the author's informants, as many as 90% claimed that they had at some point been offered a managerial post, while fewer than 5% accepted the job. Taylor, *Counter Culture*, 72. See also Paules, *Dishing It Out,* 119-29; Walker, *Restaurant*, 342. See *Waiting…* (Rob McKittrick, 2006) for its representation of wait staff's ambivalence toward "promotions" into management positions.
[495] Willis, *Primer for Everyday Life*, 17-18.

restaurants is the consumption of available labour, as this denotes luxury.[496] Hence, in the relation of eclipsed exertion in restaurants, some kinds of labour are understood to take place (customers know that there are people somewhere making their dinners), but these are displaced onto ostentatious or ritualized displays of other kinds of labour, often ones that are more culturally privileged or affective in nature.[497] So, the bartender's knowledge of mixology is showcased, while the grunt work of preparing and cleaning up after food is consigned to the kitchen and mediated by the busser and server.

Depending on the contours of a particular establishment—whether, for instance, customers consume food and drinks directly at the bar or adjacent tables—a bartender may serve and interact with patrons, or might only do what is known as "service bar," preparing drinks for waiters and waitresses to take to tables.[498] On service bar, bartenders exercise a degree of power over the servers, for their ability to serve patrons beverages depends on the bartenders producing them quickly.[499] If the drinks take too long to arrive, then customers will likely blame their servers for the delay and perceive this as bad service, meaning the server is more likely to encounter disgruntled clients and get a poor tip.[500] This gives servers inducement to stay on good terms with their bartenders and to tip them out well.

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[496] Sherman, *Class Acts*.

[497] Hanser, *Service Encounters*; Raine, *Baristi*; Sherman, *Class Acts.* The wine opening ceremony is the quintessential example of this, where customers are rewarded by a highly ritualized and public display of service after laying out a sizable chunk of cash to buy the wine that it accompanies.

[498] Whyte, *Human Relations*, 76. In some establishments, the bartender position is dispensed with entirely, so that servers themselves prepare drinks for tables, while in more high-end establishments this role might be complemented by a sommelier, who deals exclusively in wines and is generally tipped separately and directly by diners.

[499] Cobble, *Dishing It Out*, 288n; Spradley and Mann, *Cocktail Waitress*, 75; Whyte, *Human Relations*, 78.

[500] Gatta, "Balancing Trays and Smiles," 124-5; Spradley and Mann, *Cocktail Waitress*, 88.

The tip-out in turn gives bartenders incentive to fill servers' drink orders drinks quickly, even while they are taking care of their own customers.[501]

While servers are the primary receivers of tips, some tipped monies do circulate in the restaurant, as tip-out, to the bartenders who prepare their drinks, to the bussers who clear their refuse, and to the hosts who greet and seat their tables and, as the next section addresses, sometimes as a pay incentive for the chef. The tip-out thus works to mediate the status and income differentials between co-workers on the restaurant service floor, mitigating the demand for the affective labour that is performed to sustain positive at-work encounters *between* restaurant workers in the frantic rush. As Morales notes, tip-out systems serve "to keep labor costs from rising by providing support workers with an incentive, while reinforcing the interdependence" of restaurant positions.[502] Additionally, like the delegation of servers' monitoring and compensation to customers, the tip-out puts servers in the position of supervising and paying auxiliary floor staff, with the attendant displacement of potential sites of antagonism onto the relations between coworkers, rather than onto their employers.

Co-production and Server Dependency for Service

Floor and kitchen workers are employed by the same organization, and while both have the restaurant's clientele as the audience for their work, each side's

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[501] Egerton-Thomas, *How to Open*, 139.
[502] Morales, "Contending Tradeoffs," 147.

exigencies, interests and objectives are different and sometimes even conflicting.[503]

For example, a cook might wish to send out a plate that is adequately prepared,

while a server needs it to be excellent for a finicky table (or the reverse), or a server

might need a cook to rush or jump a forgotten order ahead in the queue. While

creating a positive impression of a restaurant's service rests on the work of the

entire staff, to customers the whole experience is conflated with the server they

interact with. Like the bartenders' drinks, Mars and Nicod describe how,

> A problem for the waiter is having to depend upon the chef for the basic
> material of his craft—the food. Although waiters tend to be judged in terms of
> the total satisfaction that they are able to provide, sometimes they are judged
> simply by the quality of the food they serve—even though they have no part in
> its preparation or cooking. Much of the tensions that arise between waiter and
> chef stem from this identification of the waiter with the food he serves.[504]

Furthermore, even though cooks' labours are central to servers' ability to give good

service, servers do not necessarily share the spoils of service's rewards with them.

As Fine notes, cooks earn but don't receive tips; kitchen workers enable restaurant

service, and no matter how friendly a server might be, he or she cannot do the job or

earn tips without the behind-the-scenes work of those who prepare the food but are

not financially rewarded by servers for its reception.[505] In some restaurants, servers

by rule must assign a portion of their overall sales to the head chef along with their

cashouts, acting as a form of tip-out. In these cases, though, the percentage of tip

shared is set by management, so that its size is mandated and distributed by

management, often as part of or perk to chefs' salary-based contracts, rather than

being derived from servers' assessment of their helpfulness. Thus, this tip-out is

[503] Angela M. Bowey, *The Sociology of Organizations*, (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1976), 36-7;
Cobble, *Dishing It Out*, 55; Fine, *Kitchens*, 98; Taylor, *Counter Culture*, 69.
[504] Mars and Nicod, *The World of Waiters*, 44.
[505] Fine, *Kitchens*, 102.

grounded in the chefs' agreements with their employers and is not perceived by its

recipients to be derived from their relationship or cooperation with the servers

themselves,[506] placing kitchen staff outside of the affective regime that characterizes

tip-sharing on the dining room floor.

While servers' ability to do their jobs well and how their performance is

perceived by customers rests on the kitchen's output, they have no reliable means to

secure kitchen workers' cooperation, aside from the threat of management

interference. As Gatta writes,

> While servers can attempt to control their physical and emotional work, many
> aspects of the service experience—tasty and timely food, clean tables, perfectly
> made cocktails—are beyond their immediate control. Instead servers have to
> actively negotiate with other restaurant workers to ensure a successful
> customer experience—to find ways to manage and elicit work from other
> workers over whom they do not have power.[507]

Servers may perceive themselves to be private entrepreneurs on the dining room

floor, but this is only true with respect to their earning potential, not in the actual

performance of their jobs. Servers' reliance on bartenders and the kitchen to

produce the raw materials of good service dictates that they must maintain good

social relations with co-workers as well as clients in order to earn gratuities. This

means they must engage in emotional regulation with their co-workers as well, and

that their affective labour extends beyond the mere provision of good service. Thus

the considerable interpersonal skills that restaurant workers bring with them to

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[506] Where servers are required to tip out kitchen staff or management, the practice is frequently contentious. See for example, Raveena Aulakh, "Restaurant bosses take bigger share of tip," Toronto: *The Toronto Star* April 13, 2010; Corey Mintz, "Government has no ordinance in tussle for servers' tips," Toronto: *The Toronto Star* April 16 2009.
[507] Gatta, "Balancing Trays and Smiles," 124; Marshall, "Workplace Culture," 34.

work are of the utmost importance in the performance of their jobs, in their relationships with the spheres of both production and consumption.

The chef is at the top of a kitchen's hierarchy. As Fine puts it, "The chef is the organizer, the manager of the kitchen, and the restaurant's creative force. With this comes higher status and salary... The cook, in contrast, is the line worker who prepares food on a routine, quotidian basis—a manual laborer."[508] He considers the chef, unlike cooks, as both manual worker and creative auteur.[509] Chefs create the dishes and menu, staff and runs the kitchen, and oversee its provisioning.[510] They are largely paid salaries, rather than hourly wages, and additionally receive performance-based bonuses at regular intervals as a reward for their ability to draw in customers with their menus, as this is reflected by the restaurant's sales.[511] While

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[508] Fine, *Kitchens*, 88. Ironically, in spite of women's long-standing reign as the primary food providers domestically, the vast majority of professional chefs are male, and most are white. Ron Scapp and Brian Seitz, "Introduction." In Brian Scapp and Brian Seitz (eds.) *Eating Culture* (Albany: University of New York Press, 1998), 7; Pratten, "What Makes a Great Chef?" 455.

[509] Fine, *Kitchens*, 14. See also Theodore Zeldin, *An Intimate History of Humanity* (New York: McGraw-Hill), 93-6. Chefs enjoy varying degrees of autonomy, depending on the structure of the organization that employs them. However, as Fine notes, they tend to have greater independence at work when they are most engaged in creating new dishes, as creative production is more resistant to strict intervention. He writes, "the more unique the product and the less routine the task, the less an organization can rely on formal rules, and the greater the autonomy that must be given to workers." High-profile chefs can also provide restaurants with a degree of security by being a draw, making the considerable capital investment in a new restaurant less risky. See Priscilla Parkhurst Ferguson and Sharon Zukin, "The Careers of Chefs," pp. 92-111 in Ron Scapp and Brian Seitz, eds., *Eating Culture* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1998), 93.

