

Social Relations of Unpaid Overtime Work of Social Workers

UNCOVERING THE LOCAL SOCIAL RELATIONS OF UNPAID OVERTIME
WORK OF SOCIAL WORKERS IN NON-PROFIT SOCIAL SERVICE
ORGANIZATIONS

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A Thesis Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies in Partial Fulfilment of the
Requirements for the Degree Master of Social Work

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Lay Abstract

Recent research in Ontario has demonstrated that many social workers who work for non-profit organizations such as government social services or community-based non-profits regularly perform unpaid overtime work. The objective of this study was to understand more about how social workers come to work unpaid overtime hours at their jobs in non-profit social service organizations. To accomplish this, Institutional Ethnography (IE) was used as a theoretical and methodological framework for research. IE is a critical sociology which is used to uncover the social organization of a part of every day life, rather than knowledge about the people who experience it.

Studying this research topic contributes to the knowledge of those seeking improved labour justice for social workers. The information discovered in the course of this research about how unpaid overtime work comes to happen for social workers can be useful for those trying to change and prevent unpaid overtime work.

Abstract

This study seeks to uncover the local social relations of unpaid overtime work of social workers working in non-profit social service organizations in Ontario. Previous research has identified unpaid overtime work performed by social workers as an ongoing labour issue. For example, Baines, MacKenzie Davis, & Saini (2009) found that 71% of social workers surveyed were ‘donating’ one-six hours of time to their jobs a day. Institutional ethnography is used as a theoretical and methodological framework for this inquiry. Accordingly, this research project focuses on uncovering knowledge about the social organization of unpaid overtime work. This knowledge may be useful for those seeking to make specific changes to the organization of the work of social workers to further prevent or eliminate unpaid overtime work.

During this study, three Ontario social workers were interviewed about their jobs and unpaid overtime, and provided further written information over email. One particular account of a problematic, or topic for IE research, was not formulated in this thesis as originally intended. However, three accounts of the everyday experience of unpaid overtime work of social workers are presented and could each be used to formulate a problematic for future IE research into this topic. Potential threads of ruling which are visible in the local setting are discussed, with particular emphasis on the ruling relations of non-payment of overtime work. Other potential threads of ruling identified and discussed include

the social organization of 'an endless workload' and the social organization of social work ethics.

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Declaration Of Academic Achievement

I, Emma Higgs, declare this thesis to be my own work. I am the sole author of this document. No part of this work has been published or submitted for publication or for a higher degree at another institution.

To the best of my knowledge, the content of this document does not infringe on anyone's copyright.

My supervisor, Dr Tara La Rose, and my second reader, Dr Randy Jackson, have provided guidance and support at various stages of this project. I completed all of the research work

Chapter One: Introduction

Working overtime is commonplace in many fields of work, including in the social services and social work. While extensive overtime work presents its own set of issues for workers, making it a compelling labour issues topic, unpaid overtime work may be particularly problematic for workers. The existing research about unpaid overtime work in the social work literature is minimal, suggesting that this topic may be an intriguing research area in the ongoing neoliberal social welfare context. This thesis seeks to examine the occurrence of unpaid overtime work for social workers in Ontario, with an emphasis on investigating the everyday local activities and social organization of unpaid overtime work.

I became interested in this topic during my own work and volunteer experience in community-based non-profit social service organizations prior to becoming a social worker. During these experiences, I noticed that despite my own staunch labour justice ideas and values, I was regularly working overtime hours which I was not reporting, and therefore not being paid for. Not only that, but this extra unpaid overtime work was beginning to wreak havoc on what could be called my 'work-life balance'. The more I thought about it, the more contradictory it seemed; workers in these community non-profits often work for low pay and non-existent benefits to be able to directly take on social and health inequities and injustices in their community. I also witnessed friends and peers in other organizations begin new jobs and ultimately quit them within one or two

years in search of better ‘balance’ (although there are a myriad of other reasons people may choose to leave the non-profit social service sector). The academic literature supported my observation that social service and social workers were working significant amounts of unpaid overtime; in 2009 it was reported that 71% of Ontario social workers surveyed were working one to six hours of unpaid overtime a day (Baines, Mackenzie, & Saini, 2009, p. 65). Why, or perhaps how workers come to work unpaid overtime work in non-profit social services became an interest of mine. While my primary interest is still in how this occurs in community-based non-profits, this inquiry broadens that purview. In addition, I focus here on registered social workers to open up specific policies and regulations regulating social workers for analysis.

This inquiry takes up institutional ethnography as a research ontology, epistemology, and methodology. Institutional ethnography (IE) is an “alternative sociology” (Smith, 2005, p.50), or non-traditional critical social science approach to research which focuses the research gaze on the social organization of an aspect of everyday social life, rather than on the perspectives and opinions of the people implicated in the everyday occurrence. Why and how it accomplishes this is explained throughout the Theoretical Framework and Methodology chapters. This thesis project is not a full Institutional Ethnography-this inquiry is the first steps of an IE, including collecting the initial research data and completing analysis which would be required should this topic get taken up for a full IE project.

However, the findings and analysis produced by this inquiry constitute relevant and substantive research.

Organization of the Thesis

Following this introduction, the Theoretical Framework in chapter two will outline the key considerations of IE for qualitative research, as well as the relevant historical development, ontology, epistemology, and theoretical underpinnings of IE. It also describes important analytical and theoretical tools of IE, some of which are taken up in this thesis. Next, the Critical Review of the Literature in chapter three synthesizes the major themes and findings of the academic literature on the topic of unpaid overtime work. It also examines academic literature regarding the context of social work labour in Ontario more broadly, and attempts to situate unpaid overtime in this context. This chapter also discusses the social organization of academic literature, and briefly analyzes the social organization of the academic literature included therein.

The Methodology section of the thesis in chapter four follows, and the research protocol, including methods and an account of the strategies for data analysis is discussed. Special attention is paid to the IE tool ‘the problematic’ in this chapter, as this thesis broadly seeks to formulate a problematic, or make a topic for inquiry out of the everyday occurrence of social workers doing unpaid overtime work. Next, the Findings section in chapter five provides material accounts of the work experiences of three social workers who regularly perform

unpaid overtime at their jobs. In addition to these accounts, the Findings chapter specifically identifies the work included in doing unpaid overtime expressed in the accounts according to Smith's (2005) generous conception of work, and highlights possible ruling relations present in their accounts of their everyday experiences. The Discussion in chapter six takes up these ruling relations, work, and accounts of the everyday to map how overtime work comes to not be paid in these jobs, analyze the local accounts for potential social organization regarding how social workers continue working overtime, and suggest directions for future research. The Conclusion in chapter seven presents closing thoughts, summarizes key findings or ideas from the thesis, and discusses the limitations of this inquiry.

Chapter Two: Theoretical Framework

As discussed in the introduction, this thesis project draws on institutional ethnography as a critical social science theoretical framework. Using IE has implications for methodology, method, and data analysis, which are all based on its specific theoretical perspective of the social world, organization, and knowledge. This chapter provides a relatively brief outline and exploration of the key theoretical considerations of IE. First, a brief history and overview of IE is explained. Next, three major contributing theoretical perspectives (Marxist materialism, feminism, and ethnomethodology) are explored in relation to their relevance to IE. Third, the ontology and epistemology of IE are described, and finally, a handful of key theoretical and analytical concepts of IE are examined.

A Brief History of Institutional Ethnography

Institutional ethnography is a research approach developed by Canadian sociologist Dorothy Smith (1987, p. 2). Her seminal publication on the foundations and philosophy underpinning Institutional Ethnography, *The Everyday World as Problematic* (1987), is composed of various papers she had been developing since the 1970s. Institutional ethnography was taken up by hundreds of researchers since its initial development, over the past 40 years Smith has released a number of additional books building on the theory and outlining principles for undertaking IE research, most notably *Institutional Ethnography: A Sociology for People* (2005) and *Institutional Ethnography as Practice* (2006). The latter is a collection, with chapters from numerous IE scholars who have

pioneered various strategies and approaches in IE researchers. Popular areas of inquiry for IE have arisen over the years, including labour and work organization in caring labour occupations such as nursing and the social services (Fast & Rankin, 2017), accessing health resources and services for those who are chronically ill (Smith, Mykhalovskiy, & Weatherbee, 2006), and the navigation of bureaucracies for activist or social change purposes (Turner, 2006).

During the 1970s, Dorothy Smith began to develop a critique of mainstream sociology and alternate approaches to research which would become institutional ethnography. In *The Everyday World as Problematic*, she states:

In writing a feminist critique and an alternative to standard sociology, I am doing more than a work for specialists. A sociology is a systematically developed consciousness of society and social relations. [...] Established sociology has objectified a consciousness of society and social relations that “knows” them from the standpoint of their ruling and from the standpoint of men who do that ruling. (Smith, 1987, p. 2)

Smith endeavoured to develop an alternate sociology which would include the “presence and experiences of particular subjectivities” (Smith, 1987, p. 2) which had previously been excluded from sociology in the name of objectivity. This began as a project to incorporate the knowledge and experience of women in a sociology, but was expanded later to include any social groups who had been excluded from traditional mainstream sociology (Smith, 1987; Smith, 2005).

A number of attributes makes IE distinct from the majority of sociological approaches. One, as suggested above, is that it is a sociology which does not exclude the knowledge about the social world known by those who are not a part of the dominant group (Smith, 1987, Smith, 2005). Another attribute is that analytically it avoids objectifying the experiences and perspectives of those outside the dominant group, or abstracting that objectified experience or perspective into theory (Smith, 1987). Finally, the knowledge about the social world produced using this alternate, feminist sociology is for those living the experiences or conditions of interest in the study. For example, as in the case of some of Smith's early research, the knowledge produced by doing an institutional ethnography about the perceptions and work of single-mothers is knowledge which can be useful to single-mothers, and provide them with information about the social organization coordinating their life and work (Campbell & Gregor, 2008). To more thoroughly understand what about institutional ethnography makes these attributes possible, this chapter will also provide an overview of salient IE theoretical underpinnings, ontology, concepts, and analytical tools.

Contributing Theoretical Perspectives to IE

Marxist materialism.

Institutional ethnography as a sociology is concerned with the actual actions that real, embodied people undertake (Smith, 2005). Smith has discussed her reading of *The German Ideology* during the early development of institutional ethnography (Carroll, 2010, p. 16), where Marx and Engels (1970) write about

their philosophic approach to political economic thinking and analysis. Marx and Engels (1970) state:

In direct contrast to German philosophy which descends from heaven to earth, here we ascend from earth to heaven. That is to say, we do not set out from what men say, imagine, conceive, nor from men as narrated, thought of, imagined, conceived, in order to arrive at men in the flesh. We set out from real, active men, and on the basis of their real life-process we demonstrate the development of the ideological reflexes and echoes of this life-process. (p. 47)

Gendered language aside, in this passage Marx & Engels are differentiating their way of knowing the social world from those of other prominent contemporary philosophers; they propose beginning analysis with the real material actions and conditions of people, rather than beginning with ideas or theories about the social world. In the final sentence in that passage, they suggest that ideology, philosophy, and consciousness develop from the material conditions of life, and not the other way around.

Interest in the actual activities of people in their work & lives is central to research and analysis in institutional ethnography. Researchers seek to know and observe the local activities people do, and trace or 'map' how these activities are organized or coordinated by the actual extralocal activities of people (Campbell & Gregor, 2008, p. 17). The notion of extralocal organization of the local is

explored more thoroughly later in this chapter. This notion explains how abstract concepts do play a role in organizing our everyday lives; Campbell & Gregor (2008) state that “Institutional ethnographers believe that people and events are *actually* tied together in ways that make sense of such abstractions as power, knowledge, capitalism, patriarchy, race, the state” (p. 17). Institutional ethnography draws on the Marxist notion of beginning with the actual conditions of life, and the actual activities undertaken by people to understand social organization.

Feminism.

Smith’s critique of mainstream sociology was influenced by her participation in and exposure to the Women’s Movement of the 1960s and 70s (Carroll, 2010, p. 17). Smith (1987) became interested in how women had been excluded from the production of authorized knowledges in Western society-that which is developed and disseminated by those at work in scholarly institutions, the media, and political organizations. In *The Everyday World as Problematic*, Smith (1987) concludes: “Being excluded, as women have been, from making of ideology, of knowing, and of culture means that our experience, our interests, our ways of knowing the world have not been represented in the organization of our ruling...” (p. 17-18). She argues that this extends to sociology, where the academic discipline was largely developed by men, based on knowledge about the social world visible to men.

Institutional ethnography sought at first to be a sociology for women, and later, a sociology for people (Smith, 1987; Smith, 2005). Researchers of institutional ethnography take up a specific standpoint, or an empirical location in a complex of social activities from which to study and understand the relevant social organization (Campbell & Gregor, 2008). Smith (1987) began by taking up the standpoint of women, and researchers have continued to traditionally take up the standpoint that marginalized groups occupy; George Smith's (1998) study of the homophobia experienced by gay male public school students, Roxana Ng's (1988) study of immigrant's access to social services, and Jean Louis Deveau's (2011) study of ineffective inclusion policies for people with disabilities are prominent examples. The choice to take up a standpoint occupied by women, gay youth, immigrants, or people with disabilities is not because institutional ethnographers believe all of the members across a social group share some personal innate trait, or the same viewpoint. Instead, what they have "in common is the organization of social relations that has accomplished their exclusion" (Smith, 1987, p. 78). Institutional ethnographers seek to begin from the standpoint, and with the everyday experiences of people who are excluded from authorized knowledge production to systematically study society (Smith, 1987, p. 78).

This research strategy builds an alternative sociology for people in a number of ways. The knowledge of people is not excluded; it is the starting point of inquiry and understood as expert knowledge of the local setting. People

involved in the social situation of interest to the study aren't turned into research objects; the study is interested in social organization (Campbell & Gregor, 2008). These attributes of the research approach are fundamental to its commitment to producing knowledge which is useful for people, rather than about them. This is taken up more at the end of this chapter.

Ethnomethodology.

Ethnomethodology (EM) is the theoretical area about which Smith has written the least. However, it is important to mention in a discussion about the theoretical roots of IE because its contributions to IE as a research approach are notable. Ethnomethodology is “the study of how members of society use ordinary, everyday interactions to produce social order” (Vance, 2019). It is a theoretical framework which shares with IE a research starting point and analytical goal. However, EM is interpretive, and the focus of analysis is on the interpretations of people in a given interaction, in contrast to the analytic interest in the relations of social organization in IE (Walby, 2007, p. 1010-1011). Additionally, ethnomethodology's micro focus does not permit it to seek out extralocal social activities which are shaping the local-this is at odds with the aims of IE (Carroll, 2010, p. 17; Walby, 2007, p. 1011).

Marxism, feminism, and ethnomethodology all contribute different attributes to the aims, ontology, and research methods of IE. Ethnomethodology's analysis of everyday life is 'extended' to analysis outside of the local by a Marxist interest in understanding broad social organization by starting with the material

(Carroll, 2010, p. 17). This inquiry also recognizes the value and legitimacy of the knowledge of regular people and traditionally marginalized groups, and proceeds to uncover social organization relevant to people's lives, rather than theorize their thoughts, ideas, and behaviours. This section has provided relevant theoretical background which are embedded in the ontology and epistemology of IE, and therefore this project, and the following section will explicitly outline these dimensions of IE.

Ontology

IE uses a very specific ontology from and through which it develops knowledge about the social organization of our everyday world. Smith (2005) thoroughly describes the ontology, or "theory of reality" (p. 52) of IE in two chapters of *Institutional Ethnography: A Sociology for People*. IE, quite simply, has an ontology of the social. that is to say, it holds that the social is real, material, and is lived by people and can therefore be observed (Smith, 2005, p. 52). Notions about the social world, such as racism or austerity are not themselves actors in the social world-people are actors in the social world, and their lives and work are organized by the social practices of other people. Smith includes a particularly insightful reflection on her own thinking while explaining the ontology of the social-she writes:

When I was working on my doctoral thesis, I remember sitting in the cafeteria of the state mental hospital in which I was doing my fieldwork

and asking myself “But where *is* social structure? How do I find it?”

[emphasis in original]. (Smith, 2005, p. 54)

By understanding the social world as coming about by people performing actual activities, IE inquiry creates opportunities for a precise and nuanced understanding of our social world, usually one small piece at a time. However, these small pieces of understanding of our social world shine a light on how a certain type of social practices, which Smith calls “ruling relations”, coordinate and organize the everyday lives of people.

Epistemology

The contested nature of knowledge and knowing are key considerations within IE. The IE theory of knowledge, (or epistemology) holds that all knowledge is socially organized (Campbell and Gregor, 2008), with ‘socially organized’ referring to “being put together systematically, but more or less mysteriously and outside a person’s knowledge, and for purposes that may not be theirs” (Campbell & Gregor, 2008, p. 18). Examining how knowledge is produced and how those that know it do are often key IE analytical tasks.

There are two main categories of knowledge which IE uses, which are both socially organized. Understanding them is critical for understanding the epistemology of IE. The first is embodied knowledge, which is the first-hand knowledge people have about what goes on in their lives and work (Benjamin & Rankin, 2014). This is knowledge about the material realities of people’s lives,

like a nurse's knowledge about how to best clean a wound, a regular commuter's knowledge about which bus is always early, and a parent's knowledge of the vegetables their child does not like to eat. What embodied knowledge is 'knowable' to any given person depends on the social conditions of their life-if one doesn't participate in the social relations of nursing, one cannot have the embodied knowledge of a nurse. "Knowing", as Campbell & Gregor (2008) write, "is anchored in particular places and particular uses" (p. 12).