[510] Fine, *Kitchens*, 109, 170; Pratten, "What Makes a Great Chef?" 456. The kitchen's independence from dining room floor management varies from establishment to establishment. Some continue to be supervised by a general manager, while in others the kitchen is managed by one person (usually the chef) and the floor by another. The exception is in chain establishments, where the menu design and dish creation is taken on by the chain's bureaucracy or by a single chef at one location, and the position of chef at other locales (if one is hired) is more about managing, ordering and supplies than it is about gastronomy; here, the chef is a functionary, not an auteur. See Fine, *Kitchens*, 192; Jeffrey L. Bradach, *Franchise Organizations* (Cambridge: Harvard Business Press, 1998). In larger kitchens, executive chefs do these kinds of administrative and creative tasks exclusively, letting the cooks attend to the actual production of food, although in smaller restaurants the chef works alongside and oversees the cooks' work. See Pratten, "What Makes a Great Chef?" 457.

[511] Fine, *Kitchens*, 183; Pratten, "What Makes a Great Chef?" 456. See also Whyte, *Human Relations*, 14. Again, some of this may take the form of organizationally-mandated tip-outs from servers.

cooks are generally paid either an hourly rate or a flat salary, alternative pay

structures, such as performance bonuses and sometimes tip-outs from servers, are

standard parts of chefs' compensation packages, and seem to be deemed

structurally necessary in order to secure their ongoing creative performance,

management role and continuing ability to cater to shifting customer desires.[512]

Chefs enjoy varying degrees of autonomy, depending on the structure of the

organization that employs them, and, as Fine notes, they tend to have greater

independence at work where they are most engaged in creating new dishes, as

creative production is more resistant to strict intervention: "the more unique the

product and the less routine the task, the less an organization can rely on formal

rules, and the greater the autonomy that must be given to workers."[513] Thus the

more kitchen workers' subjective resources are deployed, the greater their

autonomy, and the more likely they are to be engaged in an alternative payment

structure such as bonuses or tip-outs, to reward this creative labour.

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[512] Crang, "It's Showtime!" 301; Entrepreneur Press and Lynn, *Start Your Own Restaurant*, 47. Restaurants' success is premised upon chefs' ability to create a menu that entices customers, that is intriguing enough to pique clients' interest yet familiar enough to be inviting to them. The shift toward consumer-oriented services mandates constant reinvention in order to capture potential consumers' interest and desire. In the case of food, this trend has been accelerated in the last twenty years by diversified supply chains, where ever quicker and cheaper access to far-flung produce and preparation methods make novelty increasingly normal in food consumption and exaggerated by the proliferation of new restaurants that must find a unique niche within a competitive market in order to survive. They must continually innovate new dishes in order to capture interest; as Scholliers puts it, in spite of some trepidation, "Post-modern food consumers take novelty for granted as familiar, expected and even hoped for," as once-obscure or luxury items and cooking methods become the stuff of mass consumption (335). Chefs must continually produce new modes of preparation and presentation, while adapting to shifts in the supply and demand for different foods and maintaining the establishment's bottom line for raw materials. This work is key in circulating novel food practices. Chefs' creative labour is central to an organization's prospects, however the introduction of new foods and culinary practices are also assisted by the servers, who play an important role in educating the customers about food by recommending or conveying enthusiasm for particular dishes. See Scholliers, "Novelty and Tradition"; Paul Freedman, "The Rhetoric of American Restaurant Menus and the Use of French," pp. 129-136 in Richard Hosking, ed. *Food and Language: Proceedings of the Oxford Symposium on Food and Cookery 2009* (Devon: Prospect Books, 2010); Jack E. Miller and David V. Pavesic, *Menu Pricing and Strategy*, 4th ed. (New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold, 1996).
[513] Fine, *Kitchens,* 14; Sylvie-Anne Mériot, *Nostalgic Cooks: Another French Paradox*, trans. Trevor Cox and Chanelle Paul (Boston: Brill, 2006), 84.

By putting chefs on salary rather than paying them an hourly wage, restaurants are able to extract a great deal of labour from them, and the profession is notoriously characterized by extremely long hours.[514] But the intensification of labour at this level is mitigated by chefs' sense of their participation in an esteemed professional culture, of which these hours are considered part and parcel.[515] The salary thus serves restaurant organizations well as a system for intensifying labour without themselves imposing the long hours—they merely specify the amount of work that is to be done, and it is the chef who must meet these demands by working as long as is necessary to do so—but this has more to do with their relationships with the restaurant organizations than with their co-workers. Chefs' status as skilled workers similarly functions to filter their perception of their work through discourses of creative artistry and professionalism.[516] Additionally, the salary structure serves to remove kitchen workers from the affective labour economy that characterizes the floor, by placing more of their income outside of the purview of the restaurant's internal economy.

Creating such distinctions, between the chef and the cooks, serves an important role in the internal affective economy of restaurants. Segmenting restaurants' labour processes serves to keep some jobs as low-skilled as possible so

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[514] Pratten, "What Makes a Great Chef?"

[515] See Mériot, *Nostalgic Cooks*, 1-4. Fine holds that cooks' and chefs' responsibility to this audience, the clientele, often places them in a conflicting role with regards to their own professionalism and how they perceive their work aesthetically. While most chefs consider themselves to be artists, who not only correctly execute their at-work tasks, but do so with an eye toward form and craft, they also "recognize that they must serve food that they know is not up to their standards" (*Kitchens*, 183). He finds that customer taste, organizational norms for preparation time and the economies of the restaurant industry might all interfere, severally or together, with the quality of cooks' output, and it is of course the restaurant's management that determines just how much emphasis will be placed upon the quality of the food served relative to other concerns, such as throughput or speed of delivery.

[516] Fine, *Kitchens*, 182-5.

that anyone can do them, making workers more disposable, while other positions rely heavily on workers' active subjective participation in their at-work tasks. This division also enables restaurants to introduce efficiencies by drawing some of their labour force from the less desirable pools of the unemployed, those who have difficulty finding work elsewhere, assuring both their compliance and its cheapness.[517] Scholars from Marx on have noted capital's desire to engage workers as individuals, to establish particular contracts rather than negotiating with them in units.[518] In restaurants, such individualized work contracts appear natural, since each person occupies a different position and is paid individually. On the floor, servers are paid in tips, and the co-producers of service, bussers and bartenders and hosts, receive access to some of their tips, ensuring relatively harmonious cooperation and providing motivation for auxiliary workers to self-discipline. In the kitchen, however, workers are disciplined and motivated through a systematized hierarchy of workers who occupy their positions fluidly. By thus splitting titles and responsibilities, restaurant organizations can structure a hierarchy within the division of labour and assign each job to the person with the minimum linguistic, physical or mental capacity to do the job, and pay them as little as possible (see Chapter Six). Restaurants are extremely labour intensive, and efficiency in labour costs is one of the major ways that they can save money (the other being, of course,

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[517] Wenona Giles, "Clean Jobs, Dirty Jobs: Ethnicity, Social Reproduction and Gendered Identity," *Culture* 8(2), 1993: 37-44; Roger Waldinger and Michael Lichter, *How the Other Half Works: Immigration and the Social Organization of Labor* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003); Fine, *Kitchens*, 20; Morales, "Contending Tradeoffs"; Perrons, "Reflections on Gender"; Paules, *Dishing It Out*, 61.
[518] Marx, *Capital*, 451.

intensifying labour, although the division of labour and structure of the "rush" serve to do this too).

The cooks, whose labour entails a large degree of flexibility and autonomy, are still largely manual workers who are typically paid an hourly wage. As Paules notes, this places cooks, kitchen prep staff and dishwashers in a different relationship with the organization than chefs, whose creative and managerial responsibilities afford them a degree of autonomy, and floor workers, who earn income from both the organization and its customers. She finds that this leads cooks to take on a more deferential demeanor with restaurant managers and chefs than other restaurant employees, because of "the cook's financial dependence upon the company, which provides the entirety of his income and has the power to award him regular and significant raises."[519] Kitchen manual workers thus engage in a different regime of rewards and discipline than other restaurant staff, where the organization plays a larger role in their ability to earn or advance, giving management greater leverage over them. This is useful in mediating relations between kitchen and floor workers, for with no incentive to be helpful to the servers who frequently make demands upon them, management is frequently called in to troubleshoot difficulties between co-workers.[520]

For the most part customers don't interact with the kitchen staff, but while these workers are not expected to produce much of the affective bounty of good service, however, this does not mean that materially productive workers do not engage in emotional labour, albeit in a very different way than servers do. As Fine

[519] Paules, *Dishing It Out*, 109.
[520] Ibid.,

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maintains, their emotional labour consists of an internal regime that enables the restaurant to function smoothly:

> Their emotional reactions are little mediated by the need to impress clients, except in that general sense in which one wishes to reveal pleasant, cooperative emotional responses to one's colleagues and to be detached from the unpleasant feelings associated with stress. This performance is typically connected to standards of "professionalism." Backstage workers in practice collaborate with each other to support the emotional character of the organization and their own personal satisfactions. The display rules are displayed to an internal audience.[521]

Given the hot, stressful and time-contingent nature of their work, this emotional labour is no small thing, and is particularly important in cooks' engagements with service staff, for while both floor and kitchen workers are employed by the same organization, their exigencies and directives work quite differently and are frequently the site of an internal antagonism that must be moderated or overcome in order for the restaurant to function smoothly. Kitchen workers are not rewarded financially for the emotional labour of getting along, while servers directly benefit from the restaurant's smooth operation, although they must work to keep levels of antagonism low enough to avoid interfering with the orderly operation of the restaurant and risking their jobs, not to mention making their working lives unpleasant. This relation makes it more likely that servers will bear the brunt of the emotional labour of ensuring smooth relations with the kitchens, in addition to that which they perform for customers. Further, because kitchen bonuses are paid to them by the organization, as an amalgamation of their tip-outs from all of the restaurant servers, the intersubjectivity of tip-outs that characterize servers' relationships with auxiliary co-workers don't hold with chefs. Thus, for kitchen

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[521] Ibid., 225.

workers, while they may have to perform affective or emotional labour at work, this work is not directly compensated as such.