There is a second type of knowledge which Campbell and Gregor (2002) characterize as "specialized as technologies of ruling" (p. 36). This knowledge is abstracted from the actual goings-on of people's lives, and can be understood as the 'official', or sanctioned knowledge about the social world. Janet Rankin also describes it as "the theories and explanations that circle discursively that standpoint informants use to name and explain their problems" (Rankin, 2017, p. 2). This explanation is useful because it highlights how this knowledge travels and exists discursively. This knowledge is used to organize the lives and work of people, and even in the face of clear contradictions between it and its opposite (an embodied, or material knowledge), is regularly harnessed within institutions to continue to shape reality. The ruling, abstracted conceptual knowledge is also socially organized. This knowledge is socially disseminated discursively or using texts, and how its produced is not always clear to the knower. As Campbell & Gregor (2008) emphasize, ruling knowledge can be used to organize the lives of people.

The categories and characterization of knowledge according to IE are of vital importance to conducting data collection and analysis in this type of research approach. What is able to be known by people depending on their standpoint, how it is known, the contradictions in their knowledge, and why knowledge is produced all become central concerns for formulating a problematic for inquiry, and ultimately making visible social organization.

Major Concepts and Analytical Tools of Institutional Ethnography

There are a handful of unique concepts and notions which are used in IE for analysis, or which are elements of its social ontology. While they are not IE theory per se, they are important elements to the overall research approach and framework of IE. This section will examine social relations, ruling relations, local and extralocal relations, texts and textual mediation, standpoint, and bifurcation of consciousness.

Social relations.

A social relation is a social science concept which is not specific to IE, and as mentioned above refers to any social interaction, or relationship between people (Rankin, 2017, p. 3). It is helpful to think about social relations as particularly material when undertaking IE research-social relations can be seen, observed, and constitute actual social “happenings”. IE data collection frequently with making visible and producing an account of the social relations of a local setting, in an attempt to identify how social relations which organize or coordinate the local-ruling relations-operate.

Ruling relations.

A ruling relation is the term used by institutional ethnographers to describe “a practice [a social relation] occurring in a local setting that infuses institutional interests into the setting” (Rankin et al., 2010, in Benjamin & Rankin, 2014, p. 93). Like the rest of the social world according to IE, ruling relations are made up of the actions of people. Smith provides a more expansive explanation of ruling relations, writing that they are

that extraordinary yet ordinary complex of relations that are textually mediated, that connect us across time and space and organize our everyday lives-the corporations, government bureaucracies, academic and professional discourses, mass media, and the complex of relations that interconnect them. (Smith, 2005, p. 10)

Considering these two definitions (one specific, one broad) together is useful. They illustrate how ruling relations operate and coordinate the everyday lives of people. In the achievement of the standardized coordination of the everyday lives of many people, is the operation of institutions.

Local and extralocal relations.

Institutional ethnographers use the terms ‘local’ and ‘extralocal’ to characterize types of social relations and social settings. Once a specific moment or action in everyday life is chosen as the topic of IE research, then the social relations in that setting, in that time, are local. What IE draws from Marxism, and

which constitutes part of its theory of social organization, is an understanding that there are social relations occurring elsewhere, at another time, which organize the local relations (Smith, 2005; Rankin, 2017). These social relations in another place, in another time, are *extralocal* social relations, and understanding how they achieve coordination and ruling of local settings is the primary analytic interest of IE (Smith, 2005). Institutional ethnographers seek to empirically trace the series of social relations which connect the often distant extralocal to the local.

However, most chains of social relations are not simply a series of people interacting face-to-face to with each other, relaying a specific direction for a social action. Rather, as Smith (2005) has discovered, contemporary ruling relations, in the industrialized world are largely text-mediated.

Texts and textual mediation.

A text, for the purposes of IE, is a form of “writing, speaking, or imaging [which is] replicable and hence can be read, heard, and watched by more than one individual, in different places, and at different times” (Smith, 2005, p. 165). The replicability of texts, and the standardizing function this attribute entails, is what makes texts so relevant to social organization and the coordination of local activity (Smith, 2005). Examples of texts relevant social and the social services include case notes, assessment forms, organizational policy and government policy, and staff training manuals, videos, or other materials. Smith stresses that texts “occur” (Smith, 2005, p. 167). Texts occur in courses of action undertaken by people who read the text, and shape the course of action according to their

contents. Smith includes this figure in *Institutional Ethnography: A Sociology for People* (2005, p. 167) to emphasize that that texts are ‘in motion’:

Conceptualizing Texts in Action

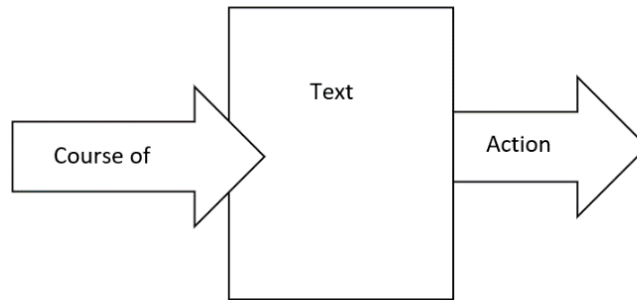


Figure 1: Smith's concept of Texts in Action

Texts, and their “material presence in local situations” (Smith, 2005, p. 168) have the capacity to organize social relations, actual happenings of people’s lives from afar, and in relatively standard ways across multiple local settings. The material presence of texts, and their centrality to many facets of life make identifying and understanding how they are taken up in a course of action important to IE.

Standpoint.

Standpoint is another crucial IE concept which is borrowed from other social science traditions and altered for the purposes of IE (Smith, 2005, p. 9-10). Standpoint is defined by Rankin (2017a) as “a stance that has an empirical location, where a group of people are positioned, within a complex regime of institutions and governance” (p. 2). The standpoint is the point within the

institution from which the IE researcher has chosen to gaze out at the rest of the institution. It is not the perspective of a certain individual or group of people, nor the specific explanations or understandings about the institution by any one group or person (Smith, 1987). Standpoint can also be understood as the “subject position” in the IE study, and acts as a “site for the knower that is open to anyone” (Smith, 2005, p. 10).

Standpoint is an important tool for IE inquiry because instead of making the people that occupy the standpoint the ‘objects’ of research, it requires a researcher to instead take up the view of those at the standpoint, and acknowledges that those that occupy the standpoint are expert knowers of the social relations in their local setting. It is the institutional ethnographer’s job to continue to trace those social relations outside of the local, to discover more about the ruling relations organizing the lives of those at a standpoint (Smith, 2005, Rankin, 2017).

Bifurcation of consciousness.

The bifurcation of consciousness is an IE notion which derives from the epistemology, and understanding of knowledges IE holds. It is the splitting of one’s consciousness to function in both extralocally and locally organized social activities (Smith, 1987, p. 7). In a locally organized social relation, embodied knowledge is gained and used, whereas in an extralocally organized relation, institutional or abstracted knowledge is used. Contradictions which are of interest to IE occur when people find themselves in a social relation in which their

embodied knowledge about something in their local setting does not match the institutional knowledge. For example, a nurse manager may notice a bifurcation of consciousness when they know through experience how to schedule nurse rotations effectively for their units needs, but is told through a new policy regarding the ‘best practices for scheduling nurse rotations’ to schedule staff differently (Fast & Rankin, 2017). These contradictions regularly frame IE inquiry and provides a starting point for developing a problematic for research.

There is a final IE notion which is critical to thoroughly examine in this thesis, which is the problematic. As it is directly relevant to the methodology and scope of this specific inquiry, an extensive discussion about the problematic will be included later in the thesis in chapter four.

Choosing IE for this Study

In this inquiry, I used principles of IE to study an everyday experience for people at a specific standpoint (social workers performing unpaid overtime in non-profit social services) because I found it to be compelling for a number of reasons. First, as someone who has experienced a similar, although not identical, situation as the one in this study, I was not interested in a research method which objectified the experiences of workers or pathologized their thinking and participation in a seemingly exploitative situation. Empirical information uncovered in the course of this study about actual workplace processes which

produce unpaid overtime can also be useful for those in similar situations seeking to change the conditions of their work.

Additionally, the theoretical framework developed by Smith and refined and expanded upon by numerous scholars over the past forty years is a compelling critical way of conducting inquiry, and it is well suited for studying a ‘workplace’ issue like my topic. IE has been chosen by some of those studying the human services, from a service-user and service-provider standpoint (Fast & Rankin, 2017; Janz, Nichols, Ridzi, & McCoy, 2014; Ng, 1988). While the distinct theoretical framework can be a hurdle for those conducting IE research for the first time, it needs to be grasped and understood by anyone who wants to conduct research and do analysis in IE.

Chapter Three: Critical Review of the Literature

An IE Review of the Literature: Scope and Attributes of Analysis

As an IE-oriented inquiry, this research project is committed to beginning with an everyday experience for people at a specific standpoint-in this case, of social workers who perform unpaid overtime work at their jobs in social service organizations. However, IE also holds that the social relations that coordinate our everyday experiences are generally not visible from the local standpoint-our everyday is organized extralocally (Smith, 1987, p. 3). For this reason, it is important for an IE review of the literature to assess the scope of the research which exists about the everyday experience of interest, as well as to review the literature which may provide information about relevant extralocal organization and social relations. This review of the literature presents a balance of research regarding potentially salient trends of social organization in the sections below such as neoliberalism, New Public Management, and social services labour issues and responses, before delving more specifically into the research on social work unpaid overtime.

While understanding and assessing the scope of the existing research is important, in IE researchers also read the literature to gain an understanding of the social organization of knowledge regarding the topic/everyday experience in the academic literature (Campbell & Gregor, 2008, p. 51). To do this, an IE researcher needs to analyse the stance and/or standpoint from which literature is written, and attempt to determine why the research was produced, what further

actions this research may support, or how concepts created in the analysis might get used (Campbell & Gregor, 2008, p. 50-54). Campbell & Gregor state:

She [the researcher] must come to terms with the literature while delineating and maintaining her particular stance vis a vis discourses, authorized knowledge, and views that express a standpoint organized differently from the institutional ethnographer's stance in the everyday world. (p. 51)

In essence, an IE researcher must read the literature with an additional critical lens, to seek an understanding of how the 'authorized knowledge' in the literature is positioned, with an understanding that it may have a role in coordinating the everyday experience of interest to the inquiry. In this review, the social organization and standpoint of existing literature will be assessed, although not on a source-by-source basis. The literature will be analyzed for these attributes in sections, to gain a general understanding of the stance of the authors and where possible insight into the purpose and organization of the knowledge produced.

This Review.

To accomplish the objectives of an IE review of the literature on the topic of social work unpaid overtime, pertinent critical social science literature was reviewed and synthesized to gain an understanding of the current discourses, debates, trends, and historical context. This includes reviewing literature pertaining to neoliberalism, New Public Management (NPM), contemporary

social work practice and policy, social services restructuring, social work labour conditions, and unpaid overtime work. Particular attention is given to research conducted in Canada (and Ontario when possible), and in jurisdictions which are structurally politically and economically similar to Canada-namely the United Kingdom, Australia, New Zealand, and to a lesser degree other continental European nations and the United States of America.

Analysis of the research stance and organization of knowledge is included, with an emphasis on analyzing the literature most closely focused on the specific everyday experience with which this inquiry is interested-namely, the literature regarding social work labour, responses to organizational change, and overtime work.

Neoliberalism and the Social Welfare State

To say that the exact character and definition of neoliberalism, even from a critical stance, is contested, is an understatement. David Harvey (2005) outlines and details a critical historical perspective on neoliberalism in his acclaimed book, *A Brief History of Neoliberalism*. In the introduction, he puts forward the following as a definition of neoliberalism: “[it is] a theory of political economic practices that proposes that human well-being can best be advanced by liberating individual entrepreneurial freedoms and skills within an institutional framework characterized by strong private property rights, free markets, and free trade” (p. 2). Giroux (2004) supports the claim that neoliberalism is a set of political and

economic theories & practices, while others hold that it is an ideology (Luxton, 2010; Read, 2009).

Read (2009) emphasizes that neoliberal ideology extends the logic of the market into the rest of society, while in Luxton's (2010) discussion of neoliberalism as an ideology, she refers to how a set of logics which underpin neoliberalism, such as a logic of individual responsibility and choice, have become hegemonic. The study which accompanies this discussion examines the logic of those who had "been directly affected by neoliberalism, by both economic restructuring and government downsizing and restrictions on programs, and because they were responding to the resulting situation by relying on voluntary family and community assistance" (p. 167). She concludes that an adherence to neoliberal logic, along with insufficient social support leaves people discouraged and vulnerable to further neoliberal constraints on their lives (Luxton, 2010).

While constituting a slightly different characterization of the term, other authors have also described neoliberalism as hegemonic political economic discourse or thought (Braedley & Luxton, 2010; Harvey, 2005; Read, 2009). Some of these authors, and others, have analysed how neoliberalism does more than alter the economy, the public sector, and the social welfare state. Neoliberalism has ushered in and relies on a transformed cultural and social ground for society (Connell, 2010; Giroux, 2004; Read, 2009). Like Meg Luxton's study suggests, the literature asserts that neoliberalism as a discourse, or

ideology, or theory, has oriented the values and logic of people towards competition, individualism, personal responsibility and choice, and independence (Connell, 2010; Giroux, 2004; Luxton, 2010; Read, 2009).

Other varying labels for neoliberalism exist in the literature; it is understood as a political, economic, and social project and agenda (Connell, 2010), as well as simply a form of market capitalism (Giroux, 2004). While there may not be a specific consensus on the ‘essence’ of neoliberalism, the literature by critical social science scholars seems to agree that it operates to protect and promote free market capitalism and reduce social welfare state expenditure, and to reorient broad social values and thinking to legitimize these logics and social policies.

A brief overview of the historical development of neoliberalism.

Hackworth & Moriah (2006) state that economists Milton Friedman and Friedrich Hayek were leaders of neoliberal economic policy development, particularly in the 1960s. Harvey (2005) elaborates that Chile was the world’s first attempt at a ‘neoliberal state’ in 1973, following Pinochet’s coup. Economists from the ‘Chicago School’ of economics, most notably Friedman, developed the “neoliberal” economic policy Chile would be forced to adopt (Harvey, 2005).

Harvey explains that in the Global North, the United States and the United Kingdom would formally and vigorously take up neoliberalism in the 1980s under the leadership of Ronald Reagan and Margaret Thatcher, heralding in an era of

neoliberal policy development around the world (Harvey, 2005). Connell somewhat challenges this view in her chapter of *Neoliberalism in Everyday Life*, arguing that the take-up of neoliberalism was not a unilateral “process [...] that arises internally within the global metropole and is then exported to the rest of the world” (p. 30). Rather, she argues that the development of neoliberalism is characterised by its relationship between the global “metropole and periphery” (p. 30). She points to the policy-making of the IMF & World Bank, and Chile’s first foray into neoliberal policy, as examples of the imperial quality of the development of neoliberalism (Connell, 2010).

Canada.

Canada’s take up of neoliberal policy is uneven, but there are significant points in history which authors have identified as crucial for understanding the trajectory of Canadian neoliberalism. Canada signed major free trade agreements in 1989 and 1994, which Carroll (2005) argues “placed downward pressure on the social standards of Canada’s welfare state” (p. 15). Mulroney’s federal Conservative government tentatively took up neoliberal policy in the early 1990s, but the Liberal federal government of the mid-1990s were the first to significantly take-up neoliberalism (McBride, 2005). Jean Chretien’s Liberal government implemented significant cuts to spending to achieve a balanced budget, and did not pursue tax increases (McBride, 2005). Notably, the federal government also devolved responsibility for programs such as social assistance, post-secondary education, and health with the development of the Canada Health and Social

Transfer. However, federal funding transfers to provinces declined in numerous areas, producing a major funding ‘squeeze’ for provinces (McBride, 2005). This was managed in various ways by provinces, but generally entailed a take-up of further neoliberal policy at the provincial/territorial level.

Throughout the 1990s, various provincial governments also took up neoliberal policy approaches (Carroll, 2005; Graefe, 2005; Hackworth & Moriah, 2006). The provincial governments made now-familiar moves such as privatization of services (Glor, 2001), and cutting social service spending (Carroll, 2005; Graefe, 2005; Luxton, 2010). Ontario adopted neoliberalism upon the election of Conservative premier Mike Harris in 1995 (Hackworth & Moriah, 2006; Luxton, 2010). Mike Harris campaigned with a slogan of a “Common Sense Revolution” (Keil, 2002), which involved deep public sector cuts, restructuring, and completely pulling out of non-profit public housing (Hackworth & Moriah, 2006; Keil, 2002, p. 579).

As an example, La Rose (2009) presents a study of a community-based research project which studied the perspectives of Ontario child welfare workers who went on strike in 2000. In the 1990s, the child welfare sector changed significantly; the general understandings of child abuse were expanded, a need for broader and better child welfare resources were identified, and ultimately services were reduced due to funding cuts to the social welfare programs (La Rose, 2009, p. 231). Child welfare workers upset with these changes went on strike for six weeks in 2000 to oppose neoliberal changes to their work and working conditions.

While meaningful gains were won, the neoliberal changes of the 1990s have generally continued, and as La Rose writes “Workers were told the changes were “service improvements” and “good for clients,” yet workers were not witnessing these outcomes” (La Rose, 2009, p. 231). Workers themselves were feeling “high stress and low morale” (La Rose, 2009, p. 231) at the pace and intensity of the neoliberal changes to their work.