Servers share their tips with those whose jobs have two characteristics: firstly, they directly assist servers with the production of service and thus in their labours toward securing their tip income. Secondly, tips are distributed amongst those whose knowledge, skill and affective labour matters, as the busser, host and bartender must interact hospitably with restaurant clientele and thus co-produce the impression of good service upon which patrons determine their tips, and chefs must design menus and dishes that tempt and please patrons. Thus even outside of waiting tables proper, the tip appears to have some fundamental relation to whether and to what degree individuals deploy their mental, emotional and creative resources in order to produce value for the restaurant organization. Furthermore, the server relies directly on the labours of these positions to do their work, whereas the labours of some back-of-house positions, such as prep cooks and dishwashers, are mediated by other jobs—there are other stages of labour between these workers and the moment when servers pick up their plates for customers' consumption. Dependencies on others' production speeds places another layer of distance between the server and the direct authority of management, since there are several different parties with a direct impact on servers' ability to do their jobs and make money—the bartenders, the kitchen, and of course the customers themselves.

The more a worker's subjectivity matters in job performance, the more he or she is paid. The less it matters who does the job, the easier the position is to refill, the lower and more standardized and perk-less the pay. Additionally, these

positions bear the least at-work autonomy and are the most vulnerable to management intervention and discipline, and are the most reliant on managers' perception of their skills and work ethic for raises and advancement.[522] Where subjectivity factors into work performance, capital needs to devise systems of compensation that are structured in such a way as to ensure workers' compliance and consent, as more traditional disciplinary measures do not seem to bear a heavy enough load to ensure willing participation. This is sometimes mediated by status, as in the case of the creative chef. However, by and large, pay in restaurants today is established by the degree to which it matters who performs a given task.

The interrelatedness of restaurant work occasionally places its workers in positions of conflict to perform their jobs, frequently making coworkers intensify one another's labours, or even making relationships with coworkers into a site of labour in and of themselves. The dividedness of restaurants' engagement with the various members of their staffs highlight the unevenness of these relationships, particularly between the front and back of house workers, where workers are codependent but have conflicting interests and must negotiate these tensions in order for the restaurant to "work." The interdependence of restaurant work casts the restaurant as a workspace with numerous and overlapping sites of exploitation, discipline and the intensification of labour, as well as a proliferation of payment schemes and multilateral negotiations of status.

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[522] Paules, *Dishing It Out*, 109.

Chapter Six: Cleaning Labour in Restaurants

> It was amusing to look round the filthy little scullery and think that only a double door was between us and the dining-room. There sat the customers in all their splendour—spotless table-cloths, bowls of flowers, mirrors and gilt cornices and painted cherubim; and here, just a few feet away, we in our disgusting filth. For it really was disgusting filth. There was no time to sweep the floor till evening, and we slithered about in a compound of soapy water, lettuce-leaves, torn paper and trampled food…. The room had a dirty mixed smell of food and sweat… But the customers saw nothing of this.[523]
>
>   - George Orwell

Literature on the service industry, tourism and leisure tends to focus on the novel interactivity and relative autonomy of service work, which is certainly true of the waiters and waitresses to whom the present account has primarily attended thus far.[524] Yet, as discussed in the previous chapter, this work is underscored by the backstage and eclipsed labour of many others, which often more closely resembles the highly rationalized and repetitive deskilled work described by Harry Braverman in *Labor and Monopoly Capital*. These workers are "relatively homogeneous as to lack of developed skill, low pay, and interchangeability of person and function (although heterogeneous in such particulars as the site and nature of the work they perform)."[525] Of restaurants, he writes,

> restaurant labor, which cooks, prepares, assembles, serves, cleans dishes and utensils, etc., carries on tangible production just as much as labor employed in many another manufacturing process; the fact that the consumer is sitting nearby at a counter or table is the chief distinction, in principle, between this industry and those food-processing industries which are classified under "manufacturing."[526]

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[523] Orwell, *Down and Out*, 69-70.
[524] Gatta, "Balancing Trays and Smiles," 117.
[525] Braverman, *Labor and Monopoly Capital*, 359-73. Quote is on p. 359.
[526] Ibid., 360.

What Braverman misses, however, is that the fact that "the customer is sitting nearby" doesn't necessarily reveal the whole of the social relations surrounding the production of service because there is an intermediary, the server, between production and consumption.

Theoretical accounts of subjective work, and particularly those of affective and immaterial labour, stress the degree to which all work is increasingly characterized by a greater deployment of workers' cognitive and emotional resources in communication. Typical is Lazzarato's assertion that even in working class labour there is a transformation "into a decision-making capacity that involves the investment of subjectivity," such that work is "defined as the capacity to activate and manage productive cooperation."[527] Significantly, these theorists also maintain that this kind of subjective work holds great liberatory potential for the labourers who perform it, as it contributes to the general intellect, the body of language and meaning shared by all and resistant to capture by capital, "a common bond among the members of a multitude."[528] However, not all workers are called upon equally to do this kind of work, suggesting that perhaps not everyone is also partaking of this richness of intersociability and mass intellectuality to the same degree. Attending to whether some workers are excluded from performing a great deal of affective and immaterial labour and are thus marginalized from the general intellect serves to set the stage for critical interrogation of the unevenness of the liberatory potential touted in autonomist accounts of affective and intersubjective labour.

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[527] Lazzarato, "Immaterial Labor," 134-5.
[528] Virno, "Virtuosity and Revolution," 194.

This chapter considers dishwashing work, using the position as a counterpoint to the server and auxiliary floor workers in order to highlight the unevenness and heterogeneity of restaurant industry employment, as well as to stage a discussion of cleaning labour and ethnicity in hospitality. Dishwashers are integral to restaurants' smooth operation, yet they occupy the lowest position within the organizational hierarchy.[529] Tucked away in the far recesses of the kitchen, kept apart even from other productive processes, their work is crucial to restaurants' smooth operation—far more so, in a strictly materially productive sense, than that of servers. They are paid the least, considered the most disposable, and have little chance of advancement, and they are not so much cooperated with as they are delegated to by their coworkers.[530] Dishwashers' work is highly repetitive manual labour where the personhood of whoever does it matters little, and restaurants disproportionately fill this post with the most marginalized members of the workforce, who generally receive minimum wage (if that) or little better for their work. Furthermore, many dishwashing posts are held by undocumented immigrants, who are routinely denied the labour rights accorded to citizens.[531] The division between front-of-house and back-of-house mirrors the globalized process of offshoring low-skilled and undesirable labour in the post-Fordist economy, but it does so within the space of the restaurant itself, ghettoizing dishwashers in their

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[529] Fine, *Kitchens*, 95; Mars and Nicod, *World of Waiters*, 18, 143; Paules, *Dishing It Out*, 107; Waldinger and Lichter, *How the Other Half Works*, 69.

[530] Adler, "¡Oye Compadre!," 241; Luis L.M. Aguiar, "Janitors and Sweatshop Citizenship in Canada," *Antipode* 38:3 (2006): 451; Andrew Herod and Luis L.M. Aguiar, "Cleaners and the Dirty Work of Neoliberalism," *antipode* 38:3 (2006): 426; Mars and Nicod, *World of Waiters*, 41; Orwell, *Down and Out*, 81; Paules, *Dishing It Out*, 109.

[531] Alison Brysk and Gershon Shamir, "Introduction: Globalization and the Citizenship Gap," pp. 3-20 in Alison Brysk and Gershon Shafir (eds.) *People Out of Place: Globalization, Human Rights, and the Citizenship Gap* (New York: Routledge, 2004).

workstations behind noisy industrial washers. These workers rarely, if ever, have any contact with restaurant clientele, nor is their work and workspace ever exposed to them.[532]

Essentially, the personalities and communication skills of the people who do dishwashing work are inconsequential in the performance of their jobs, making the post demonstrative of what happens to labour in service environments when affective labour is not a central concern in the performance of at-work tasks. Assessing the labour process, compensation structure and hiring practices for restaurant dishwashers thus serves to frame a discussion of affective labour in the service industry as a political site by foregrounding the dimensions of the work that remains most hidden.

Dishwashing, Dirt and Status

Before establishing his literary career, George Orwell spent a while impoverished in Paris, hustling to feed himself and eventually taking on work as a hotel restaurant *plongeur.* Although he was fluent in French, his legal status as a resident and worker was hazy, and it was only after a long and arduous search for any menial job at all that he was able to secure the dishwashing post. He later published an account of his experiences, *Down and Out in Paris and London* (1933), a tale of hunger and squalor and a constant preoccupation with getting by. The book was hailed on its release for drawing the curtain to expose the lives and labours of

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[532] Paules, *Dishing It Out*, 134; Waldinger and Lichter, *How the Other Half Works*, 169, 157.

the urban poor,[533] who are often as underrepresented and marginalized culturally

as they are economically. His detailed depictions of dishwashing work similarly

provide perspective into the hidden work of cleaning labour in leisure's backstages,

both its labour processes and the social relations surrounding it.

We might think of cleaning workers as representing the "old guard" of

entrepreneurial organization, who are paid an hourly wage for labour rendered

within the rubric of a broader consumer package that is the service experience, yet

who don't matter within patrons' perceptions of service quality. Cleaning labour

does not carry the additional baggage of producing customers' experiences, instead

shifting such expectations onto the restaurant's front space as a site of pleasure. By

looking at the cleaner-as-service-worker, we find a form of service industry labour

that seems archaic or un-progressive compared to some of the other positions

addressed in Chapter Five. Their pay regime follows the hourly wage model, with

little by way of perks or bonuses. The extraction of greater profits also follows

decidedly old-school means, the intensification of labour by imposing heavier

workloads and speedups in order to extract more labour from workers, what Orwell

describes as "packing four hours' work into two hours" during the tumultuous

mealtime rushes.[534] Even the social relations of cleaning labour seem almost

embarrassingly outdated compared to the jocular banter of interactive service

professions, overshadowed by the noisy clatter of plates and thrum of water jets on

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[533] See Richard Mayne, *The World of George Orwell* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicholson, 1971), 45; Scott Lucas, *Orwell* (London: Haus Publishing, 2003), 15, 40.
[534] Orwell, *Down and Out*, 80; Herod and Aguiar, "Cleaners and the Dirty Work," 427. Marx defines the intensification of labour as that which "creates in equal periods of time greater values than average social labour of the same kind," (*Capital*, 435) which is precisely what the sudden intensity of meeting the demand of mealtime rushes serves to do.

steel, in addition to the social inequality (and often enough language differences) between them and their coworkers. Restaurants often hire the most marginalized members of the workforce, "many of whom have minimal English skills and might have difficulty finding employment elsewhere" to do cleaning work.[535]

The kitchen operates very differently than the restaurant service floor, and much of this difference is constituted in its invisibility to customers. Because restaurant patrons don't see them, the carefully crafted atmosphere of the dining room is suspended: industrial kitchens are tile-heavy, reverberant, brightly-lit spaces that can easily be cleaned. They are hot, messy and loud.[536] The half-finished plates, steam from industrial washers and buckets of scraped food are precisely the debris of consumption that the theatricality of restaurants is premised upon eliding, reflecting a broader cultural disgust for of waste. Dishwashers work with other people's garbage, which is considered a low calling regardless of the industry one is engaged in.[537] While, as Fine holds, dirt is "structurally necessary" to production, and especially the treatment of food, there is a generalized cultural aversion to dirt and those who work with it.[538] Cleaners and waste are perennially confined to leisure's backstages.

Even on restaurant floors, where bussers are the main parties who deal with tables' waste, their status is affected by its synonymy with dirt. Like dishwashers, they deal with garbage, so the job bears some of the taint of refuse; however, unlike

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[535] Paules, *Dishing It Out*, 61.
[536] As Paules notes, "dishwashers and other back-house employees rarely appear on the floor but are kept out of sight, in rooms with no windows, no air conditioning, and drains in the floor." Ibid., 134.
[537] Everett C. Hughes, *Men and their Work* (Glencoe, IL: The Free Press, 1958), 49-53; Rollins, *Between Women*, 24; Waldinger and Lichter, *How the Other Half Works*, 232; Whyte, *Human Relations*, 344.
[538] Ashforth and Keiner, "How can you do it?" *Academy of Management Review* 24:3 (1999); Fine, *Kitchens*, 33; Rollins, *Between Women*, 59; Taylor, *Counter Culture*, 80.

dishwashers, they do so while looking clean and respectable in the dining room, rather than being stashed away in a hellacious back corner of the kitchen. Not only must the kitchen be obscured in order to maintain the illusions of the dining room floor, but so must its workers; even the sight of a sweaty kitchen worker's soiled apron risks dispelling the aura of the theatrical production of restaurant service. The busser serves as a mediator for the grubbier end of the kitchen, carting away the detritus of the meal. It is telling of our cultural horror for waste that in most restaurants, a separate person is designated to present customers with prepared food, while another deals mainly with its debris. Hiding waste and related labour disciplines the bodies of workers who are visible to customers, for they must appear to customers not to be engaged in this kind of work, and they display this status by wearing clean clothes and appearing well-kempt,[539] so that all traces of waste are obscured even at the level of workers' self-presentation. Furthermore, while the bringer of food engages extensively with tables and is separately and directly rewarded for the part they play in producing the social dimensions of the experience, the person who disposes of leftovers instead receives a trickle-down portion of this payment as tip-out.[540]

Dishwashers are integral to restaurants' production processes, but not in either the material production of the food served nor the affective production of service. While they may be called upon to do prep work or other tasks during slow

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[539] Civitello, *Cuisine and Culture*, 175-6.

[540] The degree of contact between bussers and tables varies both by the establishment, and what kinds of service responsibilities bussers are tasked with, and by the tables they serve. Customers always have the prerogative of initiating extended conversations with the auxiliary staff, but only servers initiate conversation with the tables. See Chapter Five for a description of bussers' responsibilities, status and compensation.

times around the rush, they do not, for the most part, create or prepare dishes, which *are* centrally constitutive of the restaurant experience, nor are they engaged in the rigours of affective labour called upon in the production and consumption of leisurely experiences in restaurant dining areas. Their subjectivity is not particularly important. Above all, the work of the dishwasher is about the reproduction of the restaurant, doing the cleaning necessary to enable turnover, the service to successive waves of tables. Without this reproductive work, the restaurant is lamed; it cannot serve any additional customers until the means to do so (clean flatware, cutlery and glasses, fresh pots pans in which to cook) are readied. In short, dishwashers' work is not directly productive of the dining experience, but reproductive, as it effectively enables turnover. Given the work's invisibility, it thus in some ways mirrors the kinds of reproductive labour traditionally performed by women at home, which enabled men to go out to perform paid labour in the public sphere; however, in this case, it is the backstage wage labourer who enables the feminized work of care in the public space of restaurants, which in turn obscures the exertions of labour's reproduction.[541]

Dishwashers are not widely perceived to be "skilled."[542] What skills they do have are easily transported to other workplaces, while a new dishwasher can be trained to do the job quite quickly. This makes dishwashers relatively dispensable, since a new one can be started with little or no training. As Fine notes, "The washers had a different status in the kitchen, and they were thought of as fully expendable

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[541] See Illich, *Shadow Work*, for a discussion of the historical invisibility of care and reproductive work in the home.
[542] Herod and Aguiar, "Cleaners and the Dirty Work," 429.

and replaceable, even though responsible cleaners may be harder to find than responsible cooks. These are quintessential dirty workers, necessary for operating the establishment but functionally non-persons."[543] Cleaning work is resistant to aestheticization. By its very nature cleaning work effaces itself in its performance, making it difficult to cast as skilled.[544] It is marked by an absence: "most of us know when somewhere has not been cleaned but few of us, we suspect, stop to think much about the laboring processes which go into maintaining spaces as clean."[545] Given that their skill set is limited, resistant to recognition, the barriers to entry relatively low, and the pool of available unskilled workers abundant, cleaning workers have cheaper turnover costs than other positions in restaurants.[546] The posts themselves are virtually interchangeable, as dishwashing in one place differs very little from the same position in another milieu, and dishwashers' turnover is disproportionately high.[547]

Cleaning workers are predominantly first-generation immigrants[548] and, in hotels and homes, women.[549] Restaurant organizations aim to limit costs and impose organizational efficiency, and, as Fine notes, "In practice, this means that backstage workers will be the cheapest labor available; the restaurant industry is

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[543] Fine, *Kitchens*, 97-8. See Chapter Five for a discussion of Goffman's "non-person" in the context of bussers' relationship with restaurant patrons.

[544] For an excellent fictionalized depiction of this relation of cleaning workers effacing their own work, see Olga Tukarczuk's "The Hotel Capital," *Granta* 72 (2002): 33-54.

[545] Herod and Aguiar, "Cleaners and the Dirty Work," 427.

[546] Adler, "¡Oye Compadre!," 241. See Braverman, *Labor and Monopoly Capital*, 359.

[547] Paules, *Dishing It Out*, 61.

[548] Giles, "Clean Jobs, Dirty Jobs:," 37-44; Waldinger and Lichter, *How the Other Half Works*, 8.