Understanding the uptake of neoliberalism in Canada, particularly in terms of its effect on the social services, is assisted by taking a deeper look at the literature on New Public Management.

New public management.

New Public Management (NPM) is an institutional management approach which became prominent first in Anglo-Saxon countries, and eventually globally, in the 1980s and onwards (Aucoin, 1995). It has been argued that NPM has been used to operationalize neoliberal goals in the public sector, including in the social services (Griffith & Smith, 2014, p. 6), and that it supports the shaping of the public sector with the values and structures of the private sector (Connell, 2010). Dawson & Dargie (2002) explain that NPM can be understood in three ways: as a movement backed by a certain ideology; as a topic for academic study; and as specific types of public management reform (p. 34). While it constitutes somewhat of a “slippery label” due to its many meanings (Dunleavy, Margetts, Bastow, & Tinkler, 2006, p. 468) there are some baseline agreements in the social services/public policy literature about the attributes of NPM.

According to the literature, NPM typically involves: a restructuring of social service organizations and provision, usually characterized by decentralization; organizing policy and practice around principles of competition or ones adopted from business discourses; orienting work to goals of fiscal and service accountability & efficiency; and utilizing information technologies to track progress of mainly quantitative measures of success (Aucoin, 1995; Baines, 2004; Fast & Rankin, 2017; Gillingham & Graham, 2016; Glor, 2001; Griffith & Smith, 2014; Schedler & Proeller, 2002). These attributes are generally viewed in the social services literature as detracting from the value-set and orientation of social work practice, and reorganizing work away from accordance with values such as social justice and equity (Arellano-Gault, 2010; Baines, 2004), and practice approaches such as service-user-worker relationship-building, and client-centered approaches (Baines, 2004; Gillingham & Graham, 2016; Janz, Nichols, Ridzi, & McCoy, 2014).

NPM in Canada.

The literature on the historical uptake of NPM in Canada is quite clear. Mulroney's federal government began to implement NPM in the mid-to late-eighties. However, the federal Liberal government of the nineties and early 2000s continued to take up NPM approaches to the public sector, including social services, in an attempt to reduce the deficit and reform the public service (Borins, 2002; Glor, 2001). This mirrors the timeline of neoliberal policy uptake described above. Provincially, Baines (2004) states that NPM was taken up in Alberta in

1993, and less formal versions in B.C. and Nova Scotia in 2001 and 1999 respectively. Glor (2001) notes that at the time of her writing, Ontario, Manitoba, in addition to Alberta, had taken up NPM the most fully.

Persistence of NPM-A contested notion.

Disagreements in the critical discourse on NPM in social service provision emerges when it comes to the question of whether NPM is still relevant and operating in the 21st century. This may seem perplexing, because the academic literature on NPM cited directly above spans from 2001 to present. However, in 2006, scholars from the London School of Economics and Oxford University published an article boldly entitled “New Public Management is Dead-Long Live Digital-Era Governance” (Dunleavy, et al., 2006). In their article, they analyze the status of over 30 attributes of NPM in “Leading-Edge Countries” (the United States, United Kingdom, New Zealand, Australia, Canada, and Netherlands) such as de-professionalization and outsourcing. They determined that the major attributes of NPM were generally no longer relevant to public service management in those jurisdictions (Dunleavy et al., 2006). Their comprehensive analysis is compelling and clear (for example, see Dunleavy et al., 2006, p. 471), but their overall argument is slightly more nuanced than the title suggests. They write that:

This [NPM’s] cognitive and reform schema is still afloat, and a minority of its elements are still actively developing. But key parts of the NPM reform

message have been reversed because they lead to policy disasters, and other large parts are stalled. (Dunleavy et al., 2006, p. 468)

In their article, they also clarify that some jurisdictions which did not take up NPM as early as the “Leading-edge countries” are still adopting and actively using NPM (Dunleavy et al., 2006, p. 468). The theme that NPM is no longer the dominant public policy managerial style is taken up in various degrees in the literature. ‘Post-NPM’ approaches are examined (Bryson, Crosby, & Bloomberg, 2014; Dunleavy et al., 2006; Reiter & Klenk, 2019), and the social services is identified as a sector where the discourse on post-NPM is particularly prominent in the UK context (Reiter & Klenk, 2019, p. 17).

Caffrey, Ferlie, & McKevitt (2019) offer a counterpoint to Dunleavy and colleagues (2006), with a case study of a research branch of the UK’s National Health Service, where they determine NPM is still the guiding orientation of organization. Griffith & Smith (2014) and Fast & Rankin (2017) have produced recent empirical analyses, in the form of institutional ethnographies, that demonstrate the role of NPM in organizing work in the public and non-profit sector in Canada and the U.S. This disagreement in the literature cannot be readily resolved, but the research suggests that while other public management and governing approaches have sprung forward in reaction to issues with NPM, in some jurisdictions or facets of the public sphere, NPM remains a relevant force.

Stance and organization of knowledge: neoliberalism and NPM literature.

The critical social science research on neoliberalism and NPM reviewed above generally are not produced from a stance with an empirical location in an institution. Researchers are mostly producing knowledge about what neoliberalism and NPM are, and *what* they ‘do’. There are some exceptions-some authors (Griffith & Smith, 2014) take up empirical approaches and are interested in making visible *how* various social outcomes are produced. The ongoing critical trend in the literature suggests that this knowledge about neoliberalism and NPM is produced in an interest of drawing attention to the issues and injustices they have identified with these approaches/theories.

The research on NPM, and its contested dominance in public management is thought-provoking-while the source ideas and principles of NPM can be traced (Aucoin, 1995), in some ways whether it is still considered hegemonic depends on how scholars are defining it as they analyze its prevalence (for example, Caffrey, 2019; Dunleavy et al., 2006).

Neoliberalism and Social Work Values, Policy, and Practice

The general implications of hegemonic neoliberalism (and inconsistent NPM) for the social welfare state based on the characteristics outlined above are rather obvious. A slimming down of the social welfare state by reducing funding, eligibility, programs themselves, or a myriad of other ways are par for the course, as will be explored in the literature more thoroughly below. Some researchers

have also investigated how neoliberal ideology may be shaping and altering values within social work and the social welfare state itself (Baines, 2010; Mearns, 2014; Rossiter & Heron, 2011).

Rossiter & Heron (2011) critiqued the Canadian Council of Social Work Regulators (CCSWR) for their move to create a list of social work competencies—they argue that this is likely motivated by a need to facilitate labour mobility, so as to adhere to a trade agreement. After providing examples of some of the competencies proposed by the CCSWR (p. 307), Rossiter and Heron (2011) argue that reducing the profession to a list of competencies erases the unquantifiable interpersonal and relationship-building aspect of the work, room for reflexivity on the part of the social worker, or to challenge power differences within or outside the social worker-service user relationship (p. 307-309). This is, as they say “an erosion of values” (p. 307) within social work practice.

Using a critical discourse analysis of an agenda document regarding the social welfare state, George Mearns (2014) levies a similar critique at ‘social care’ in the UK. He explains that the terms ‘choice’ and ‘independence’ are used to discursively construct the values of the incoming social care system in a manner that amounts to market-based competition and individualism (p. 229). These, he argues, are incompatible with social work’s social justice values (p. 229). Donna Baines has noted that social workers being interviewed in 2010 had significantly fewer aspirations for meaningful changes in service delivery than social workers she had interviewed with a similar question at the beginning of the onset of

neoliberal policy change (Baines, 2010). This suggests that the proliferation of neoliberal social policy, and the challenges it has posed for service delivery, has somewhat eroded the ‘social work imagination’ for making transformational social change through their work. This theme resonates with literature discussed earlier which emphasizes the social and cultural transformation, including that of social values, which underpins neoliberalism (Connell, 2010; Giroux, 2004; Luxton, 2010; Read, 2009).

Linking neoliberalism to contemporary social services delivery and social policy.

Over the past twenty years, social work researchers have sought to explore how the terrain of social work and social services broadly have changed along with the changes to policy direction and ideology. Their research largely looks at social workers in the public sector working for government social services, and community-based non-profits, which generally obtain their funding from a combination of government grants or contracts, and private philanthropic grants & donations. Recurring themes regarding how neoliberalism, NPM or perhaps other social and political forces are shaping social work organizations and practice can be identified.

Organizational changes and restructuring.

A subset of the literature investigates or documents how the structure of social service organizations appears to be shifting. Aronson & Sammon (2000) interviewed 14 social workers in Southern Ontario a few years into the uptake of

NPM and neoliberalism, and recorded their observations about the reshaping of organizations and practice. Their participants described how funding cuts and reductions to social work departments was accompanied by a narrowing and acceleration of practice (being compelled to do less with each service-user, and see more service-users). It was noted that this led to a higher fragmentation of practice, where social workers needed to refer service-users to other organizations or departments to have their needs more fully met (Aronson & Sammon, 2000, p. 171-173). Welbourne (2011) discusses restructuring of health and social services in the British context in their article, and explores the move to have service-users become their own care-managers and purchasers of services, as opposed to this work being mediated by a social worker (p. 407). The article explores how for vulnerable adults who require some support, this can be empowering. However, reducing the amount of social work and social services support for service-users “[reduces the] scope for empowering people through exploration of the complex social, psychological, economic and medical factors that impinge on their lives” (p. 408) and may leave them without support when it is needed. This case of restructuring presents opportunities for service-users, if guided by the appropriate principles as opposed to a motivation to cut costs.

A trend which appears in the literature to accompany narrowing and fragmentation of social services is an increase in the use of standardized assessments, reporting, and/or information technology to organize work and track primarily quantitative data about service-users (Eakin & Richmond, 2005;

Hackworth & Moriah, 2006; Scott, 2003; Welbourne, 2011). Welbourne (2011) discusses how an Information and Communications Technology (ICT) system was adopted in the British child welfare system. While an ICT system is not an inherently negative element of an organization, its use may increase the time workers spend entering data, and they may make social work practice inflexible due to the standardized nature of practice their use prescribes (Welbourne, 2011). A study of Ontario public housing heard from research participants that upon the decentralization of the provincial housing system to 47 local organizations, the amount of paperwork increased and 75% of the respondents found that management in the system was more difficult (Hackworth & Moriah, 2006). The literature suggests that the time social workers and social service workers spend doing paperwork or using IT systems has increased since neoliberal restructuring in the sector (Eakin & Richmond, 2005; Hackworth & Moriah, 2006; Scott, 2003; Welbourne, 2011).

A nuance in the literature on how the social services have fared in the take-up of neoliberalism is in regards to the difference between government social service organizations, and community-based non-profit organizations. While community-based non profits may appear to have more independence from government policy and management trends such as NPM, their dependence on government funding places a restriction on that freedom. Community-based organizations have experienced a funding shift from largely multi-year government grants to shorter, contract-based funding for providing specific

services-needless to say, that does not generally include advocacy (Eakin & Richmond, 2005). Precarious funding in community non-profits can also be linked to high turnover and lower pay for workers in those settings (Eakin & Richmond, 2005).

Advocacy and Activism.

Researchers have explored how the performance of advocacy and activism by social service organizations and their employees may be shifting in the neoliberal era. Organizations may be concerned that speaking out against government policy decisions, or to bring attention to an injustice may put their limited funding in jeopardy-this withdrawal from advocacy is labelled as ‘advocacy chill’ in the literature (Eakin & Richmond, 2005; Scott, 2003). Carniol (2010) also describes workers being discouraged from undertaking advocacy on behalf of their clients for fear of funding becoming threatened. Barnoff, George, & Coleman (2006) spoke to Ontario social workers in their study on implementing AOP in social service organizations, and found that organizations were largely in “survival mode” (p. 45) and did not have the time or resources to utilize a critical, social change-based approach such as AOP.

Social Work Labour Issues in the Neoliberal Era

The academic and grey literature discusses the state of social work and social service work labour conditions, with special attention to how it has shifted over the past 20+ years. In terms of grey literature, the Canadian Union for Public

Employees (CUPE), who represents numerous groups of social service and social workers throughout Ontario, published a backgrounder report on Overwork in 2014. They link social service overwork to inadequate funding for the sector, and go as far as to say, “In almost all cases, the consequences of re-organization, restructuring, downsizing and contracting out are increasing workloads and a corresponding rise in injuries and stress” (p. 3). CUPE does not point to specific empirical data to explain or support this finding.

Other relevant grey literature includes the Ontario Association of Social Workers (OASW) 2018 report, based on data they collected from a survey of their members in 2017. Among their findings are workload statistics, which found that 33.1% of respondents would describe their workload as overwhelming, and another 34.6% would describe it as unpredictable (p. 23). The issues which participants identified as “the top issues negatively impacting job satisfaction” were “salary level, insufficient resources, increased documentation, volume of work, [and] lack of social work supervision” (p. 24). The discrepancy between government social services and non-profit organizations were illustrated in the findings as well, with social workers in community multi-service agencies ranking the lowest in satisfaction with salary, their current position, and their career (p. 22). Notably, social workers in this sector ranked their satisfaction with their current salary on average as under 5.3/10 (p. 22).

Emotional labour and workplace stress.

Social workers have reported an increase in emotional labour required to do their work in settings where austerity has increased in the social services (Aronson & Sammon, 2000; Grootegoed & Smith, 2018). In a Scottish social services context, themes of worker frustration, emotional distancing, guilt, and ethical stress came forward when social worker research participants were asked to respond to vignettes where social workers did not have adequate access to resources service-users needed (Grootegoed & Smith, 2018). Additionally, Baines, MacKenzie Davis & Saini (2009) used OASW survey data to assess social work working conditions in Ontario and found that 63% of respondents reported feeling workplace stress. Participants listed various effects of workplace stress including “effects on family and social life [...], feelings of depression [and] frequent illness” (Baines et al., 2009, p. 65-66).

Wages.

A theme of low wages or salaries for social workers and social service workers was also present in the literature (Baines et al., 2009; Cunningham, Baines & Shields, 2017). Cunningham et al. (2017) reported that most workers in their study regarding work in large-scale non-profits desired a pay increase to simply “make ends meet” (p. 378). The 2018 OASW report found that social workers surveyed reported that their salary level was a top issue negatively impacting job satisfaction (p. 24). This also extends to concerns regarding inadequate overtime pay, as the report states that: “Salary and workload

manageability appear to be connected as social workers commented on the need for increased compensation, through overtime pay, for extra time spent on their work” (p. 25).

Stance and organization of knowledge: social service organizations and labour conditions literature.

Grey literature from unions or associations may produce knowledge differently than academic literature. Their stance is located in the union-not necessarily empirically located at the everyday level of the work of their members, but it is interested in making visible the perspectives and experiences of its members. The goals of a union or association leadership are to advocate for and produce positive change in the labour conditions or wages of their membership. Knowledge they produce is organized by a worker/labour location in their workplaces, and oriented towards to furthering their interests.

The academic literature in the area of organizational restructuring and social work labour issues mainly produces knowledge about the perspectives of those doing the everyday work of social workers and social service workers. The research focus of these studies is not on the social relations producing the labour issues (for example, Aronson & Sammon, 2000; Baines et al., 2009), but rather on the perceived impacts of them, as expertly known by those who experience them. Additionally, some of the researchers turn their gaze towards discourses (Mearns, 2014). The critical orientation of the knowledge produced in this area suggests that like union and association research, this research is produced with the

intention of shedding light on issues with current social conditions, and perhaps to support policy-oriented recommendations for change.

Social Work Response

Within the literature on social work in a neoliberal context is a theme of examining how social workers have responded to the changing circumstances of their work. Social workers are commonly drawn to the profession out of a desire to work according to their values, beliefs, or politics (Baines, 2010). Scholars have examined how social workers have ‘pushed back’ against policies or expectations stemming from neoliberal constraints which limit their capacity to work according to their values; this discourse includes discussion of social work resistance (Smith, 2007), deviant social work (Carey & Foster, 2011), activism in social work practice (Grootegoed & Smith, 2018), and the uptake of social unionism (Baines 2010). Smith’s (2007) research into how workers resist in the “restructured social work agency” (p. 152) characterizes the strategies as hidden, and include using “stealth social work practices [and] hidden and transitory coalitions” (p. 152). These hidden or “underground” (Smith, 2007, p. 145) strategies are explained to be taken up instead of more traditional, direct strategies for resistance because these direct measures are now typically accompanied by threats of punitive actions from their employer.

This complexity regarding how to respond to institutional changes is captured in Grootegoed and Smith’s (2018) findings, where some social workers

in neoliberal settings interviewed tried to fight against changes, and were disappointed with the lack of political activism of their organizations, but ultimately ended up ‘giving in’ to the changes because the activism was often “exhausting” (p. 1939). Participants described taking up advocacy on behalf of one service-user at a time, and making an emotions-based argument to supervisors-this strategy could be effective, but inconsistently applied across service-user cases (Grootegoed & Smith, 2018).

In Carey and Foster’s (2011) research, they also documented cases of mostly individual ‘push-back’ by workers as they sought to conceptually locate ‘deviant social work’. Some of their respondents participated in deviant actions in their work because they disagreed with the formal policy or practice guidelines (for example, encouraging service-users to lie on assessments to obtain more resources from the organization, or spending more time with service-users than is allotted) (p. 587-588).