[549] Anna Maria Seifert and Karen Messing, "Cleaning Up After Globalization: An Ergonomic Analysis of Work Activity of Hotel Cleaners," *antipode* 38:3 (2006): 558-60; Barbara Ehrenreich, "Maid to Order," pp. 85-104 in Barbra Ehrenreich and Arlie Russell Hochschild (eds.), *Global Woman: Nannies, Maids and Sex Workers in the Global Economy* (London: Granta, 2002), 88. This differs from janitorial work in institutional public spaces, which is dominated by men. See Herod and Aguiar, "Cleaners and the Dirty Work."

known for hiring undocumented aliens and the mentally impaired."[550] Where

restaurants employ undocumented workers in kitchens, this also mirrors historical

practices of denying reproductive workers, such as women and slaves, citizenship

rights and the kinds of legal protections that accompany citizenship in order to

maintain a cheap source of labour.[551] Cleaning workers, as Luis Aguiar notes in a

discussion of janitors, are fixed in working conditions that have "eroded their ability

to enjoy fully the citizenship rights by which the institutions of the Fordist welfare

state had previously extended to some and promised to others," a relation that he

calls "sweatshop citizenship."[552] By denying undocumented workers state-

sanctioned subjectivity, large numbers of working bodies are left available to do

undesirable cleaning work. As Ronnie Lipschutz argues,

> the need for low-wage workers and the fact that middle-class citizens will not
> take such jobs, even in times of economic duress. One need only stand outside
> of Disneyland, or one of its clones, at closing time, watching the daytime
> workers leave and the nighttime workers arrive, to see this distinction at work.
> The difference is evident, and so is the demand for labor that structures that
> difference.[553]

It is argued that the native-born do not want these low-status scrub jobs, and that

only those who cannot find work elsewhere would take them.[554] Hiring

undocumented workers affords service organizations numerous advantages,

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[550] Fine, *Kitchens*, 20.

[551] See Brysk and Shafir, "Introduction"; Ronnie Lipschutz, "Constituting Political Community: Globalization, Citizenship, and Human Rights." In Alison Brysk and Gershon Shafir (eds.), *People Out of Place* (New York: Routledge, 2004), 35; Aihwa Ong, "Latitudes of Citizenship: Membership, Meaning, and Multiculturalism." In In Alison Brysk and Gershon Shafir (eds.), *People Out of Place* (New York: Routledge, 2004), 9.

[552] Aguiar, "Janitors and Sweatshop Citizenship," 440.

[553] Lipschutz, "Constituting Political Community," 40-41. The reference to night-time cleaning workers brings to mind restaurant night cleaners. More precarious still, these workers scrub the kitchen, storage and bathroom areas of restaurant on a contractual basis and are not considered employees of the restaurant per se. They have little to no interaction with the rest of the restaurant staff and their working conditions and pay structures are difficult to monitor. These, even compared to dishwashers, are the ultimate invisible workers, cleaning after the establishment has closed and gone before morning.

[554] Waldinger and Lichter, *How the Other Half Works*, 69.

suggesting state-level complicity or sanctioning of capital's need for such workers by continuing to deny them the labour and other rights that accompany citizenship.[555] Immigrants, with proper documentation or without, are deemed to be more amenable and less able to find work elsewhere, making them less likely to bargain for better conditions,[556] and these relations hold in particular for undocumented workers, who might have even greater difficulty securing other employment given their legal status (or lack thereof), and furthermore face the threat of exposure if they leave or displease their employers.

Richard Morales finds that "restaurant employers have selectively recruited Mexican immigrants eager to accept the minimum wage, while native-born workers will accept low-wage jobs only if they can also obtain tips."[557] Selectively hiring native-born people to work in the front seems to rely on the assumption that they will have greater social capital, a better understanding of service decorum and stronger social skills with which to create relationship bonds with patrons. Furthermore, he holds that, "Customer tips provide an incentive for native workers with low levels of commitment to their jobs, while an on-going supply of immigrants willing to work for low wages and long hours keeps kitchens fully operational."[558] In short, while tips are required to motivate good service from the native-born, for lower-status or more contingently employed recent immigrants, precarity alone is enough to secure compliance, or at least enough compliance to keep the pots scrubbed and cutlery stocked.

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[555] See Aguiar, "Janitors and Sweatshop Citizenship"; Brysk and Shafir, *People Out of Place.*
[556] Ibid., 159.
[557] Morales, "Contending Tradeoffs," 143.
[558] Ibid., 150.

Race in Restaurants

The restaurant industry is one in which "workers are separated according to their production and service functions," creating "a two-tier occupational structure" in which native-born North Americans are given the majority of front-of-house positions and recent immigrants are consigned to the backstage kitchen. Morales holds that this "target hiring of the U.S.-born for visible front-house positions completes the cost effective symmetry which has allowed this industry to flourish," a system of target hiring that reinforces "the significant income advantage native-born workers enjoy over their immigrant counterparts."[559] The division between front-of-house and back-of-house mimics the broader process of offshoring manufactory labour in the post-Fordist economy, but it does so within the space of the restaurant itself, and dishwashers are further segregated to a smaller area within the kitchen, the graphically (and aptly) named "dish pit."[560] This, as argued in the previous chapter, follows the logic by which restaurants can be read as microcosms of the globalized economy.

Accounts of offshoring attend to how the immaterial labour of marketing, bureaucracy and accounting are retained domestically, while the grunt work of

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[559] Ibid., 143

[560] Accounts of post-Fordism routinely highlight the international division of labour's ability to be "exploited flexibly," dividing labour both globally and locally, within cities. See Aguiar, "Janitors and Sweatshop Citizenship"; Ash Amin and Anders Malmberg, "Competing Structural and Institutional Influences on the Geography of Production in Europe," pp. 227-248 in Ash Amin (ed.), *Post-Fordism: A Reader* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1994), 227-8; Josef Esser and Joachim Hirsch, "The Crisis of Fordism and the Dimensions of a 'Post-Fordist' Regional and Urban Structure" pp. 71-97 in Ash Amin (ed.), *Post-Fordism: A Reader* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1994), 80; Andrew Ross, *Low Pay High Profile* (New York: New Press, 2004); Deepak Narang Sawhney, "Journey Beyond the Stars: Los Angeles and Third Worlds," pp. 1-20 in Deepak Narang Sawhney (ed.), *Unmasking L.A.: Third Worlds and the City* (New York: Palgrave, 2002), 2.

production is outsourced to cheaper labourers from the globalized South; in the

restaurant, the kitchen serves as this figurative "off-shore," taking advantage of the

plenitude of the most marginalized members of the workforce to toil in an invisible

productive space opaque to consumers. Like the globalized offshoring of work, in

North America we find what might be termed "localized offshoring," or the

ghettoization of certain undesirable jobs among marginalized populations.[561]

Immigrants, minorities, ex-cons and the mentally and physically disabled and

disturbed's consignment to kitchens' back spaces reflects a broader social process

where members of marginalized social groups tend to hold primarily peripheral

jobs in independent businesses and are often assigned posts low in the hierarchy of

these organizations.[562] Many accounts also attend to how this ghettoization of jobs

comes to seem natural over time, "colouring" both the work and the people who

perform it. As Herod and Aguiar write, cleaning bodies are inscribed

> in racial and ethnicized terms to 'naturally' fit the presumed association
> between specific work assignments and particular morphological types—for
> instance, in the global North it is frequently immigrants from the global South
> who fill such positions, whereas in the global South processes of rapid
> urbanization and projects of modernization often suck in rural migrants
> (many of whom are ethnic or linguistic minorities in their own countries) to
> work cleaning jobs.[563]

The spatial divisions of labour reflect racial ones, with minorities often consigned to

low-status jobs obscured from view.[564] Being ghettoized in the dish pit doesn't

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[561] Perrons, "Reflections on Gender," 169; Sawhney, "Journey Behind the Stars"; Ross, *Low Pay, High Profile.*
[562] Aguiar, "Janitors and Sweatshop Citizenship," 445-8); Steven P. Vallaz, "Rediscovering the Color Line within Work Organizations: The 'Knitting of Racial Groups' Revisited," *Work and Occupations* 30 (2003), 382; Ryan A. Smith, "Race, Income, and Authority at Work: A Cross-Temporal Analysis of Black and White Men (1972-1994)" *Social Problems* 44:1 (2997), 21.
[563] Andrew Herod and Luis L.M. Aguiar, "Ethnographies of the Cleaning Body," *antipode* 38:3 (2006): 531. See also Rollins, *Between Women*; Ong, "Latitudes of Citizenship."
[564] Vallaz, "Rediscovering the Color Line," 384-5; Rollins, *Between Women.*

afford marginalized workers much opportunity to gain other skills, even those

cultivated and shared in the restaurant such as cooking technique and service mores,

such that their spatial ghettoization in the kitchen reproduces a broader racial

ghettoization of certain undesirable occupations.[565] Thus, it would seem,

subordinate racial categories, like dirt, remain something that must be hidden in

order to sustain the illusions that the consumption of good service in restaurants

relies upon.[566]

Many restaurants still maintain the racial division of labour remarked upon

in the Harvey Houses almost two centuries ago, where white women serve on the

floor but the kitchen is remarkably more diverse. But this division of labour was by

no means inevitable. As Cobble reminds, American diners were frequently served by

African-Americans before the turn of the 20th century, particularly in the American

South where there was a long tradition of domestic service after the end of slavery,

and many men were employed as waiters in Pullman train cars. She notes that even

until 1930, over a quarter of American waiters were black men, a figure that shifted

only with the influx of white women into the service industry.[567] While at the turn of

the century there was a move away from black men's employment as servers in

favour of white women, black women were largely barred from waitressing jobs

entirely:

> Because of their sex, black women had been excluded from the waiting jobs in
> which black men had found acceptance—those in elegant hotels, trains, and
> other situations that catered to travelers and businessmen, did not require a
> homelike, informal, or intimate atmosphere and hence were more amenable to

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[565] Rollins, *Between Women*, 7, 55.
[566] Rollins argues that, additionally, other races are more easily made "invisible" than whites. Ibid.
[567] Cobble, *Dishing It Out*, 18-19. See also Civitello, *Cuisine and Culture*, 192; Shore, "Dining Out," 319.

black and male personnel. Yet because of their race, they were at a
disadvantage in competing for the new jobs opening up for women.[568]

In Cobble's analysis, it was the very shift toward the personable good service

premised upon an interpersonal relationship, the "homelike, informal or intimate

atmosphere" that led to white women's being broadly deemed more suitable for

serving work at the moment restaurants grew increasingly to be about the

consumption of experience.[569] While African-Americans were acceptable as service

personnel in service environments where the worker was effectively a non-person,

echoing the mores of Victorian domestic service, the consumption of "good service"

was rendered more valuable when consuming the homeliness and social deference

of a white woman.

One exception to this rule is in so-called "ethnic" restaurants, the term

typically used to qualify establishments that serve food prepared using ingredients,

methods and recipes other than those derived from a blend of French, Italian and

British culinary traditions and where this ethnic status is thematized and

highlighted. An ethnic themed restaurant "entails the use of ethnic art, décor, music,

external façade, name, and various stereotyped signals to create a distinctive setting

which lays claim to being a reflection of some exotic but recognizable cuisine," in

which "issues of authenticity are largely subordinate to the clients' demand for

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[568] *Ibid.*, 23. In practice, many women of colour have ended up doing cleaning and service work in domestic spaces, as housekeepers, cooks and child-minders. Their consignment to private homes risks making this kind of work even more precarious in that it is structured as an individualized contract outside of the public sphere. See, eg., Ehrenreich and Hochschild (eds.), *Global Woman*; David Katzman, "Domestic Service: Women's Work" in Ann Stromberg and Shirley Harkness (eds.) *Woman Working* (Palo Alto, CA: Mayfield, 1978).

[569] A similar trend toward personable service with elements of care work is well-documented when 19th century phone operator posts came increasingly to be held by women (see Green, "Goodbye Central," 920-25; Martin, "Hello Central?," 99; Marvin, *When Old Technologies Were New*, 26) as well as in secretarial and clerking services in offices (see Lowe, "Mechanization, Feminization and Managerial Control," 194-98; Davies, *Women's Place is at the Typewriter*, 51-78).

entertainment and gustatory diversion."[570] These restaurants tend to preferentially

or exclusively hire those of or seeming to bear an ethnic identity and racial

extraction consistent with the ethnic theme of the restaurant and its food.[571] I would

venture that the actual ethnic identity of these workers does not matter, only its

appearance to customers. For example, many (Japanese) sushi restaurants are

operated and staffed by Vietnamese- or Korean-born immigrants, however this

distinction is not held to matter given that the restaurants' patrons are assumed not

to be able to notice the difference. Paradoxically, in these cases the servers' ethnicity

is deemed to "matter" in the production of ethnic cuisine, while those who prepare

the food, obscured in the kitchen, may not; it seems that only affect bears weight in

considerations of ethnic authenticity. As discussed elsewhere, servers are often

treated as ornaments of the dining room, as themselves part of the décor and

sensual experience of the restaurant's theme, often enough as an Orientalized

stereotype of ethnicity.[572] In casual dining, the ethnicity of the servers may or may

not factor into the consumption of an "authentic" ethnic experience.

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[570] Alan Beardsworth and Alan Bryman, "Late Modernity and the Dynamics of Quasification: The Case of the Themed Restaurant." *The Sociological Review* 47:2 (2001): 242. See also Shun Lu and Gary Alan Fine, "The Presentation of Ethnic Authenticity: Chinese Food as a Social Accomplishment," *The Sociological Quarterly* 36:3 (2005); Ian Cook and Philip Crang, "The World on a Plate: Culinary Culture, Displacement and Geographical Knowledges," *Journal of Material Culture* 1:2 (1996).
[571] Morales "Contending Tradeoffs," 145-6.
[572] Ibid. Parker notes that in fast food chains, workers are often selectively hired to represent the ethnic makeup of the establishment's perceived potential clientele, so, Latinos or Latinas in neighbourhoods where these populations predominate, or primarily ethnic Asians in a fast food outlet in Chinatown. In fast food, however, homogeneity is primary, rather than the consumption of an "authentic" ethnic experience. Parker, *Fast Food, Fast Track.* Aihwa Ong (2004)'s work suggests that the linguistic and ethnic homogeneity in ethnic restaurants may also themselves be sites of intensified exploitation, noting that, "In many cases, migrants of the same nationality are the worst abusers of their countrymen," (65) when wealthier, more established immigrants with stronger English language skills use their advantageous class and citizenship positions to employ more recent or undocumented immigrants of their own nationality in disadvantageous or exploitative contractual positions. In "Latitudes of Citizenship."

Sociability and Mobility

The central motif of Orwell's account of working as a dishwasher is exhaustion.

He describes incredibly long hours of intensely physical labour, after which he was

too tired to do anything other than go directly home to sleep or get drunk.[573] In his

assessment it is this chronic fatigue that makes the life of the *plongeur* inescapable:

> Theirs is a job which offers no prospects, is intensely exhausting, and at the same time has not a trace of skill or interest; the sort of job that would always be done by women if women were strong enough. All that is required of them is to be constantly on the run, and to put up with long hours and a stuffy atmosphere. They have no way of escaping from this life, for they cannot save a penny from their wages, and working from sixty to a hundred hours a week leaves them no time to train for anything else. The best they can hope for is to find a slightly softer job as night-watchman or lavatory attendant.[574]

Even though Orwell clearly went on to escape the drudgery of the kitchen on a

loftier career path, he denounces the job as a form of slavery: "a *plongeur* is one of

the slaves of the modern world… he is no freer than if he were bought and sold. His

work is servile and without art; he is paid just enough to keep him alive; his only

holiday is the sack." It is not just the nature of the work that makes it comparable to

slavery in his estimation, but its inescapability. Continuing, he writes, "One cannot

say that it is mere idleness on their part [if they do not rise to a higher station], for

an idle man cannot be a *plongeur*; they have simply been trapped by a routine which

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[573] Orwell, *Down and Out in*, 94-5. In Orwell's Hôtel X, the *plongeurs* are paid a day rate to do their jobs, and the hours are set for each position by management. In most modern restaurants, dishwashers are paid an hourly wage, but the rate is low enough that one would effectively has to work the same long hours in order to earn a living wage. See Ehrenreich, *Nickle and Dimed.* Awareness of cleaning work's precarity and long hours has proved an effective way to shame companies into paying higher wages, for example in the Justice for Janitors campaign. See Ong, "Latitudes of Citizenship" for a discussion of activist responses to the precariousness of cleaning labour in the United States.

[574] Ibid., 81. While Orwell's narrative focuses physical toll of this work, another aspect of cleaning labour's effect on the body is its risk: "whereas cleaning is often thought to be easier work than 'heavier' activities such as manufacturing, in actuality it is one of the most injury-prone occupations in the contemporary labor market." Herod and Aguiar, "Cleaners and the Dirty Work," 426.

makes thought impossible."[575] Simply put, the dishwasher is just too tired to make

and act on other plans or to imagine another life.

There are two potential trajectories that a dishwasher might follow to rise

within a restaurant's hierarchy and income structure. The first would be a

promotion to busser, with the potential to eventually become a server or bartender.

The second and more common is an ascent through the ranks of the kitchen brigade.

There is no uniform trajectory for cooks' and chefs' careers, but most arrive at this

position having worked their way up through at least a few of the lowlier and less

status-laden positions in the kitchen. While chefs, especially in higher-end

establishments, often undergo formal training and accreditation, most cooks work

learn the job as they go.[576] Even for those chefs who do attend culinary schools, their

technique is refined and finished on the job, for cooking work requires cultivating

the ability to work by feel, so that food's timing and doneness becomes "second

nature," to use Bourdieu's term.[577] Cooks' skills are aptitudes: "speed, accuracy,

repetition"[578] and the ability "to work quickly and effectively under pressure and

have appropriate motor skills and manual dexterity."[579] Ultimately, much of their

training takes place by *doing* the work and getting a sense for properly prepared

foods' smell, texture and appearance. Obtaining this familiarity thus requires

proximity and practice; there is a socialization into cooking practices and techniques,

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[575] Ibid., 123.
[576] Fine, *Kitchens*, 45-9; Pratten, "What Makes a Great Chef?" 455.
[577] Fine, *Kitchens*, 50; 178; Bourdieu, *Logic of Practice*, 56.
[578] scott haas, "Why a Chef?: A Journey into the Darkest Regions of the Kitchen," *Gastronomica: The Journal of Food and Culture* 5:2 (Spring 2005), 37.
[579] Darren Lee-Ross, "A comparative survey of job characteristics among chefs using large and small-scale catering systems in the UK" *Journal of Management Development* 18:4 (1999), 344.

which may have consequences in terms who gains access to the social networks

through which such skills are gleaned.

One of the problems with considering untrained and unquantifiable aptitudes

as part of living labour is the way in which various social groups may be differently

attributed with skill at work. Racial minorities or recent immigrants who occupy the

lower ranges of labour tend not to move up through the ranks of the organizational

hierarchy and are often excluded from the best jobs.[580] Studies on allocative labour

have shown that minorities in particular tend to be promoted based on their formal

education, especially where there are cultural differences that may prevent their

peers and superiors from recognizing their skills or potential.[581] This is particularly

troubling in restaurants, where jobs' skill sets are defined by a mix of formal

training and on-the-job experience, as in the case of cooks, or by social aptitudes

gained at and outside the job through socialization, as in the case of anyone who

interacts with customers.[582] Promotion would furthermore require a manger's

taking notice of and interest in a given dishwasher, and, as Paules notes,

dishwashers "rarely remain at the restaurant long enough to cultivate poor or

favorable relations with management. There is, in addition, frequently a language

barrier between dishwashers who are not native English speakers and managers,

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[580] Herod and Aguiar, "Cleaners and the Dirty Work," 426.