Alternatively, Baines (2010) studied how some community social service workers responded to fewer opportunities for input in their work and participation in the community by taking a collective approach and unionizing-in Canada, there was an uptick of unionization in the community social services beginning in the late 1990s and continuing into the 2000s (Haiven, 2000; Statistics Canada 2003, 2007, as cited in Baines, 2010, p. 18). Based on her findings from interviews with social service workers, Baines writes that:

In short, unions themselves, and more broadly social union activism, seemed to emerge from three forces: the workers' commitment to social justice, the impacts of neoliberalism on opportunities for social change efforts within the context of their agencies, and the negative impacts of neoliberalism on the communities they served. (p. 19)

Whether conceptualized as individual or collective resistance, activism, or deviance, the research into social worker actions against neoliberal policy agree that these actions are underpinned by a commitment to practicing according to a set of personal values.

Overtime.

Researchers have produced literature about overtime work on the part of social workers in a neoliberal policy and restructuring context (Aronson & Sammon, 2000; Baines, 2004; Baines et al., 2009). Baines et al. (2009) reported the stunning figure that 71% of respondents in a survey of Ontario social workers 'donated' one to six hours of work at their job per day. Social workers in this study reported feeling that their only option was to work overtime to ensure their service-users received adequate services. However, overtime hours were generally not permitted or were discouraged, so their additional work hours were not reported, and nor were they compensated (Baines et al., 2009, p. 65). The trend of performance of unpaid overtime in social work goes back at least to the year 2000, when Aronson and Sammon (2000) also reported that many of their participants were engaging in unpaid overtime (p. 180).

Donna Baines' (2004) article "Caring for Nothing: Work organization and unwaged labour in social services" is perhaps the most thorough examination of the topic of unpaid overtime work for social workers and social service workers in Canada. This article uses data collected from qualitative interviews with 83 frontline public and non-profit sector social service workers (Baines, 2004, p. 268-270). A major theme in this article relates to the complexity of social workers taking-up unpaid overtime work in NPM and restructured workplaces. Social workers in this study want to work according to their values-Baines states that "a sense of social obligation and moral outrage is visible" in their interviews (p. 285), and social workers being guided by values is explored thoroughly in the literature and in this review (for example, Baines, 2010). However, Baines (2004) notes that

In the course of this resistance [performing overtime work to practice in a manner aligned with their values] they inadvertently provided a subsidy to the social services system they disliked, and increased their own rate of exploitation, but simultaneously provided them-selves with a space in which they could operate with a sense of integrity and moral conviction.
(p. 284)

Social workers in this study use unpaid overtime work to resist restructuring, narrowing service eligibility, or other practice changes, but Baines' analysis highlights how this strategy is also contradictory (Baines, 2004).

Another theme in Baines' (2004) article is her conceptualization of a compulsion-coercion continuum of volunteering at work in the social services. Baines characterizes coerced unwaged work as work undertaken when there is a threat of job or education loss for refusing. Compelled volunteering, on the other hand, occurs when "workers [...] feel persuaded by their own or other people's moral standards or pressure. In other words, with compulsion, the threat (explicit or implied) is to one's identity or the sense of one's self as a good person" (p. 286). People who undertake unpaid additional work at a social service organization can fall anywhere on this spectrum between compelled and coerced, with variables such as their full-time work status, their educational background, their economic stability, and their identity all possibly playing a role in that work (Baines, 2004, p. 287).

Stance and organization of knowledge: social work response and unpaid overtime.

Researchers on this topic adopt a critical stance, which does not have a particular empirical location in an institution from where the social relations of the institution are analyzed. Instead, researchers are mainly interested in the ideas and experiences of social workers. An obvious trend in the knowledge produced in this area of research is the creation of concepts and quasi-theorizing in the analysis of researchers. Explanatory concepts (for example, the compulsion-coercion continuum, notions of deviant social work or underground best practices) are abstracted from participant accounts of their actions and their perspectives.

While these may be generally useful concepts for organizing experiences and understanding the perspectives of social workers performing overtime, it is important in an IE project to avoid importing these concepts into the research design; to start with a concept is the opposite of starting in everyday experience, as IE asks researchers to do (Campbell & Gregor, 2008).

Gaps in the social work labour literature.

The social work labour literature from neoliberal and NPM jurisdictions provides rich interpretive, qualitative data capturing the perspectives of those who have worked in the very settings which are in flux due to policy, funding, and value changes. However, there appears to be a lack of empirical data regarding social work workplaces and labour issues, and broad quantitative data collection from organizations such as the OASW occurs once in a span of several years. This data would provide a useful context and grounding for the rich qualitative data that has been collected and analysed since the beginning of neoliberal and NPM changes to the social services.

While attention has been paid to the overtime work of social workers by researchers, there is also a notable lack of recent statistics or empirical analysis regarding the performance of unpaid overtime, as well as general nuance in the types of organizations or work settings unpaid overtime is occurring (if some and not others). Additionally, there is a severe lack of labour data and analysis regarding whether social workers of different social

group memberships perform different amounts of unpaid overtime. There is attention paid to social identity and exclusion in the general labour force data (for example, Lightman & Gingrich, 2013) and in research regarding service-user's access and experience of social work (for example, see Baines, 2002). However, in the social work labour research, the impact of race, sexual orientation, history of immigration, and disability are not generally explored in relation to unpaid overtime work.

Conclusion

Social work and the social services have experienced a significant shift throughout the past 20+ years, mirroring the changes occurring politically, economically, and socially worldwide. The hegemonic character of neoliberalism, and to a lesser degree NPM, makes understanding the character of these two theories critical for studying social work labour and social service organizations. Researchers have undertaken a broad array of research approaches to investigate the contemporary neoliberal context and its repercussions for social work labour, with special attention to social worker perspectives on their work.

Generally speaking, the knowledge produced in the literature in this review is of the perspectives, ideas, and activities of social workers/social service workers who are working in contemporary neoliberal contexts. This knowledge, as well as the broader analyses of neoliberalism and NPM reviewed above were produced to explain what neoliberalism and NPM are, and what it is like to live

and work in systems organized by them. Few researchers take up a specific standpoint in an institution with which to study labour conditions or neoliberal restructuring. In the organizational, labour, and overtime literature, the research gaze is largely not focused on the social organization of the situation—a gap which this inquiry is interested in helping fill. As anticipated in critical social science research, the general orientation of the literature suggests that research knowledge is being produced in the interest of uncovering injustice and using this awareness to create change.

This chapter has reviewed the literature—with an emphasis on research conducted from a critical social science standpoint—to synthesize the contemporary discourses, thematic trends, and historical development in the areas of neoliberalism, NPM, and social work restructuring, labour issues, and response. While the literature offers an array of ideas and perspectives on these issues, gaps exist in the research and data available. More empirical research on labour experiences of social workers & social service workers, and quantitative data regarding issues such as unpaid overtime would help with the framing and contextualization of the rich qualitative data which exists. Additionally, the existing literature does not thoroughly explore how the social identities of social workers (beyond gender and age) may be related to their labour experiences, such as the performance of unpaid overtime, in a neoliberal social services context.

Chapter Four: Methodology

Careful selection and planning of a research project methodology is critical for undertaking valid, consistent, and useful research findings and knowledge. This chapter will outline the methodological framework of the thesis, and includes sub-sections regarding an overview of IE methodology, the IE concept of Problematic, the research methods used in this study, how data was analysed for this study, and an evaluation of this methodology.

Methodology of Institutional Ethnography: An Overview

As discussed in the Theoretical Framework in chapter three, this inquiry uses institutional ethnography as a guiding theoretical perspective. However, using IE also has specific implications for the methodology of a research project. In IE, researchers are seeking to empirically trace ruling relations which are organizing a given everyday experience (Smith, 1987, p. 50). Therefore, the researcher is seeking data regarding social organization, and not interpretive data from research participants (Campbell & Gregor, 2008). Different IE projects accomplish this in different manners, but they are all ultimately trying to do the same thing: produce an ethnographic description of institutional relations which uncovers the relevant social organization. Depending on the context, different types of data collection may be useful. Common data collection methods include qualitative interviews, observation, and textual analysis (Campbell & Gregor, 2008). Researchers can take up any data collection method which allows them to

see the social relations (mediated through a text, or not) of a setting, and the relevant ones which extend beyond the local.

Research design is typically somewhat emergent in IE (Campbell & Gregor, 2008), as it is impossible to fully predict from the beginning where tracing the social organization of a setting will lead, or what methods will be needed to find out about it. Researchers use some of the methods listed above to find out from the standpoint informant, who is an expert at the social relations in their local setting or from their own observation, *what actually happens* (Campbell & Gregor, 2008). To understand the textual mediation of social relations, they may analyse examples of texts from the social setting, and talk with those who use them about how they get taken up.

There are two major stages of data collection and analysis in IE (Campbell & Gregor, 2008). The first stage is data collection and analysis about the local setting, the local social relations, and generally what is happening “there” (Campbell & Gregor, 2008). Marie Campbell and Fran Gregor (2008) explain this stage of the research process:

Entry-level data is about the local setting, the individuals that interact there and their experiences. The research goal is to explicate that account [...] Others in the same, or similar settings, will have their own stories that relate to Jan’s experience [the example case] in some way. While we

would not expect their experiences to be the same [...] they will be about similarly related phenomenon (p. 60).

The second stage of research seeks to explicitly uncover ruling relations, which involves tracing social relations that extend outside of the local (Campbell & Gregor, 2008). There is only time to complete the first stage of research, so this project is a partial IE, not a full one. The analytic goal, as implied above, is to formulate a research problematic, or to “make problematic what is ordinarily taken for granted in the reported experiences-that is, how these particular things happen as they do” (Campbell & Gregor, 2008, p. 60).

Defining the Problematic

The research problematic is characterised in a number of ways throughout the IE literature; synthesizing these explanations and definitions provides a holistic understanding of what exactly the term refers to and what is meant when IE researchers write about “the problematic”. In *The Everyday World as Problematic*, Smith (1987) writes that a problematic is “a topic for inquiry” (p. 98). In essence, ‘problematic’ refers to ‘what is being studied’ within the institutional ethnography. However, one way IE as an alternate sociology veers away from the mainstream, is in its selection of problematics/topics for inquiry and its commitment to studying the everyday (Smith, 1987). In IE, our everyday lives are material, occurring in time, in actual physical locations, in tandem with the everyday lives of others. Therefore, an IE problematic-or the topic for

inquiry-is a moment in life which is material, occurring in time, in an actual place, and is coordinated with the everyday lives of others (Smith, 1987).

IE inquiry typically studies moments in everyday life where a disjuncture is present. 'Disjuncture' here refers to a separation, or disconnection between the everyday life as lived (as discussed above), and "the forms of thought, the symbols, images, vocabularies, concepts, frames of reference, [and] institutionalized structures of relevance" regarding that everyday life (Smith, 1987, p. 49-50). This disjuncture is where a bifurcation of consciousness, discussed in chapter two, occurs. There is a contradiction between what someone knows institutionally about a certain aspect of their everyday life or work, and what they know about it from their embodied experience in the local setting (Smith, 1987, p. 50). These disjunctures, or the dissonance of knowledges is a sign that extralocal social relations are present in and organizing the local. Selecting a moment of disjuncture from everyday life as a problematic/research topic is strategic because not only do disjunctures tend to cause troubles for those in the local setting, making them a salient social science research topic, but the disjuncture is a point from which to begin to "see" the ruling relations in the local.

For any given everyday experience, there may be numerous people involved who occupy different standpoints within an institution of social relations. For example, a common everyday experience in a social service organization may involve a service-user, a frontline worker, and a manager. Due to their different standpoints within the institution, the service user, frontline worker, and manager

would all have different knowledge about the same everyday experience-their subjectivities are shaped by their location in the institution (Rankin, 2017a, p. 2). An IE researcher could choose any of their standpoints as a place to develop a problematic, but must remain committed to conducting inquiry from one standpoint. It is common-practice to collect information about the social relations of the problematic from people who do not occupy the standpoint adopted for research; however that cannot extend to formulating and understanding the problematic according to their knowledge about the everyday experience being studied or else the inquiry will be examining multiple ruling relations which operate and organize differently (which would constitute separate IEs).

Role of the problematic.

In her pair of articles for IE novices, Janet Rankin (2017a; 2017b) stresses that a problematic serves as a methodological tool for the IE inquiry. She characterizes the process of formulating a problematic as “to elaborate these as the puzzles to be explicated” (Rankin, 2017b, p. 3). She also emphasizes the importance of formulating a clear problematic to begin the IE inquiry (2017a). On a basic level, having a clearly outlined problematic is a useful tool for staying focused on explicating one ‘puzzle’ throughout the data collection and analysis process.

Considering the problematic as ‘topic for inquiry’, ‘everyday life’, ‘disjuncture’, and ‘at a standpoint’ together reveals how the problematic can also provide methodological guidance for the IE researcher. The IE inquiry is

interested in the moment in everyday life and an empirical explication of how it comes to occur in the manner it does (McCoy, 2006). The research gaze must never slip from explicating the problematic and the relevant ruling relations-that is, from the social relations taken up by people, and not the people themselves. Liza McCoy (2005) refers to this as “analytic drift” (p. 109). In addition, the problematic which occurs at a standpoint provides helpful methodological direction. Campbell and Gregor (2008) present “the notion of problematic [as also helping] the institutional ethnographer identify her own stance in relation to the inquiry-as opposed to methodologically removing herself from it” (p. 46). To ‘methodologically remove oneself’ from the IE inquiry, or to consider the researcher as an objective viewer of a moment of life who thus knows the objective ‘truth’ about the given topic would not achieve the purpose of IE.

This thesis originally sought to formulate a problematic-an account of a topic for research of an everyday experience where a disjuncture is present-regarding the experience of social workers working overtime in non-profit social services. This thesis will also identify possible ‘threads’ of ruling relations-or social relations where organization is visible. While not a full IE, this is a manageable piece of IE inquiry which constitutes a ‘first step’ in an entire project. The methods used to collect data and analyze it to formulate the problematic, and how the study shifted after collecting and analyzing the data are explained in the following sections.

Methods

To formulate a problematic, information was collected from research participants who knew about the relevant local setting and the experience of interest to this study. Participants in this study had to be social workers who were registered in the Ontario College of Social Workers, and who worked in a non-profit social service organizations (NPSS). Ideally, social workers would be employed in community-based non-profits, although those working in public organizations were also eligible. Participants had to be employed by an NPSS organization for at least six months in the past two years, and had to be working unpaid overtime there on a regular basis. Participants also had to identify as an activist, or someone who participated in activism-this definition could be broadly interpreted, and could include someone who undertook social justice work, or were committed to working according to a set of social justice principles. This study sought three to five participants, and ultimately interviewed three participants-two were social workers in employed in public social service organizations, and one was employed in a community non-profit. Ethical approval for this study was obtained from the McMsster Research Ethics Board.

Recruitment occurred through a number of channels. A recruitment email was sent to McMaster School of Social Work alumni on two occasions. Posters with information about the study were posted in visible public areas in a mid-sized southern Ontario city. People in the School of Social Work, including professors, and student peers, forwarded information about the study to people

they knew personally or through their employment who may be interested and eligible in the study. Interested people contacted the researcher, answered the screening questions, and if successful, met with the researcher to sign the Letter of Information and Consent and participant in an interview.

The interviews were qualitative, 35-50 minutes long, and conducted on a one-on-one basis between the researcher and the participant. Two took place in person, and one occurred over Skype. Interviews were recorded with an audio recorder and the researcher took additional hand-written notes throughout the interview. Participants also had the option to write a list of their work tasks and responsibilities to provide to the researcher as data about their daily work, which two participants did. The recruitment poster, interview guide, letter of information and consent, and instructions for completing the list of everyday work tasks are included as Appendices A, B, C, and D at the end of this thesis.

Having a small group of standpoint informants/research participants is suitable for IE research (for example, having three people in this study) because the goal of the inquiry is not to determine what a broad group generally thinks, feels, or believes about unpaid overtime based on the data collected from a subsection or sample of the broad group (Campbell & Gregor, 2008). Rather, IE is trying to understand how specific local activities are socially organized, and identify where the same activities are occurring in multiple settings (Campbell & Gregor, 2008). IE researchers are looking for experiences which are “about a similarly organized phenomena” (Campbell & Gregor, 2008, p. 60) of those at the

same standpoint. IE inquiry requires data which is very specific and detailed from fewer people, rather than a broad sample.

Qualitative interviews with primarily open-ended questions were used as a data collection method, because interviews allowed participants to provide as much information as they saw relevant in response, and to include or bring forward topics which they knew were important. As the research participants are seen as the experts about activities in their local setting in IE (Campbell & Gregor, 2008), it was important that the participants be able to determine to some degree what was important to discuss. In accordance with IE methodology, these interviews were not focused on collecting interpretive data from the research participants (Campbell & Gregor, 2008). Rather, they were more interested in knowing what participants know about their work settings, how their work is conducted, and how unpaid overtime occurs in their workplace. These types of questions align with the IE goal of seeking to uncover social organization (Campbell & Gregor, 2008). Questions were focused on the activist identity or social justice orientation of the participants, their daily work tasks, information about their employing organizations, and what their unpaid overtime work looked like. Asking for an account of the regular activities in the organization, particularly the work of these participants (who are standpoint informants), was done to collect data with which to formulate an account of the everyday experience which constitutes an IE problematic.

A Change in plans.