[581] George Wilson, "Pathways to Power: Racial Differences in the Determinants of Job Authority," *Social Problems* 44:1 (1997), 39, 48.

[582] As Adler notes, in the case of male Mexican immigrants specifically, many workers might be intimidated by serving white customers in English and thus shun a shift to the service floor: "men who have outgoing personalities and are secure enough to interact with higher class, white people take busboy positions. Some men are intimidated by the prospect of having to do this and so prefer the security of the back of the house." Adler, "¡Oye Compadre!," 234-5. I posit that this role discomfort operates similarly to that of male servers in low-end dining establishments, described in Chapter Four, where the deference required in service also poses a threat to or conflicts with their sense of their own masculinity.

making it difficult to evaluate the tenor of their interaction" and be rewarded or promoted.[583]

Jobs where there is a reliance on skills obtained through socialization, those requiring interpersonal scripts and the performance of habitualized social relations, may exclude workers who come from or are thought to be a part of other networks of socialization and have a different habitus. Socialization takes place off the job, but it affects the possibility of acquiring skills and competencies on the job. So, for example, allophones and the foreign-born have been engaged in different regimes of socialization and had less exposure to the decorum of North American service as consumers, and thus may be excluded from jobs that are premised upon a high level of interpersonal or affective skill. Furthermore, as Kari Lerum relates, dishwashers in particular are often excluded from the sociability of the restaurant work life. In an ethnographic study of the social relations between restaurant staff at a seasonal establishment in Cape Cod, referred to as The Blue Heron, she describes the sexualized banter and teasing that characterize most inter-staff sociability, yet notes that,

> there was a striking and complete absence of sexualized interactions with one worker, Thomas, the Jamaican man who worked as the dishwasher. Several explanations may be offered for this anomaly, including the fact that Thomas was both physically and culturally separated from the rest of the workers. Thomas's dishwasher station was physically removed from the other workers, with much less need for close coordination with the other workers. Perhaps more important, Thomas also remained culturally and linguistically separate from the rest of the Blue Heron crew. As one of many Jamaican seasonal workers in the region, Thomas essentially lived in segregated housing. These organizational and cultural factors may have been underscored by racialized notions such as the idea that Black skin signifies outsider status.[584]

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[583] Paules, *Dishing It Out*, 109.
[584] Lerum, "Sexuality, Power and Camaraderie," 763.

Thus the dishwasher's physical segregation in the dish pit and cultural difference effectively barred him from social engagement with his co-workers, denying him access to whatever social skills and linguistic capital he might have acquired in so doing. This particular instance is furthermore remarkable because while he is described as "culturally and linguistically separate" from his co-workers, as a Jamaican, Thomas is still in all likelihood an Anglophone and would thus be in an advantageous position to socialize with co-workers compared to allophones.

In the case of non-native English speakers where there is a mostly Anglophone audience of customers, it is difficult to obtain the linguistic capital necessary to enunciate good service. Bourdieu describes linguistic capital as the competence to express the right sentiments in the language that dominates a field. Having linguistic capital enables speakers to perform "correctly" in a given linguistic field, affording them greater value, in the present case as workers. Furthermore, he notes that,

> through the medium of the structure of the linguistic field, conceived as a system of specifically linguistic relations of power based on the unequal distribution of linguistic capital (or, to put it another way, of the chances of assimilating the objectified linguistic resources), the structure of the space of expressive styles reproduces in its own terms the structure of the differences which objectively separate conditions of existence.[585]

Thus, exclusion from a linguistic field and the opportunity to acquire linguistic capital further reproduces this exclusion and the inequality that privileges the language more valued in the linguistic field. Without access to a lifetime's

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[585] Pierre Bourdieu, *Language and Symbolic Power* (Cambridge: Polity, 1991). Quote on p. 57. For more on the international valuing of the English language specifically as bearing greater linguistic capital in service contexts, see Adam Jaworski and Crispin Thurlow, "Language and the Globalizing of Tourism: Toward a Sociolinguistics of Fleeting Relationships," pp. 255-86 in Nikolas Coupland (ed.), *The Handbook of Language and Globalization* (Malden: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010) and Alison Phipps, *Learning the Arts of Linguistic Survival: Languaging, Tourism, Life* (Clevedon: Channel View Publications, 2007), 58-61.

assimilation of the tacit codes of conduct surrounding service, foreign-born workers often do not share the same service decorum as do the native-born, making it more difficult to gauge customer reactions and cues and anticipate needs. New immigrants and workers who come from marginalized social groups, those who do not habitually consume service in their leisure time (or consume a different or less culturally privileged mien of service) arrive at work with a different etiquette of service, making it more difficult for them to ascend through the ranks of restaurant organizations. Service that depends on familiarity with social codes thus reproduces class inequalities because the inability to consume services reproduces an exclusion from some service milieus as a labourer; thus the jobs themselves become classed.

Minority kitchen workers' difficulties in ascending to the more prestigious and skilled jobs of cook or waitress call into question some of the assumptions that are made about the nature of immaterial or affective labour and its place in the service industries. Both Lazzarato's account of immaterial labour and Hardt and Negri's concept of affective labour hold that engaging in these kinds of productivity produces the general intellect, enriching workers' intellectual and social resources in a way that capital cannot wholly capture or assimilate. However, when existing social marginalization prevents vast scores of workers from obtaining jobs where their subjectivities are thus engaged, then they are simultaneously excluded from reaping the rewards of the cooperation and richness of community thereby produced. While the autonomists celebrate the liberatory potential of communicative or affective labour, this ignores those who are excluded from these kinds of work, those left behind by the shift toward post-Fordism to dwell in

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repetitive, non-interactive work. As Nick Dyer-Witheford argues, "the priority Negri and his collaborators gave 'immaterial labor' seemed to diminish the continued importance in the post-Fordist economy of a vast mass of all too physical and material work—domestically, in the service sector, and internationally, in everything from maquiladora manufacturing to coffee plantations to the trade in body organs."[586]

The division of labour in restaurants prevents or obstructs some kinds of skills from circulating amongst some kinds of workers. Restaurants are thus sites where inequalities of race, class, gender, and heritage are reproduced and extended. As Judith Rollins notes, cleaning work, "rather than functioning as a gateway through which socioeconomic marginals pass into the mainstream, functions to reinforce racial and ethnic stereotypes and maintain those biological 'deviant' in a social and economic underclass."[587] The autonomists encourage thinking of the general intellect as a part of the fixed capital of the worker, giving the kinds of work labourers perform a kind of sedimentation or adherence that has value; however, not all workers have equal access to this value. While they are insistent on the point that every job increasingly makes use of various types of affective labour, that this labour is more and more a generalized part of all work, it is true that it is not a part

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[586] "Empire, Immaterial Labor," 71. He recommends instead considering immaterial labourers alongside two other primary categories, material and immiserated. The material labourer, in his account, does the manual labour of physically producing commodities, while the immiserated labourer is "discarded," as "that part of the labor force which, through various gradations of precarious and contingent employment up to the short- and long-term reserve army of the unemployed, is treated by capital as simply surplus to requirements," (76) loosely translating to the reserve army of labour described by Marx. Like Dyer-Witheford, my critique of this element of autonomist theory is aimed respectfully, for it is certain that none of these authors would intentionally exclude the abject and disenfranchised from consideration in their work.
[587] Rollins, *Between Women*, 55.

of all jobs equally, that some do more and more valued/valuable types of affective labour than others. In short, *affective labour is itself hierarchized and valued differently based on the skills that the exercise of different kinds of affective labour engender.*

In practice, this means that there are scores of workers who are immobilized in their current social position, a variation in the value of labour that serves capital (and restaurant organizations) well. Marx called such workers the "disposable industrial reserve army," describing how "it is capitalist accumulation itself that constantly produces, and produces indeed in direct relation to its own energy and extent, a relatively redundant working population, i.e. a population that is superfluous to capital's average requirements for its own valorization, and is therefore a surplus population."[588] Wage labour relies on this group, the lumpenproletariat, to depress wages and fill in gaps in the labour market as needed. Restaurants, of course, don't create these relations, they merely exploit them; businesses in many industries push their back-end production cycles "offshore," it's just that in restaurants this happens on-site. As Ong notes, North American states have a tendency to promote "more restrictive immigration policies against poor (Hispanic) immigrants, while laying out the welcome mat to the possessors of 'human capital.'"[589] In practice, this means that the state is complicit in helping to maintain this body of workers by routinely denying them the citizenship, labour and democratic rights of workers.

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[588] Marx, *Capital*, 781-99; quoted text on p. 782.
[589] Ong, "Latitudes of Citizenship, 63.