In my initial research plan for this study, I focused on discovering how a socially organized identity or set of values (that of an ‘activist’, or someone committed to social justice work) was coordinating the performance of unpaid overtime work for social workers. As this identity or set of values could feasibly be organizing the work of social workers in any type of position or field, I did not specify any one type of work, other than ensuring the organizations employing the workers were non-profit (community-based non-profit organizations or non-profit government social services). However, what I found speaking to three social workers who identified with being an activist or being committed to doing social justice work was that their unpaid overtime was more complex and intertwined with other social relations than I imagined. It did not seem useful, or perhaps even possible to look only to the potential ruling relations of activist identity in organizing the outcome I was interested in, and even if that remained the focus of the study, identifying the substantive local social relations of activist identity coordinating unpaid overtime was not possible with the data I was able to collect.

What I did find, was that the research participants provided rich information about numerous other local social relations coordinating their unpaid overtime work, and in the spirit of IE, I shifted my research gaze to look at what was tangibly ‘going on’. Examining how an activist or social justice orientation may be coordinating unpaid overtime has still been included in the analysis of this study; what could be discovered about it is discussed in the analysis. While this

has meant that there are multiple threads of ruling to examine, and possibly numerous problematics opened up for examination in this study while intending to examine only one, the early-IE research in this study contains useful and relevant knowledge for social workers performing unpaid overtime work in Ontario, and provides the data and analysis needed to continue a (or several) full IE study/ies.

Analysis

Organizing the accounts.

Analyzing the data for this research project took on a different form than a more typical thematic analysis of the interview transcripts that qualitative projects often use. A transcriptionist was hired to transcribe the recordings of all three interviews. The transcripts of all three interviews were printed, and first were used, along with the list of work tasks completed by the participants to develop accounts of the local performance of overtime work of each of the research participants. Their descriptions of their work were re-organized and synthesized to produce clear accounts of their experience at their standpoint (described more thoroughly in the following section). In one case, a relatively straightforward ‘day in the life’ account was able to be produced, and in the case of the others, their accounts focused on the parts of their days or weeks which were seemingly most relevant to unpaid overtime work. Producing these accounts was crucial for developing (a) problematic/s, and treating unpaid overtime work like a topic of study.

After drafting the accounts of the three participant's unpaid overtime work, the participants were emailed follow-up questions to help fill in important details for the account, or clarify how they described various components of their work. It was important to ensure the accounts were as factual and empirical as possible, as otherwise the descriptions would be unhelpful abstractions from the material circumstances which is the focus of IE. As IE analysis begins with identifying local social relations, and because social relations are understood to be actual social happenings or events which tie people together (Campbell & Gregor, 2008), understanding 'the actual' of each participant's work is crucial.

Highlighting work, texts, and social relations.

While organizing the findings of the interviews for the accounts, it was important to identify the work, the social relations, and take-up of texts. The portions of the interviews where the participants described using or filling in a text, performing work related to their unpaid overtime work (according to the generous conception of work, explained below), or where social relations were particularly relevant and visible were manually highlighted and noted in the printed transcripts so that they could be included in the accounts in the Findings chapter. The generous conception of work is a notion Smith (2005) developed during her development of IE, and refers to a broader definition of work as anything 'getting done' which requires skill, time, knowledge, thought, and occurs in a specific context (Smith, 2005, p. 151-152). Identifying work, social relations, and the take-up of texts is important while conducting IE research

because they are part of the functioning of contemporary ruling relations, and their presence in a local setting may be a clue or a 'thread' of ruling. Tracing the relations of ruling which organize the local setting according to extralocal social relations is the ultimate goal of institutional ethnography (Smith, 2005).

Indexing.

An understanding of how the local social relations, take-up of texts, and work operate similarly in the three accounts was also sought during the data analysis (Campbell & Gregor, 2008). Identifying the similarities in the accounts is distinct from coding the transcripts for themes. This process in IE is not to identify the similarities between how the participants thought or felt about their overtime work. Instead, the process could be thought about more as an 'indexing' of similar empirical events which occurred in the everyday lives of the participants, as reported in their interviews.

To index the interviews, lists of instances of the use of texts, operation of social relations, and performance of work were written for each interview. Next, the lists were compared for similar or identical experiences, and an index document organized by social relation/text/work categories was written, with passages from the interviews which demonstrate each index category included. As the indexing process continued, more categories were added to the index, as subtle or obvious similarities in the material accounts of participants were identified. The transcripts, and the index were mostly produced manually, by

writing out lists, and reading the transcripts repeatedly to check for similarities or differences.

Using the indexed and organized data, the accounts, and analysis of the Discussion chapter were written. The threads of ruling identified during the analysis process were written up and considered, and where enough detailed information about the social relations of the local setting was garnered (the non-payment of overtime work hours) a comparative diagram was also created. Combined, the accounts and analyses of social relations and potential threads of ruling thoroughly investigate the local occurrence of unpaid overtime work for social workers, providing the information and stance necessary to formulate an IE problematic(s).

Conclusion

Using an IE methodology requires the researcher to take up some specific considerations in their research design, while also requiring a certain degree of improvisation and ongoing adaptation as the shape of the local setting of work, and the available knowledge emerges. In this chapter, the theoretical background to an IE methodology is explored, the methods of this inquiry are discussed, and the data analysis process is explained. How the project shifted after the data collection and initial analysis stage is also discussed. The findings and discussion produced by the processes described in this chapter are reported in the next two chapters of the thesis.

Chapter Five: Findings

This chapter focuses on reporting the findings of the research interviews, lists of work responsibilities, and follow-up questions provided to participants after their interviews conducted for this study. The methodology chapter examined how by seeking to establish a problematic, an IE researcher needs to turn to the everyday material conditions of the scenario or circumstance of interest. To find out about the everyday work and conditions of social workers performing unpaid overtime work in a non-profit organization, I interviewed three social workers who spoke about their firsthand knowledge of working unpaid overtime, their jobs and employing organizations, how they explained ‘choosing’ to do the work and not being paid for it, how doing unpaid overtime over weeks, months, and years felt, and how they related to social justice work or activism. Their accounts of their job, overtime work, knowledge about their overtime and work, and other salient information is presented in this chapter, in the form of three accounts of their everyday. Although each account is organized slightly differently, they all begin with a description of their job and their work. At the end of each account, I apply an IE lens to make visible salient local social relations occurring in each work setting, as well as the work of unpaid overtime undertaken by the participant, as informed by Smith’s generous conception of work (Smith, 2005).

Sarah's Account of Unpaid Overtime

Sarah is a manager of a community-based child welfare unit in a small city in Southern Ontario. She supervises five workers who do frontline child protection work. In her unit, there is also a coverage worker, whose job is to fill in for frontline workers when they have a day off, are off from work because they are sick, or are required to be in court with one of the families they work with. There is also one Unit Assistant who does administrative work for the unit. Sarah is overseen by the Director of the child welfare organization, who supervises all of the unit managers like Sarah. In Sarah's unit, one frontline worker is currently on a medical leave of absence. During a leave of absence in Sarah's organization the worker on leave continues to be paid, but the organization is not provided with additional funding to hire a temporary frontline worker to cover the caseload of the worker on leave. Sarah's organization has been working with one fewer staff for several months, which she calls a case of being 'short staffed'.

Sarah explained that the standard work hours at this organization are 8:30 AM-4:30 PM, but also that they are "flexible". For example, on this day, Sarah arrived to work at the office of her organization before 8:00 AM. She had taken a day off the previous day, and documents were sent to her on her day off from her workers over email which required her approval. She came in to work early to approve the documents which she normally would have approved the day before had she not been off work. Sarah also came in early to answer emails from the

previous day. However, she was also answering certain emails yesterday from home on her day off.

Between 8:30 AM and 10:00 AM, Sarah met with the Unit Assistant in person, she met with one of the frontline workers she supervises regarding one of the families the worker is working with, and she has taken work phonecalls. Between 10:00 and 11:00 Sarah attended another meeting. There are numerous tasks the unit manager must undertake regarding the families the frontline workers are directly working with. The frontline workers are required by the Ontario Child Protection Standards, a provincial policy document, to consult with their unit manager and receive their approval when they plan on following up with a family, and when they are planning to close the family's case file and end their involvement with the family. Frontline workers also consult their unit manager when they are running into problems or would like to seek advice about working with a family. Therefore, Sarah is frequently meeting with the frontline workers about their work and the families they are working with.

Between 11:00 AM and 12:00 PM Sarah had a 'team meeting' which is a staff meeting all of the staff at her unit attend. The meeting was scheduled to take place last week, but it was rescheduled because staff at the unit were busy with the families they work with. From 12:00-1:00 PM, she and her staff were taking a lunch break together at a nearby restaurant. She explained that there were changes in the team, and that they had planned to go to lunch as a team to socialize together. From 1:00 PM onwards, Sarah had a series of meetings, which

were “one after another”. The final meeting was scheduled to begin at 4:00 PM, and Sarah knew it would take at least one hour. She left her office after 5:00PM that day. Sarah receives work emails to her cellphone, and knew from experience that she would be reading emails she received that evening, and answering certain important emails during the evening. While explaining this, Sarah stated that the next day was scheduled to be “fuller”, and she was answering emails in the evening to try to “stay a step ahead”. On this example day, Sarah was at her workplace for over nine hours, including a one-hour lunch break which was used to connect with staff. She also answered emails in the evening. Sarah is paid for 33.75 hours per week, which is 6.75 hours per day for five days a week. Her overtime on this day was at least 1.5 hours. She had also worked the previous day, on her day off.

Other everyday experiences of unpaid overtime.

Child Protection Information Network.

Sarah also described other common scenarios where she would work overtime. In Ontario, the majority of child welfare organizations use a computer system called CPIN (Child Protection Information Network). CPIN is used to record case management information, finances, and to share information about families between child welfare organizations if needed (Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services, 2016a). As a unit manager, Sarah can see the case files of the workers in her unit. The Ministry of Community, Children, and Social Services can also access all of the information in CPIN. If it was decided

by the frontline worker and the manager that the case file of a family will be closed, then there is a deadline established in CPIN by which the frontline worker needs to input the information regarding closing the case, and formally close it on the CPIN system. There are other deadlines in CPIN, such as a deadline for inputting information for a six-month review of a family. If a frontline worker cannot meet a deadline in CPIN for a review, or for case closure, they need to request a departure from their unit manager. The manager needs to approve the request on CPIN before the deadline, otherwise it is marked as a late entry for that worker. The full consequences of having late entries was not discussed in the interview/follow-up questions. Approving departures may be required from a manager on their day off, or in the evening after their day of work, if their staff is working during those times.

Sarah explained that it is common for her workers to work on case notes in the evening or on weekends-she receives emails on her cellphone outside of work notifying her that a worker has requested approval regarding a decision about care for a family, or sent documents such as referrals for services from other organizations to her for her to review and approve. Because the manager has to approve numerous worker activities on CPIN, and the workers submit documents to be approved at various times of day (because of their overtime and “flexible hours” at the organization), Sarah reviews emails from her staff and from CPIN even when she is off work. Sarah does this to try and stay on top of her workload and to ensure her workers do not fall behind.

Social justice and workload.

Sarah also explained that on occasion she and the frontline workers in her unit used their lunch hour to participate in social justice activities. For example, they had recently participated in a demonstration against budget cuts during a lunch hour. This is not a part of their formal work responsibilities, and does not constitute unpaid overtime in the same manner as writing case notes in the evening is clearly unpaid overtime. However, this is work they are undertaking which is relevant to their job and what resources and services they can provide to the families they work with, which they are not paid for. The staff in the child welfare agency, to which their unit belongs to encourages but does not force staff to participate in social justice-oriented events such as public Pride events, and Indigenous People's day.

The frontline workers in her unit undertake certain actions in their work which are not standard across organizations. Sarah explained that frontline workers in their unit advocate more regularly for families to receive services or benefits in other social service systems. They also facilitate family group decision-making to plan for a child's care instead of making unilateral decisions and as a team they meet together to brainstorm a plan to advocate for a family. In her experience covering for other managers in other units within this organization led Sarah to conclude these activities were not the norm. Sarah explained that her workers take extra time (for example, sometimes during their weekends) to do

their work in this way to meet their personal work goals which come from a justice purview.

Reporting Hours.

Sarah, the frontline workers, and unit assistant report their hours using a timesheet. How the timesheet is processed to ultimately pay workers was not confirmed with her, although it is likely the timesheets are approved by someone such as the Director, passed on to a financial staff person or department, and a paystub and payment is produced and returned to the staff. Sarah explained that the child welfare organization is currently not paying any overtime, which is due to budget concerns, but that workers can report their overtime hours worked and build up a “flex bank” of time which they can use towards having paid time off from their job. Sarah noted that she and the frontline workers do not usually record their overtime hours, as they do not normally have time to use them due to their heavy workloads.

Seeing social relations and work in Sarah’s everyday.

This account of Sarah’s everyday experience of overtime clearly involves work (it is her job), and involves social activities involving other people. However, in IE, researchers are particularly interested in making social relations and work visible in a local setting, and to use that knowledge to identify threads of ruling. The social relations of Sarah’s job, and the work she does, particularly that outside of the specific tasks of her role, are explored in this section.

As a manager, Sarah is regularly in contact with the frontline workers in her unit. The requirement of having the manager approve specific frontline worker decisions, and approve certain documents which are submitted online through CPIN, specifies a certain course of action with a pattern of social relations. In Sarah's local setting of work, it appears that she is involved in a course of action of a 'case file' midway through its process. The case file (which is a discursive abstraction of an actual, material family) is passed along to Sarah for her to approve a certain action on the part of the frontline worker in relation to the family they are working with. She also is involved in the progression of a case file when a frontline worker consults her for advice on which action they should take. Their meeting, and the advice given by Sarah organizes the next activities of the frontline worker in relation to the case file, or "activates" a course of action in the social world (Rankin, 2018, p. 3).

In a full IE, it would perhaps be appropriate to map the entire process which a case file takes, both prior to and after the frontline worker notifies Sarah it requires her approval via CPIN, or when they meet in Sarah's office to discuss the case. However, that is not necessary to establish a problematic, and is therefore beyond the capacity of this study. What is interesting and salient regarding this course of action is how this process, of Sarah approving actions in particular, appears to be connected to her performance of overtime work which she is not paid for.

To keep the process of “cases” going as smoothly as possible, and to support her staff, Sarah works in the evenings, comes in early or stays late. Apart from doing the work of actually reading and approving or not approving actions, Sarah undertakes mental work. She uses her time, effort, and experience-based judgement to decide whether emails she receives during her time-off need to be answered then or whether they can be answered the next time she’s at work. She considers what needs to be done to “stay a step ahead”, and uses her knowledge of her work and judgement to make decisions.

Another social relation which appears to organize Sarah’s performance of work during her breaks, amounting to unpaid overtime work, is the support from the broader agency that she and her staff participate in demonstrations or social justice events. The agency informs the staff that they are encouraged to participate in these events, outlining a course of action which Sarah and other staff members take-up. Sarah’s overtime work, particularly her work done from home, may also be implicated in the frontline staff’s overtime work attributed to taking more time to undertake quality advocacy and collaborative measures with families. As they undertake this work during their evenings and weekends, Sarah receives their emails requesting her approval through CPIN. She then performs the work of deciding which emails to answer, or approve, as described above. While the social relations of the staff’s commitment to social justice are not entirely clear, their performance of that work organizes Sarah’s unpaid overtime work.

Andrea's Account of Unpaid Overtime Work

Andrea is a social worker in a hospital in a medium-sized city in Ontario. She is a clinical manager of an in-patient unit in a hospital, and approximately 100 staff, over half of whom are nurses, report to her. Among the other staff reporting to her are small number of physiotherapists, occupational therapists, and social workers, and over a dozen Registered Practical Nurses. Broadly, Andrea's work as a clinical manager involves overseeing the day-to-day activities of the ward, including 'patient flow' or admitting and discharging patients, addressing concerns of families not addressed by frontline staff, and managing the budget of the unit as well as ordering supplies.

While Andrea and I did not 'walk-through' an entire day of work in the same fashion as Sarah and I did, she provided instances of common, everyday circumstances and actions she undertook in her job which involved or seemingly brought about unpaid overtime work. Andrea is paid for 7.5 hours per day, five days per week. Clinical managers are formally supposed to work from 8:00 AM-4:00 PM, or 8:30 am-4:30 pm, with a half hour unpaid lunch break included because 8:00 AM-4:00 PM are the formal hospital business hours. On occasion Andrea starts work at 7:00 AM if she needs to meet with surgeons to accommodate their schedule, as shortly after this time they go into surgery and are thus unavailable to meet. For a clinical manager to accommodate doctors, they need to begin work at 7:00 AM, however, Andrea is rarely able to leave work at 3:00 PM on those days where she begins at 7:00. This is explained in her account

as being due to bedding and staffing issues which continue past 3:00 PM, and which require the manager to oversee.

Andrea is also sometimes scheduled for a meeting beginning at 5:00 PM, and in her words, she “can’t not go to those meetings”. Previously, as a clinical manager, Andrea also occasionally came to work in the evening at around 10:00 PM for a meeting with the night staff, who would otherwise have to come to the hospital during the day, or she would not be able to meet with them at all. Andrea occasionally takes her lunch breaks, but explained that normally she simply eats something like a granola bar between meetings.

In general, Andrea connected her performance of overtime work hours to the workload of her position. In her words “I don’t know how I’m going to be able to do this job between those hours, [...] because there’s more work than the hours provided”. Andrea regularly works 9.5 hours a day in her job, not leaving the hospital until about 6:30 or 7:00 PM, and usually without taking a full lunch break. While working in the clinical manager job, Andrea works unpaid overtime every day she works.

Overtime work hours are not recorded for managers, nor for non-union staff in this hospital, and individuals in these positions are not paid for overtime work. Several years ago, a time clock software was introduced into the hospital, where all employees had to enter their personal information when they were beginning and ending their shift, and their hours of work were recorded in this

manner. However, after two or three years, managers and non-union staff were informed that they no longer had to “punch in and out” via an email sent from the corporate office of the hospital. Andrea stated that “they [hospital executives] took away this responsibility...because they didn’t want to show electronically or have a record that ‘Yes people were working so many extra hours’”. Managers can record and report their overtime hours to their boss-if approved, those hours can be “banked”, or formally recorded and used for paid time off later. However, she was unsure whether anyone would ever have the time to use those banked hours for time-off.

In the course of our interview, Andrea considered what would happen if she were to actually leave after an eight-hour work shift. She said that because leaving at that time would mean her work was not completed, it would leave other staff like the charge nurse, or the social worker on the hook to finish work, and that the staff would be disgruntled and stressed by her absence. She explained that it felt like an “unwritten rule” in the hospital that working those hours was expected, and she attributed it to the culture in the hospital. She also mentioned knowing that she is a “good worker” and that she stays overtime to ensure all of the work is done because of what she was taught by her parents about being a good worker. Andrea described feeling frustration, which developed into fatigue at working these hours.

Seeing social relations and work in Andrea's everyday.

While I do not have observational data about the local material conditions of Andrea's everyday unpaid overtime, in what was shared with me some of the social relations of her unpaid overtime work can be made visible. First, her attendance and scheduling of meetings outside of her work hours is a reoccurring social relation, or a practice which is activating a course of action in the social world (Rankin, 2017)-in this case, a course of action where she works outside of her scheduled hours. Andrea's explanation for these meetings, particularly ones with other professionals or staff on other shifts outlines this local social relation; either she or another staff person schedules a meeting outside of her standard work hours, which produces a course of action where she subsequently attends the meeting, and works overtime. There are clues in her account that this social relation extends beyond her local setting, with references to the schedules of surgeons in her unit, and the schedules of other staff on her unit. In other words, there are social relations occurring outside of what she knows about as part of her daily work, for example, the process which produced the schedules of surgeons, which is coordinating the scheduling of meetings at times outside of her standard work shift.

While the practice of meetings being scheduled and attended outside Andrea's work hours appears to be involved in her overtime work, there is a seemingly distinct social relation occurring so that the work is not paid. Her account of clinical managers being directed to not formally record their hours by

punching in and out is an example of a text-work-text sequence, a type of text-based work process developed by Susan Turner (2006). In essence, Andrea regularly participates in a sequence of actions mediated by texts, which results in her not being paid for her overtime. She is informed she should not record her actual hours using the software which unionized staff use, she continues her normal work and does not record her hours, and therefore her pay stub and her pay reflects the standard work week she is “supposed” to be working. The diagram below is a simple graphic of the text-work-text sequence, where each social relation activates the next, producing her ultimate non-payment of overtime hours.

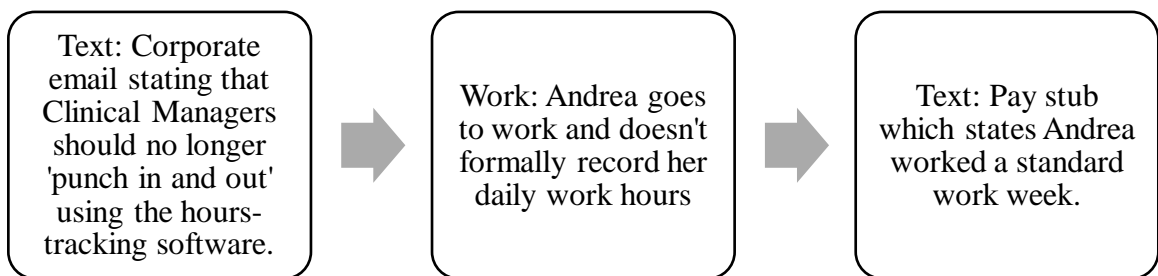


Figure 2: Andrea's text-based work process

In Andrea’s account, there also relevant social relations which are less tangible which can be identified. Her reference to an ‘unwritten rule’ that these are the hours managers work, and what she was taught by her parents about being a good worker may both be having a coordinating effect on her work, insofar that she was made aware of these “rules” and expectations through a social process, and they have organized a course of action where she works overtime, and

continues to work at a job she knows from experience will require unpaid, overtime work. In a full IE, further investigation of this “unwritten rule” would certainly be undertaken, and apart from interviewing Andrea may require observing the setting for a long period of time to see how this rule is being communicated, and how it coordinates the course of action which produces overtime work.

Joelle’s Account of Unpaid Overtime Work

Joelle is a social worker employed by a large non-profit organization in a medium-sized city in Ontario. She works in an office as a housing outreach worker, and assists families who are homeless or at-risk of homelessness become permanently housed and to divert them from staying in a shelter. She is one of two frontline workers in this department. When new families contact their department, she does an assessment with one of the adults in the family to determine whether they are eligible for services-this includes asking the potential service-user questions over the phone or in person, and recording the information about the family and the outcome of the call in a call log. She reviews the call log to determine which families need to be followed-up with, and subsequently meets with families to make a plan with them to resolve the housing instability. This plan can involve finding short-term housing; securing supports to help with other issues the family may be facing which impacts their housing; connecting with other social service systems to coordinate services; completing a personal budget; and developing a plan for a housing search.

Joelle also does a Vi-SPDAT assessment with new families, which involves her asking the family a set of standardized questions about their current housing circumstance and needs, and reporting their score to the municipal government. She continues to meet with the family as they seek housing and follows-up with them regarding the plan they established. She informally counsels, engages in supportive listening, and continues to refer the families to services as they seek housing. Once the family is housed and discharged from the program she completes follow-up meetings with the family after three and six months. Joelle does administrative work such as recording how long she spent doing certain kinds of tasks, reporting her hours bi-weekly, and writing case notes. She occasionally covers frontline shifts in other departments of the organization when they are understaffed, and provides brief training about her program to new staff in other departments.

This is only a brief overview of Joelle's work, and her job entails many other specific tasks that she undertakes regularly. Currently, she is normally scheduled for shifts between 9:00 AM-5:00 PM or 10:00 AM and 6:00 PM. Joelle reports her own hours on a biweekly basis, which are inputted into an hours-tracking software and submitted to management for review. Once management approves the hours, it is submitted to the finance department for review and her payment is processed. She thinks that she currently works between two to four hours of unpaid overtime a week.

Everyday experiences of unpaid overtime.

There are some attributes of her job and work which she identified as being tied in to her performance of overtime work, in addition to the size of the workload she and her co-worker share. At the time of our interview, there were no “caseload caps”, or limits on the number of families workers in her department could be assisting at any one time. Housing and homelessness are pressing issues, and Joelle explained that “everyone that I’m working with is in a crisis [...] everyone is homeless or about to become homeless”. When families are seeking support and help from Joelle and her co-worker, they are already in a situation that is urgent.

Case Notes.

Joelle identified writing case notes as a task which often gets pushed to the side during a busy day. She and her co-worker will leave writing case notes until the end of their shift, but then to complete them, they stay longer at their job than their scheduled shift. For an extended period of time, Joelle and her co-worker simply did not write their case notes, as their work was already so busy. However, several months after this had been going on, her organization was undergoing an accreditation process and recognized that their department had numerous cases left open, and were told they needed to formally close all of their closed files. For a period of a few weeks she and her coworker would work an additional four or five hours before or after a shift one to two days a week, or come in on a day off to close all of their outstanding cases. Now, they find it

important to keep case notes because they have chosen to frequently work collaboratively with families, and want to make sure the other is updated on their actions even when they are not working together.

Interactions with management.

Joelle described a few different interactions with managers in her job which seem relevant to her performance of overtime work. Her managers have scheduled her for meetings during fully scheduled days, which she described by saying

our manager and [...] management in general knows we will stay [at work overtime] because we want to stay so a lot of time they'll book us in for a meeting when they know we already have so much to do that day [...] so, like how are people going to say no to that because they know clients rely on them.

Joelle explained that she had never seen a written policy about recording overtime, but had been informed at a staff meeting that workers in her program could bank up to 30 minutes per day of lieu hours. Lieu hours are recorded but not paid hours worked which can be used at a future time. For example, Joelle described that workers should be able to use lieu hours by leaving early or having a day off which is paid, but she has not had time to do so and so her lieu hours continue to grow. More recently, Joelle and her coworker were informed that they could bank as many lieu hours as needed as long as it did not pass four hours

per week, amounting to forty-four recorded hours per week worked maximum (forty paid and four banked as lieu hours).

Joelle described being “talked to about our priorities” when she has recorded close to 44 hours per week. She is afraid to try and record all of the hours she works, because other staff have gotten in trouble, or been fired for working more hours. Joelle and her co-worker prioritize and reprioritize their tasks everyday to manage the fast-paced, urgent, and dynamic nature of their work, and she knows they are skilled at prioritizing.

When Joelle and her coworkers have collectively approached the management in her organization about issues such as a lack of caseload caps, inadequate staff to handle the number of families seeking their services, and their overtime work. Her explanation of their response was that

[and the managers say] You have to understand that’s the nature of this job and it’s not going to pay well and the work’s going to be hard but people have to do it because they love it, and if they don’t they can leave.

Joelle has this job because she is passionate about the work that she does, and she and her co-worker stay overtime so that they do not let down the families they work with. She described feeling that it was unacceptable to let families down, for example by not following up with them in the timeline they agreed on. As she is prioritizing tasks throughout the day, she considers whether a specific task can be pushed to the next day, based on her knowledge of the next day’s workload.

Her managers have recognized that their workload is “endless”, and will instruct her to leave tasks until tomorrow, but to also complete a certain task before she leaves.

Thoughts and feelings.

Joelle described both feeling passionate and committed to her work- numerous times throughout the interview mentioning that she loves the work itself-but also feels various negative emotions related to the workload and the performance of overtime work. She described feeling like she was becoming burnt out, that she was experiencing compassion fatigue, and that she and her coworkers sometimes feel “dead inside” after leaving work. On the topic of her consistent overtime work, she described thinking that “This is ridiculous, I’m married to my job”. She and other coworkers decided to meet for a half an hour a week this winter to discuss their work-based stress, which they did after work for several weeks

Seeing the social relations and work in Joelle’s account.

Joelle’s account of her everyday work and experiences of unpaid overtime are quite detailed, and throughout the course of our interview, she brought forward numerous parts of her job that she linked to unpaid overtime. Like the first two accounts, particularly Andrea’s, there seems to be multiple different social relations, and courses of action organizing work in her local setting, including the performance of overtime, how she is paid for that work, and her

continued commitment to this job despite her first-hand knowledge of what it entails.

What is quite clear from Joelle's account is a significant disjuncture between what she knows from experience about her work, and what her managers say about her work. Joelle knows that the nature of housing work is that the needs of families are often urgent, that currently there are no caseload caps so she and her co-worker are constantly being referred more families, and that her and her co-worker are using their best judgement and experience to prioritize tasks and that they are skilled at prioritizing. What she is told by management about her work is that if they prioritize effectively, only limited overtime work is needed. In terms of the local social relations of recording hours worked, Joelle is informed by her managers that she can record up to four lieu hours per week, producing a basic course of action where Joelle records between zero and four hours of lieu hours per week, and does not record any additional hours worked. As stated above, she is currently working two to four hours of unpaid overtime per week.

Other social relations support that basic course of action described above, such as verbal warnings about prioritizing work effectively, and being "talked to about our priorities"-in Joelle's words-when more hours are logged. The manager's institutional knowledge about Joelle's workload and hours is obviously not coming from the local setting. For example, other directions or observations the managers have said to Joelle contradict the institutional knowledge, like recognizing that the work is indeed "endless", betraying that extralocal ruling

relations are coordinating the directions given by the manager and Joelle's subsequent work and pay in this local setting. This will be taken up again in the next chapter.

Another seemingly pertinent social relation occurring at the local setting involving Joelle is one that is not so easy trace. Despite knowing that her workload was too high, that she was not being paid adequately, to the extent that she was organizing with other workers to collectively confront their management, Joelle and her co-worker have worked in this job for over a year and a half, and she "love[s] the job". However, she also expressed that she does not believe she could do this job in the long term (for more than another year or so). Similarly, Joelle discusses how she stays hours and hours past the time she knows she will get paid for on a weekly basis, because the work simply "needs to get done". The question arises of 'what is coordinating this inclination to work without being paid?' The actual social relations, or the "particular practices that "activate" a social world of things happening among people" (Rankin, 2017, p. 3) are not entirely visible based on the accounts provided by Joelle. Perhaps a clue lies in her account of a dialogue between her and a manager in her work; she states:

You know what, like we want to stay, everyone here is working here because they have a passion for supporting people" and they're like "Yah but, you know, you have to understand that's the nature of this job and it's not going to pay well and the work's going to be hard but people have to do it because they love it, if they don't they can leave.

Here, managers are reinforcing the idea to staff that it is simply the nature of the job to work long hours and not be compensated very well for the work. This social relation, or even a social work discourse may be coordinating the everyday life of Joelle, and organizing a course of action where she works long unpaid overtime hours. This thread will also get taken up more thoroughly in the next chapter.

Returning to Smith's generous conception of work, we can see all of the work described in Joelle's account apart from the formal work of her job. She uses her time, effort, and knowledge in a specific place for a specific purpose (Smith, 2005) to decide how many hours she can reasonably report on her timesheet without being disciplined, to decide what phone calls or case notes can be undertaken another day, and even to organize weekly peer support sessions with her coworkers to prevent more burnout by, in her words, "venting" about workload. All of this work needs to be done by Joelle so that her experience of unpaid overtime work, as well as the level of service provided to families seeking their supports, are maintained.

Conclusion

This chapter has provided accounts from three social workers who regularly perform unpaid overtime work at their job at a non-profit organization, whether in a public social service organization or a community non-profit agency. All three accounts are significantly different, and offer different insights into the everyday

experiences of social workers performing unpaid overtime work. To the best of my ability I have explicated salient social relations happening in the local setting, and identified the work of performing overtime which is made visible using Smith's (2005) generous conception of work. The social relations, work, and descriptions of 'what happens' in the work of these social workers that appears to be relevant to unpaid overtime will be the data analyzed in the next chapter. Additionally, some of the social relations explored in this chapter will be taken up in the next chapter as future directions for research, as they constitute (potential) threads of ruling in the local setting.

Chapter Six: Discussion

In this chapter, the accounts and local social relations described in the previous chapter are analysed to identify potential threads of ruling. In particular, the local accounts of non-payment of overtime hours and unclaimed overtime are explicated and the accounts of all three participants are compared. This chapter considers how future research into this topic could proceed, and discusses the problematic(s) which have been formulated in the course of this research.

Tracing Overtime Work Non-Payment & the Employment Standards Act

From the accounts I received from Sarah, Andrea, and Joelle, I was able to map their local social relations of non-payment for overtime work, and supplemented their accounts of the local with research regarding Ontario's labour laws. You can see a basic map of the three accounts of 'not being paid for overtime' in Figure 3 below. Mapping is a common IE tool for organizing and analyzing social relations, particularly institutional processes (Smith, 2005). "Time's arrow" is indicated on this map, which is an attribute Smith (2005) recommends including to remind the viewer that the social relations portrayed actually happens in time, in addition to in a material world. In the map below, different relevant elements of the course of action as was made visible by the participants' accounts (work knowledge, use of texts, work they undertake) are portrayed. A legend is provided in the corner of the map to indicate the different social relations and texts involved in the non-payment of unpaid overtime. All three everyday experiences produce a visible disjuncture: a paystub which lists

and pays the workers for fewer hours than they actually worked. This disjuncture, between the material knowledge the workers have about their job, and what discursively circulates about their job (that they don't or rarely work overtime), is a central contradiction in this IE.