While Orwell's *Down and Out in Paris and London* was praised in its time for divulging the precarious circumstances of the working class poor he lived among, this social body is all too often just as culturally obscure today. Aguiar notes that while we in the West tend to think of sweatshops as blights on the third world, we should follow Andrew Ross in considering an expansion of the term "sweatshop" to more broadly define unsafe workspaces where there is extremely intense labour that is not compensated by a living wage, so that the term can encompass sectors beyond manufacturing.[590] Aguiar describes how the

> transformation in the state's political economic role has been matched by a neoliberal rhetoric which suggests that labor market inequality is individually based rather than structurally anchored, a rhetoric in which economic "winners" are exalted but workers such as janitors are invariably condemned as economic "losers," stuck at the bottom of the labor market as a result of their lack of education and/ or willingness to work hard.[591]

As this chapter has showed, this structure is exacerbated by labour processes that are resistant to providing outlets for workers to improve their conditions, even when they are integrated into organizations and labour processes largely characterized by a very different, very un-sweatshop orientation toward labour and compensation. As in Orwell's time, dishwashers remain largely invisible, both within the restaurants where they are often culturally and physically separate from co-workers and to the public sphere of customers who unwittingly consume the effects of their labours. It becomes all the more imperative, then, not to reproduce this erasure at the level of critical theory.

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[590] Aguiar, "Janitors and Sweatshop Citizenship"; Ross, *Low Pay High Profile.*
[591] Aguiar, "Janitors and Sweatshop Citizenship," 451.

Conclusion

George Orwell concludes his account of working as a *plongeur* in Paris

with a damning critique of service as such:

> What makes the work in them is not the essentials; it is the shams that are supposed to represent luxury. Smartness, as it is called, means, in effect, merely that the staff work more and the customers pay more; no one benefits except the proprietor, who will presently buy himself a striped villa at Deauville. Essentially, a "smart" hotel is a place where a hundred people toil like devils in order that two hundred pay through the nose for things they do not really want. If the nonsense were cut out of hotels and restaurants, and the work done with simple efficiency, *plongeurs* might work six or eight hours a day instead of ten or fifteen.[592]

He finds the wastefulness and exploitation of restaurant work to be grounded in

the "extras," of service, but acknowledges that such "extras" are only performed

cynically by service workers: "the job the staff are doing is not necessarily what

the customer pays for. The customer pays, as he sees it, for good service; the

employee is paid, as he sees it, for the *boulot*—meaning, as a rule, the an

imitation of good service."[593]

As I have argued in this dissertation, the construction of good service in

restaurants today relies on a construction of the sovereign consumer, who

appears to have a great deal of power and freedom relative to the deferential

service worker. However, service in restaurants is structured by a series of

illusions, fetishes, eclipsed relations, hidden labour and mystifications, such that

consuming service isn't always what it seems. While this project has sought to at

least partly untangle the intermeshed movements of hiding and display in

restaurants, the field of Communication Studies would do well to continue

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[592] Orwell, *Down and Out*, 126.
[593] Ibid., 82.

looking into how such substitutions undergird interpersonal communications that take place as part of service exchanges, and what happens to communication in these structures.

By accepting restaurants' organizational structuring of instrumental interpersonal relations in the service exchange, we risk extending these relations beyond the service encounter, breeding opportunism throughout our social lives. If the interchangeability of workers in the service encounter threatens to a change in the way we "see" faces and individuality, then we must try to think through means of restoring the humanity of service workers and consumers alike. In his account of immaterial labor, Lazzarato similarly finds commodities produced by our emotions and intellects reproduce the social relations that constitute them:

> The particularity of the commodity produced through immaterial labor[…] consists in the fact that it is not destroyed in the act of consumption, but rather enlarges, transforms, and creates the "ideological" and cultural environment of the consumer. This commodity does not produce the physical capacity of labor power; instead, it transforms the person who uses it. Immaterial labor produces first and foremost a "social relationship."[594]

As ever more of our encounters with strangers in public take place as a component of providing or consuming a service, then it becomes imperative that we think about how to ethical relationships there.

This project has looked at the construction of service relationships through a number of lenses. Tracing a history of the genealogy of restaurant service revealed how service gradually became feminized as ever greater

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[594] Lazzarato, "Immaterial Labor," 138.

numbers of women took up service work in the public sphere, and how this bred

a body of service mores and customs premised upon sustaining the appearance

of a friendly and sometimes flirtatious service relationship in which the server's

deference to the client is highlighted, calling stereotypes about femininity into

the service of service. While there have always been jobs that required working

with subjectivity as the principal means of production, this was not the

dominant mode until the last 100 or so years, but has become increasingly

prominent in the contemporary economy. To theorize this feminization of

service labour, I explored several bodies of critical literature on intersubjective

labour, including Hochschild's work on emotional labour and Hardt's concept of

affective labour, to lay the groundwork for analysis in successive chapters.

As stated, one of my central interests in this project was to study the

series of illusions that enable customers to enjoy the subjective role of the

sovereign consumer by engaging in the fetish of good service, where there is

some understanding that the service relationship is normalized and habitual

work for the server, but consumers and servers pretend that it is spontaneous,

sincere and organic. In Chapter Two, I addressed some of these relations, coining

the term "illusion of spontaneity" to describe how the social relationship of

service is made to seem organic and authentic, rather than the product of an

economic relationship. Maintaining this illusion requires selectively eliding

some features of restaurant service, in what I term the "eclipsed exertion," while

other kinds of labour are showcased. By looking at the standard formation of

restaurants, where kitchens are hidden while the affective relations of service

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presentation are showcased, I study how these play out in the disciplinization, monitoring and compensation of service labour.

Key to this is the tip, which I addressed in detail in Chapter Three, showing how discourses about tipping behaviours are circulated in restaurants in order to motivate and "entrepreneurialize" restaurant servers to provide good service. Since good service relies on the illusion of spontaneity, management cannot be seen hovering behind workers, and are forced to operate on an "ad hoc" basis, chipping in when and as needed. The tip serves to fill this gap in surveillance by ensuring that servers will do everything in their power to make sure that customers enjoy the service experience since they are directly compensated for their role in service production; this has the effect of motivating workers so that management doesn't have to. This is consistent with other accounts of postindustrial labour that hold that capital aims to ensure worker cooperation by aligning their interests with those of capital, in this instance by delegating the compensation of servers to those they aim to please. Furthermore, this displaces wages as a site of antagonism from restaurant entrepreneurs to customers, so that restaurants can intensify other dimensions of service labour while clients unwittingly compel servers to self-discipline in order to produce the good service that should ensure their incomes.

I next turned to look at service through the lens of skill and gender, to see how these intersect in service. Service work has traditionally been considered "unskilled," however feminist labour theorists hold that this relies on a particular framing of what constitutes "skill," specifically one that fails to

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recognize the aptitudes naturalized as "women's work"—care, emotional modulation and sociability—casting them instead as innate talents and denying this work the status of labour. I argued that the physical work of service labour is concealed, while servers' bodies as aesthetic or sexualized objects are highlighted, making them targets for institutionally authorized sexual harassment. The relations of deference and care that characterize service are accompanied by the mandatory performance of a flirtatious, feminine heteronormative sexuality for waitresses, in a way that blurs into sex work. To contrast this, I look at the austere formality that characterizes the more masculinized and asexual service of fine dining, where waiters predominate. Finally, I use a reading of the 2006 comedy film *Waiting…* to stage a discussion of masculinity in "women's work," showing how straight men at work often engage in compulsorily heterosexual banter and horseplay that affirms their masculinity in ways that can be oppressive to women and gay men. Given this observation, I tentatively suggest that one way to decrease the inequalities in restaurant workplaces might involve questioning the heteronormativity that figures so prominently in social relations with co-workers and customers alike.

Relationships with co-workers are complicated in restaurant service, where the intensity of mealtime rushes and a contingent, just-in-time production system leads co-workers to motivate and discipline each other, making relationships *between* coworkers a site of labour. This, I argue, is to some degree mediated by the circulation of some tipped monies between the auxiliary workers who help servers to co-produce good service on the floor, however

restaurant workers whose subjective labour matters less and who are easier to replace are excluded from receiving this money. The interdependence of restaurant work casts the restaurant as a workspace with numerous and overlapping sites of exploitation, discipline and the intensification of labour, as well as a proliferation of payment schemes and multilateral negotiations of status.

Finally, to show the degree to which the desire to inspire affective performances structures the ways in which servers are disciplined and managed by their organizations, I looked at one restaurant position, the dishwasher, to contrast how cleaning work is positioned within the service economy, using it as a counterpoint to the server. The discussion of dishwashers is used to stage a critique of the autonomists' emphasis upon the liberatory potential of affective labour, to show that existing social inequality based on gender, race and class are reproduced in service spaces. While theorists such as Hardt and Negri attend to how the performance of affective labour creates communicative bonds outside of capital's aegis that contributes to the general intellect to enrich the intellectual, linguistic and cultural resources of those who perform it, these accounts fail to address the degree to which many are excluded from this richness by the nature of their work, reproducing inequalities of race, gender and class anew in the very site where they find the potential for revolution.

The service relationship, whether one plays the part of consumer or worker, puts strangers into direct contact with others they might never otherwise have spoken to, giving it a tremendous potential as a site for

confronting and understanding social differences. However, these relationships

are still inscribed in unequal and oppressive social relations, making it

imperative to better understand what kinds of power, economic and affective

relations hold there, of which this project makes a tentative start. As consumers,

since there is a considerable degree of potential authority that can be exercised

over service workers, it is important to think about whether and how we should

avail ourselves of all that service offers us and to occupy the position of the

sovereign consumer more reflexively.

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