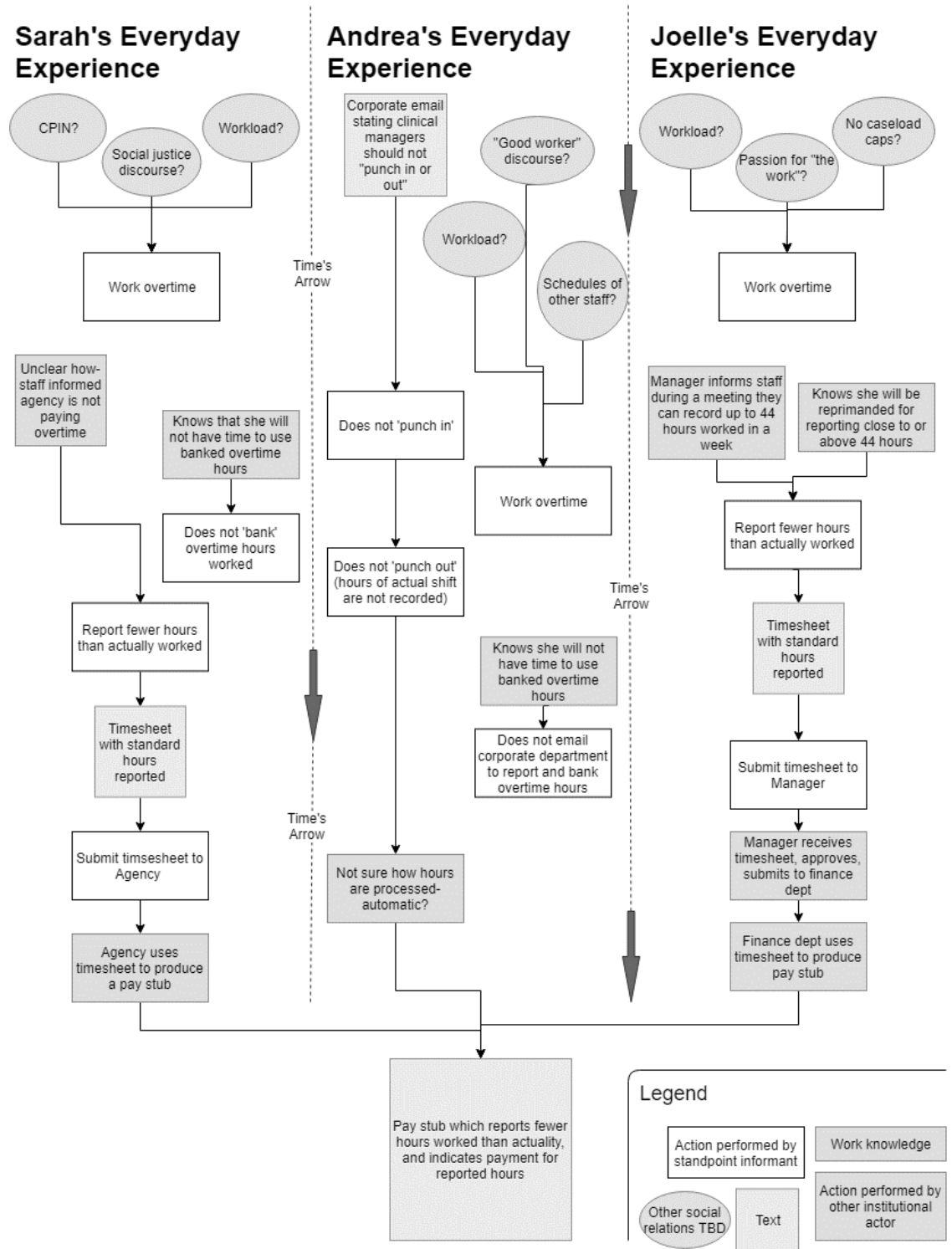


Figure 3: Map of non-payment for overtime work

In the map, the relatively straightforward courses of action each participant described are laid out-this helps visually see the similarities and differences in their processes. With the axis of 'time' explicitly included in this map, texts are demonstrated to 'happen' rather than simply exist. Each text is taken up by each social worker or other institutional actors and they occur in the course of action, and the text-reader relation coordinates the next social relation (Turner, 2006).

As a map of local social relations, there are still significant gaps in the knowledge about unpaid overtime work I was able to uncover in the course of this research. Some additional research into salient legislation are also discussed below, namely the Employment Standards Act, which provides compelling hints as to how certain processes or the use of certain institutional texts are organized.

Employment Standards Act.

The Employment Standards Act is the current labour legislation used in the province of Ontario. In Part VIII, Section 22, there are specific sections related to payment of overtime work. One passage appears particularly relevant to the experiences of Sarah, Andrea, and Joelle-it states:

an employer shall pay an employee overtime pay of at least one and one-half times his or her regular rate for each hour of work in excess of 44 hours in each work week or, if another threshold is prescribed, that prescribed threshold. (Government of Ontario, 2019)

The instructions Joelle received regarding not reporting more than 44 hours per week on a timesheet (paid and in lieu), as well as her work knowledge of how that is enforced by pressures from management (the talks about “priorities”) are likely connected to this section of the Employment Standards Act. The Act may play a role in organizing overtime work non-payment by requiring employers to pay 1.5 times regular pay for hours worked. In a funding austerity context, the Act is potentially involved in a course of action where organizations seeking cost reductions instruct staff not to report more than 44 hours worked, despite knowing the staff will still work the overtime hours (coordinated by other ruling relations) to avoid paying the higher overtime rate. To properly map this ruling relation, and know more about how managers of agencies are coordinated this way, more knowledge about the steps which take place outside of Joelle’s local setting would be required.

On a government of Ontario webpage they specify how the Employment Standards Act applies to managers and supervisors by stating that:

Managers and supervisors do not qualify for overtime if the work they do is managerial or supervisory. Even if they perform other kinds of tasks that are not managerial or supervisory, they are not entitled to get overtime pay if these tasks are performed only on an irregular or exceptional basis.

(Government of Ontario, 2019)

As managers, neither Sarah and Andrea record their actual hours worked. For example, in the case of Andrea, that is coordinated by a corporate email she received instructing her not to do so. This component of the Employment Standards Act can likely be traced to be coordinating the everyday experience of not being paid for the overtime work of Sarah and Andrea.

What Isn't Known: The Overtime Work

This research uncovered some of the easily-identifiable social relations happening at the local level which are congruent with a regulatory text, suggesting a clear thread of ruling which future inquiry could continue to take up and more meaningfully explicate. These social relations (and potentially the regulatory text) explicate in-part the ruling relations of overtime non-payment for social workers. An understanding of how 'working overtime' is organized, and how the course of action demonstrated in the local map comes to be repeated on a daily and weekly basis, despite the knowledge of non-payment for overtime work, is significantly more murky. There are some potential promising threads of ruling in the accounts of the participants, which are included in the map as red ovals.

Thread one: CPIN.

In the previous chapter, the local social relations of CPIN in Sarah's job were explicated, demonstrating how its structure organizes Sarah's everyday; she regularly responds to work emails during her evenings and days off as the staff in her unit send her documents to be approved according to CPIN timelines. There does not seem to be an analogous or similarly organized activity going on in

Andrea and Joelle's workplaces. However, Sarah's knowledge suggests that CPIN is standardized across most Ontario child welfare organizations, and in an IE inquiry specifically into the unpaid overtime of child welfare workers, CPIN would be an extremely important textually mediated process to examine.

Thread two: the social accomplishment of 'work which needs to get done'.

All three research participants talked about their understanding of why there was always overtime work to do, and why they did it. It was difficult to draw clarity from the discussions, and in one case a participant discussed in the course of our interview how they did not know exactly why they continued to work in a job with the amount of overtime work. There were similarities in how the participants talked about their workload, and the seeming unending work and required overtime-I have labelled this potential thread of ruling "the social accomplishment of 'work which needs to get done'". In the social ontology of IE, everything is a social accomplishment, and brought about by the social relations of actual people. In the accounts of these three participants, the similar ideas and opinions expressed are not themselves of interest in an interpretive sense. Rather, they are of interest in this IE-oriented inquiry because they provide a clue as to what ruling relation is organizing the topic of this research, unpaid overtime of social workers.

First, there are some passages from the interviews where the participants provided more generic accounts about their workload. Sarah, discussing why she answers emails in the evenings said that

You could say “that’s your choice, you can turn off your phone”. True but then the worker is waiting for me when I come in [...] tomorrow I have an even fuller day, so, it’s just always trying to stay a step ahead.

Andrea expressed similar ideas throughout the interview and in follow-up correspondence, stating that “working overtime isn’t really about social justice, but it’s about trying to get the job done”, and continued to say

So, if I just say ‘oh well I don’t care it’s 4:00 I got to go’, what does that mean for the charge nurse or the social worker [...] if I just walked out and, there’s still things that need [to get] done.

Joelle brought up her amount of work throughout her interview as well, and recounted this interaction between she and one of her managers: “every single day I tell my manager that there is only one of me and the work is endless. And she’s like, “Yeah the work is endless, leave it until tomorrow, but also this [asking Joelle to perform another task]””. She also discussed how “you just need to stay because the things need to get done”. All three participants are making reference to how in their job, their tasks or responsibilities are seemingly never finished, and all three use overtime they know they will not be paid for to try and keep up with their jobs.

While the amount of work each of these participants are responsible for is unquestionably part of how their lives are organized to undertake unpaid overtime work, exactly how is not clear. Workload may be a good place to start, but it does not fully explain why these social workers do overtime if no matter what the work will be endless, or why they choose to continue working in this job. There are some potential ruling relations visible in their accounts, such as CPIN in Sarah's and the schedules of other staff in Andrea's. In Andrea's account she mentions that "that's your ethical obligation as a social worker, yes you have to time manage". When Sarah is discussing the unpaid overtime work of frontline workers in her unit, she states that "to do what they feel is ethically correct...they will put the effort and the time [...] above and beyond, on those files". While Sarah is only providing information based on her knowledge of those worker's experiences, not her own personal experience (not to say that she does not also participate in thinking and reasoning like this in her work), and Andrea is more broadly discussing time and task management in this portion of the interview, it is worth noting both make reference to the ethical obligations of social workers.

Joelle elaborates on this even more explicitly throughout her interview, never characterizing it as an ethical obligation, but suggesting that she feels a certain commitment to the families she supports, with passages such as: "well I honestly feel like this needs to get done, this person is going to be 100% affected if I don't stay [to work overtime]" and "A lot of families that we're working with they've been let down by every other support, so once we build that rapport it is

so hard to not call someone back [after the shift is over]. Most poignantly, she states at the end of her account that “even if they paid me every single overtime hour, the work would never stop, and so, it all comes down to needing more staff. Or letting people down”. Joelle’s ethical or other obligation to service-users is clearly playing a role in organizing her decision to continue working at her job, and work overtime hours she knows she won’t be paid for.

Making sense of potential threads of ruling: considering multiple threads

Without more data collection, such as more focused in-depth interviews, and follow-up research into other extralocal settings and texts, it is impossible to determine exactly what is organizing the ideas and actions of these three social workers as it pertains to unpaid overtime work and ‘the work that needs to get done’. The inclusion of comments about ethics and the deeply-held commitments to service-users in these interviews suggest a possible thread of ruling relating to the social organization of social work ethical positions. The accounts also emphasize how their workloads are simply untenable and how even a worker in their position with none of their ethical, justice, or other social commitments would likely be unable to perform their work duties in a standard work week. A preliminary analysis of this attribute of the accounts suggest that while a ‘social work ethical inclination’ is likely not unilaterally organizing the regular overtime work of some social workers. However, it may be increasing and worsening the existing condition, or coordinating the decision of social workers to remain in their jobs. More research is required to understand this thread of ruling.

In the local site of social work unpaid overtime, these interviews suggest there may be at least three major inter-related ruling relations organizing the work of social workers. First, the social organization of ‘the endless workload’ was identified in their accounts, which may be hooked into ruling relations such as the funding and organization of the social welfare state and community non-profit organizations. Second, the social organization of social work ethics/social justice commitments may be organizing the work of some social workers to participate indefinitely in the ‘endless workload’, despite how it may also be coordinating a poor ‘work-life balance’ for these workers. Finally, the social organization of non-payment of overtime hours, that was traced in part earlier in this chapter, ensures social workers are not paid for the overtime they complete as their work is coordinated by other ruling relations.

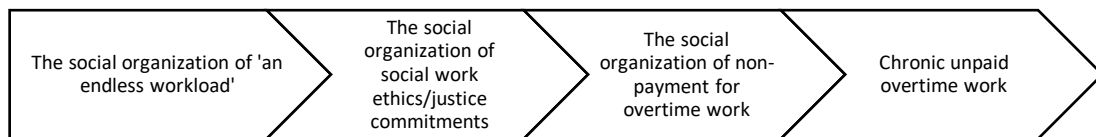


Figure 4: Possible threads of ruling

Social work is certainly not the only profession where workers consistently perform unpaid overtime work because of their extensive workloads and because they feel it is the right thing to do. How it becomes the ‘right thing to do’ would be an important future thread to take-up in the continuation of this IE project, and it is possible that ruling relations may be coordinated by social work education or social work academic literature. However, these ruling relations may

also be organized by a broader framework or discourse relating to work, such as the popular values about the importance of productivity (which resonates with but is not proven by Andrea's quote "it's not because I'm not a good worker, because I think that I am a good worker"). Discourses about gender, race, or class and work & productivity are also possibly coordinating this experience of social workers. How these relations of ruling may interplay with the current neoliberal austerity measures of the Canadian welfare state, particularly in Ontario, may be a fruitful avenue of research to pursue if this IE project is taken up again.

Without question, more thorough investigation into the local sites of unpaid overtime, and the organization of social work ethics/social justice may uncover something else not uncovered or hinted at in the accounts discussed here. However, without empirical evidence, the ideas in this section which build on passages in the accounts are theoretical abstractions of the material, and not achieving the goal of uncovering knowledge in IE. To turn these threads into actual knowledge of ruling relations, more discovery and data collection would have to take place.

Returning to the Problematic: A question of standpoint.

Standpoint is a key methodological consideration for IE. While recruiting participants, I took some precautions to ensure that the people I would be speaking to occupied the same standpoint within the complex institution, such as ensuring they were registered social workers, that they performed unpaid

overtime, that their employing organizations were non-profit, and that they suspected that their activist or social justice identity or work may be influencing their overtime. As discussed in the Methodology chapter, the social relations I focus on in this study also shifted during the course of the project. In the beginning stages of an IE project, without adequate knowledge of the institution and relevant social relations to study, it is difficult to guarantee that the participants spoken to actually do occupy the same standpoint in that institution.

In this pre-IE study, it appears that there is some variance between the empirical locations and stances of the participants, particularly in the social relations of non-payment for overtime work. The Employment Standards Act organizes the work of Sarah and Andrea as managers in a fundamentally different manner than Joelle as a frontline worker (Government of Ontario, 2019), although the outcome for all three workers is essentially the same. Interestingly, in Andrea's interview she also discussed her local knowledge of working as a part-time frontline hospital social worker, which she was doing on weekends before her parental leave; it was not explored in this study because there was limited time in our interview for her to give a full account of that additional work experience, and for concision in this thesis. However, the method of recording and being paid for hours in her position as a frontline worker are more similar to the social relations of manager non-payment for overtime described by Sarah and Andrea-in essence, a lack of any measures for really recording hours of work and a default paystub. This is another topic of further clarification and exploration in a full IE.

As an empirical stance in an institution, a future IE would need to select either the standpoint of a frontline worker or a manager for appropriate institutional ethnography methodological rigour. Although the institution of Canadian social work may produce similar personal outcomes for managers and frontline workers, this initial data suggests how that is accomplished may be different. An example of this is how Sarah spoke about how the frontline workers in her unit put in extra work with the families they were supporting due to their personal social justice purview, and how that in turn organized her overtime work in the evenings or her days off. This is a clear indication that these two roles occupy different standpoints in the institution. Choosing whether to adopt the standpoint of a manager or a frontline worker would be an important methodological consideration going forward with this IE.

Due to the difference in standpoint, the accounts of everyday life and work in this thesis likely constitute at least two distinct problematics of unpaid overtime work for social workers; the everyday experience of frontline social worker's unpaid overtime work, and that of social work managers. An initial account of both are in the previous chapter and can be used as problematics for IE research. The organization of these everyday experiences have been explored as topics for research in this analysis, framing them appropriately for IE theoretical and methodological guidelines for formulating a problematic.

Future directions for research.

This research study scratched the surface of a complex topic for IE research. As explained by Campbell and Gregor (2008), IE research and data collection occurs in two major steps; first, the researcher collects local experiences from standpoint informants to formulate a problematic, and next, they attempt to explicate the ruling relations coordinating the local they had discovered. In this chapter, multiple potential threads of ruling were explored, and the accounts provided in the previous chapter were assessed to constitute at least two distinct (although similar in result) problematics. Future research could take up any account as a problematic from this study, and any thread of ruling.

Should the standpoint of a frontline worker be taken up for future research, an IE regarding the social organization of their unpaid overtime would begin with an account such as Joelle's. How she and her co-worker's workload, and their shared inclination to work overtime are organized would be key areas of data collection, along with further clarification of the processes of non-payment of overtime work. Alternatively, choosing a social services manager standpoint would require taking up Sarah or Andrea's account, and similarly tracing the relevant social organization. Legislation such as the Employment Standards Act for the Province of Ontario (2000) and the Ontario Child Protection Standards (2016b) organize managers/supervisors differently than frontline workers, and these would be important distinctions to attend to while tracing the ruling relations continued in an unpaid overtime of managers IE.

If this IE project were to continue, care must be taken to select and continue to focus on one standpoint and problematic. While this study has done significant data collection and analysis around formulating a problematic (truly, multiple problematics), some questions remain: do frontline social workers in different social work fields occupy different standpoints? How do you go about studying multiple 'reasons', and sets of ruling relations which one person may have for performing overtime work? Must each set be treated as distinct IEs? These are important questions to consider for the uptake of any of these problematics.

Methodological limitations.

The methodology used in this research project adheres as closely as possible to the principles of research of institutional ethnography. IE does not typically take up a collaborative or community-based research approach; while useful knowledge about the social organization of an aspect of their lives is produced on behalf of and for people, in this case social workers, rather than about them, it is unusual to use a community research team to produce that knowledge by them (Campbell & Gregor, 2008). However, it is important to note that IE does not produce knowledge about people without them-it produces knowledge about relevant social organization. By doing this, IE provides people with knowledge about the social relations which are organizing their lives which is outside of their view, or outside of the local setting (Smith, 1987, Campbell & Gregor, 2008). IE has historically been taken up by researchers who are

interested in producing knowledge about the social organization of a contradictory and unjust aspect of social life (de Montigny, 1995; Smith, 1998; Turner, 2006). Regardless, a limitation of IE is how specialized and technical the theoretical and methodological framework can be, which can make it inaccessible to potential community researchers seeking information about a social injustice in their lives.

Within the realm of IE methodology, this project in particular would have benefitted from more data collection about the local work setting, such as doing observations of the participants in their work (Campbell & Gregor, 2008) and during their performance of unpaid overtime. The ethics application process, and the timeframe of a Master's thesis makes this challenging for this project, but the observational data could have proved valuable and would provide more empirical information about the local.

A final methodological limitation of this study is in regards to the standpoint of the research participants. As the research unfolded, it became clear that some of the participants likely occupied different standpoints in terms of the social relations of unpaid overtime for social workers. This is assessed more thoroughly in the Discussion chapter. Having participants who occupy different standpoints would be a more significant issue if this inquiry were to continue (Campbell & Gregor, 2008), but at the initial data collection and problematic stage, it does not interfere with the analysis because the researcher is aware of it. It is also nearly impossible to know that two people occupy different standpoints

in the ruling relations of unpaid overtime, until some basic observation of the ruling relations of unpaid overtime work has been undertaken (as in this research).

Other limitations.

A limitation of this study is simply the amount of knowledge which was produced. This thesis does not contain a full IE, and there is perhaps less data collected and analyzed in this study than in other theses of comparable size. Conducting a full IE requires knowledge to be built in stages, and for the research design to change as the project continues (Campbell & Gregor, 2008), and this makes it a challenging choice in some ways for a Master's thesis timeline. This means that this study could only conduct the early stages of IE, and could not feasibly engage in the next stages which require more data collection such as further interviews and observation. While the amount of knowledge is a limitation of this study, it was a required attribute of this study to ensure that the relevant type of knowledge was sought, and that there was adherence to IE methodology.

An additional limitation of this study was the degree to which it could direct attention to the role of social identity (particularly gender, race, immigration status, and class) in producing the outcome of interest in the thesis. Anecdotal knowledge would suggest that the social relations of these identities play a factor in the organization of social workers' everyday work. Additionally, in the literature review, I identified a gap in existing research regarding the role of social identity in shaping labour experiences of social workers. However, this

study does not focus on or bring forward for analysis social identity, as the social relations of gender, race, or class were generally not described in the local settings in the accounts of unpaid overtime work of the participants (apart from brief mention of broad relations of gender in one interview). That does not mean that the social relations of social identities do not occur in the local setting, or that the broad ruling relations of notions such as gender, race, and class are not pertinent ruling relations for these problematics. In fact, it seems improbable that they are not relevant to these problematics. While an IE study of this scope was limited to the data about the material local setting provided by the research participants, further observation and data collection about the local setting, and thorough tracing of ruling relations in a full IE could possibly uncover the ruling relations of one or several social identities in the ongoing production of unpaid overtime work in social work. Uncovering how “abstractions” such as “capitalism, patriarchy, [and] race” (Campbell & Gregor, 2008, p. 17) exist in the material and physically lived everyday world of people is possible and desirable in the IE research approach.

Chapter Seven: Conclusion

At the beginning of this thesis, I discussed my personal experience with unpaid overtime work, and how that experience inspired my take-up of this topic for my social work research. At the early stage of my project, my research question was: how do social workers come to perform unpaid overtime work in non-profit social service organizations? That remains the central guiding question of my project, although I came to realize that this project alone, as a pre-or beginning IE inquiry, could not answer that question in full. As I continued to study IE and its methodology, I established that the task of this thesis would be to develop a problematic, or make a topic for IE study of the everyday experience of unpaid overtime work of social workers. After collecting initial data, I also determined that I could not follow my original path and only study the role of activist identity/social justice commitments in organizing unpaid overtime of social workers. Instead, I would examine more broadly the local social relations visible to me and uncover knowledge which could be used to formulate at least two problematics. I accomplished this by organizing and formulating three accounts of the everyday experience of unpaid overtime, highlighting the key attributes of these accounts necessary for IE analysis, analyzing and indexing the activities in all three accounts to determine whether similarly organized activities were occurring, and identifying potential threads of ruling in the local settings described by the research participants. Additionally, I did some basic analysis of the social organization of the non-payment of overtime work, and suggested the

possible routes to performing a full IE based on the problematic(s) established herein.

To undertake this study, I interviewed three southern Ontario social workers who performed unpaid overtime work on a regular basis at their jobs about their work, and what they know about doing unpaid overtime. I followed up these interviews by asking them to list the tasks and responsibilities they have at their job, and asking additional questions over email to complete their accounts. The type of data collected, and the manner in which it was analysed was organized according to institutional ethnography methodology. This topic in particular has not been the focus of an institutional ethnography, although researchers of social work and other caring labour professions regularly use institutional ethnography to investigate contradictory aspects of their everyday lives and work (Fast & Rankin, 2017; Janz, Nichols, Ridzi, & McCoy, 2014; Ng, 1988). This thesis contributes new knowledge about the material conditions of social workers' unpaid overtime work and the social organization of overtime work non-payment in particular, which could be used to take up a fuller IE. It offers a new way to look at the previously identified social issue of excessive and ongoing unpaid overtime work of social workers, and begins to provide clarity about the social processes which stretch far beyond the social work workplace which organize the lives and work of social workers.

What became clear about the performance of social worker's unpaid overtime work, is that there appears to be multiple different interlocking sets of

ruling relations which are playing a role in producing unpaid overtime. How the work becomes 'unpaid' is somewhat visible in the local setting, and can be quite confidently linked to existing legislation. The 'overtime work' component itself, and how it is reproduced for days, weeks, and months by social workers is more difficult to determine. However, clues and threads exist in the local setting and are discussed in this study, and surely there are more which were not observed, or not identified for what they were in this thesis research. Understanding how social workers are coordinated to work extensive, draining, and unjust unpaid overtime work-while perhaps more complex than it appears on the surface-has proven to be an interesting research question so far. Seeking to answer this question will hopefully continue to produce useful knowledge for social workers should it get taken up as a topic for research again in the future.

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Appendix A: Recruitment Poster



SOCIAL WORKERS NEEDED AS PARTICIPANTS FOR A RESEARCH STUDY ABOUT UNPAID OVERTIME WORK

We are looking for volunteers to take part in a study of the **performance of unreported and unpaid overtime work in non-profit organizations** by social workers.

*You would be asked to:
participate in one 45-90 minute
interview, answer follow-up
questions over e-mail or in a
short follow-up interview, and
write a list of your work tasks &
responsibilities.*

For more information about this study, or to volunteer for this study, please contact:

Emma Higgs, MSW Student

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This study has been reviewed by, and received ethics clearance by the McMaster Research Ethics Board.

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Appendix B: Interview Guide & Follow-up Interview Guide

Interview Guide

This guide gives you an idea of what I would like to learn about how an activist identity comes to organize the work of social workers in non-profits to perform unpaid and unreported overtime. Interviews will be one-to-one and will be open-ended (not just “yes or no” answers). Because of this, the exact wording may change a little. Sometimes I will use other short questions to make sure I understand what you told me or if I need more information when we are talking such as: “So, you are saying that ...?”), to get more information (“Please tell me more?”), or to learn what you think or feel about something (“Why do you think that is...?”).

Interview Preamble: *During this interview, I will be asking you about your social work, your job and employment at a non-profit social service organization, your identity as an activist, and performing unpaid and unreported overtime. If at any time you would like to stop the interview, or pause for a break, please let me know. We can also skip a question you do not feel comfortable answering. There are no consequences for choosing to stop or pause the interview. I’ll be recording the interview with an audio recorder and taking some written notes during the interview. Are you ready to begin?*

Social Work and Employment at Non-Profit Organizations

- How long have you been a social worker?
- How long have you been working for a non-profit organizations?
- How long have you been working at your current or recent job at a non-profit social service organization?
- Can you tell me about the organization you work for?
- Can you tell me generally about your job and your work responsibilities?

Activist Identity:

- How did you begin to be interested in activism?
 - How did you learn about activism?
 - When did you come to identify as an activist?
- How would you describe your activist identity now?
 - What about being an activist is important to you?

Unpaid and Unreported Overtime

- How often do you think you work overtime at your job which is not reported, and so not paid?
- Can you tell me about a time you worked at your job and worked overtime without formally reporting it, and without being paid for it?
 - Or, a time you worked more hours than you were paid for at your job?
- Can you tell me about why you worked overtime in that instance?
 - Or, what you were thinking about in that instance?
- Can you tell me about how that felt?
- How would you describe the link between your unpaid and unreported overtime work, and your identity as an activist?
- Is there anything else you would like me to know about your instances of working unpaid and unreported overtime and its relationship to your identity as an activist?

Postamble: That's all of the questions for this interview. Thank you so much for your time today. Some of the things we have discussed today are very personal and perhaps stressful. If you require mental health crisis support, you can call 905-972-8338 to reach the Crisis Outreach and Support Team. You may also be able to access mental health counselling for free or low cost through your employee assistance plan. Thank you again.

Follow-up Interview Guide

This guide includes examples of the type of questions which will likely be asked of research participants in either a full follow-up interview, or as a few questions sent over email or phone. The questions will be directly relevant to information they shared in their interviews, and the general research topic. The exact questions which will be asked are impossible to know ahead of time. This guide does not present a specific sequence of questions meant to be asked in order, but rather is a list of possible questions.

Preamble: Hello! While beginning to analyze the data from our earlier interview, a few questions arose which I would appreciate your help with answering. If it is all right with you, I would like to ask you a few follow-up questions. Whatever you say here will be confidential, and we can stop the interview, or take a break at any time.

1. How did your introduction to/beginnings in doing activism or thinking of yourself as an activist which you discussed affect the way you thought about your paid work?

2. You explained how you think your activist identity or commitment to activism and social change impacts your performance of unpaid and unreported overtime at work. Can you say more about the underlying assumptions you have which make staying at your job logical, or rational?
3. You discussed a form at your work which you use to record your hours. Can you send me a picture or copy of it with a short explanation of how it gets filled out?
4. You discussed why you choose to stay at your job, despite being frustrated with your unpaid and unreported overtime. What do you think it would take for you to choose to leave that job? What would have to change, or what would have to happen?
5. Can you say more about how you connect social work and activism to each other?

Thank you so much for all your help with this research study!

Appendix C: Letter of Information and Consent

Date: _____



Letter of Information and Consent

A Study of/about: The Influence of Activist Identity or Involvement on the Performance of Unpaid and Unreported Overtime by Social Workers employed in Non-Profit Social Service Organizations

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Purpose of the Study:

I am a Masters of Social Work student who has worked in a variety of non-profit social services organizations. I am interested in using this experience to inform a research project which examines an occurrence I noticed and experienced during my work-the phenomenon of workers working overtime without reporting or being paid for that work. In this research, I would like to learn specifically how social workers who identify as activists or who participate in activism come to work unreported and unpaid overtime within social service organizations.

The OASW released a report based on data collected in 2017 which demonstrated that social workers employed in 'community multi-service agencies' had among the lowest satisfaction with their career, position, and the lowest pay of Ontario social workers. This research resonates with my previous experience in similar social service work settings, and suggests that this broad sector requires improvement to produce a better and more just experience of labour for its workers. I am especially interested in how being an activist or someone who participates in activism comes to organize the experience of working unreported and unpaid overtime within social service organizations. This study seeks to contribute to the process of identifying issues and potential ways to make improvements should they exist in the community social services field of social work.

I am doing this research for a thesis as part of the requirement for my Masters of Social Work.

Procedures involved in the Research:

First, you will be asked to write a list of your tasks or responsibilities at your job. You can choose whether you would like to write the list by hand or to type it on the computer. You will bring a copy of the list to the research interview or e-mail it to the Student Investigator after the interview.

You will participate in an interview conducted by the Student Investigator. The interview will be recorded using an audio recorder. During the interview, you will be asked questions about your work responsibilities, your workplace and employer, your identity and ideas regarding activism, and your experience of working unpaid and unreported overtime. You will also be asked about how long you have worked as a social worker, and how long you have been employed by non-profit organizations. The interview should take between 45 and 90 minutes. Your personal information, and the name of your employer, will be confidential. Your participation is completely voluntary, and you can choose to end the interview at any time.

I may contact you via e-mail or phone after the initial interview to ask follow-up questions about the research, or to request a follow-up interview or meeting directly pertaining to collecting data for the thesis. If you agree to participate in a follow-up interview, we will schedule the additional follow-up interview at that time. The questions in this interview will be related to information discussed in your initial interview, and directly related to the same themes as the initial interview (ie. your work, ideas surrounding activism, overtime work). The purpose of a follow-up interview or questions will be to gain more detailed relevant information after doing an initial analysis of the first interview.

I may ask you to provide copies or images of documents relevant to your work, such as copies of forms, media materials, or policies of your employer which are publicly available or which are not sensitive or personal internal documents (eg. a blank timesheet, a copy of the staff overtime policy). I will clarify with you prior to requesting a copy of a document whether it is personal, confidential, or sensitive to the organization-I will not collect any personal, confidential, or sensitive internal documents. Please only provide blank versions of any forms, sheets, or other fillable documents. Any excerpts or reference to documents included in the final thesis will be anonymized to mitigate any risk to you.

You may choose to not participate in any follow-up communication and data collection, including follow-up interviews, providing relevant documents, or answering questions regarding the research over e-mail.

All data from this research project will be confidential. Digital files containing research data, such as transcriptions of the interviews, will be stored in an encrypted file on a password-protected computer. Physical files, such as the signed consent forms, will be stored in a locked cabinet.

Potential Harms, Risks or Discomforts:

There are no physical or financial risks to participating in this research. Your place of employment will not be disclosed, and therefore there is no risk of retaliation from your employer. Any documents you provide will be anonymized, and therefore will not be reproduced in a manner which is identifiable in the thesis.

I may use anonymized quotations from the interview transcripts or follow-up question responses in the final copy of the thesis. When you share information during the

research process, please keep in mind that you could be identifiable by the stories you tell.

There is minimal emotional risk to participating in this research. Discussing troubling or stressful work situations may cause uncomfortable emotions or reactions.

Potential Benefits:

This research will not benefit you directly. I hope that this research contributes to a better understanding of social work labour in non-profit organizations in Ontario, and provides direction for making improvements if appropriate.

Participation and Withdrawal:

Your participation in this study is completely voluntary, and you may withdraw your data at any point before Friday, July 19th 2019. If you choose to withdraw from the study, data you have provided and your Letter of Consent will be destroyed or deleted. You may also choose to not answer any question or participate in any component of the data collection throughout the research process. Your information will be confidential.

Information about the Study Results:

I expect to have the study completed in September 2019. I will provide you with a summary of the research findings using your preferred method (indicated below) by October 31st 2019.

Questions about the Study:

If you have questions about this study or your participation, please do not hesitate to contact me via email or telephone at:

Emma Higgs higgse@mcmaster.ca (204) 612-0888
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This study has been reviewed by the McMaster University Research Ethics Board and received ethics clearance. If you have concerns or questions about your rights as a participant or about the way the study is conducted, please contact:

McMaster Research Ethics Secretariat
Telephone: (905) 525-9140 ext. 23142
C/o Research Office for Administrative Development and

Support

E-mail: ethicsoffice@mcmaster.ca

CONSENT

- I have read the information presented in the information letter about a study being conducted by Emma Higgs, of McMaster University.
- I have had the opportunity to review information about my involvement in this study and to receive additional details if requested.
- I understand that my participation in this research study is completely voluntary and confidential.
- I understand that I can choose to withdraw data I have provided for this study until Friday, July 19th 2019.

- I understand that the interviews will be recorded with an audio-recorder.
- I understand that I can deny to: answer any questions in the initial interview; participate in follow-up interviews; answer follow-up questions; or provide additional documents or materials.
- I acknowledge that by signing this form, I provide my consent to participate in this study as described herein.

Please select one:

Yes, I would like to receive a summary of the study's results

Please send them to me at this email address

Or to this mailing address:

No, I do not want to receive a summary of the study's results.

Name (please print): _____ Signature:

Date: _____

Appendix D: Instructions for completing list of everyday work tasks

Instructions for Creating the List of Tasks/Responsibilities at Your Job

Hello! Thank you for participating in this research study. Please see the instructions below on how to get started.

1. Please create a list of the tasks/responsibilities which you undertake at your job in a non-profit organization.
2. You may write out or type the list and bring it to the research interview. If you are not able to complete the list by the interview time, you can email it to Emma after the interview at higgse@mcmaster.ca. Please do not email your list before the research interview and submitting a signed letter of information and consent!
3. It might be helpful to mentally “walk yourself” through a day at work to help remember the many tasks you do!
4. In the list, please give some sense of how often various tasks are undertaken, or, their duration. In writing out a similar list, I found it relatively easy to organize tasks in categories such as: Daily; 2-3 times a week; Weekly; Bi-weekly/Monthly; As-Needed/On Occasion.
5. Try to be as specific and material with your characterization of the task/responsibility as possible-avoid terms that ‘don’t mean much’ to those outside of the field (ex: instead of writing “*facilitate a group education session on psychosocial health*”, try “*arrange tables and chairs in meeting room, set out writing materials, greet participants as they arrive, distribute hand out materials to participants, verbally present information on the relevant psychosocial health topic, answer questions from the participants, explain a learning activity and help participants with questions about the activity, clean-up the pens, paper, and other supplies in the meeting room afterwards*”...try to make as visible and tangible as possible the many things you do in a day.
6. If you have any questions, please don’t hesitate to email or call Emma at (204) 612-0888.

Thank you again!