

Paid in Sunsets
A Seasonal Working Life

by

Amy Rae Pearson

A Dissertation Presented in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Doctor of Philosophy

Approved April 2012 by the
Graduate Supervisory Committee:

Sarah Amira de La Garza, Chair
Mary Margaret Fonow
Robert McPhee

ARIZONA STATE UNIVERSITY

May 2012

ABSTRACT

Overwork is a long documented social problem in the United States linked to an abundance of negative outcomes. Typically this issue has been addressed organizationally at the individual level or socially as an economic structural problem. While both approaches are valid in their own ways, missing from these angles is an approach to overwork from an individual perspective. This study explores overwork from the perspective of seasonal workers in Glacier National Park who typically work for the National Park Service five months and spend the rest of the year recreating. Using qualitative interviews and observations, this piece investigates a seasonal mentality towards work in terms of agency and trust, conceptions and practices of work and life, and in terms of embodiment and spirituality. Grounded theory methods were used to develop an axiomatic analysis which informs a poetic and narrative expression of findings in concert to the discussion and implications of the study.

The findings of this study illustrate how seasonal workers present a fascinating alternative to traditional work arrangements in a capitalist system. They possess a unique approach to work and life that foregrounds life experience, freedom, and process as opposed to material goods or stability. They tend to approach work and life as an integrated and holistic pursuit as opposed to a segregated and problematic enterprise. And they tend to approach their work as an embodied and spiritual craft as opposed to something accomplished quickly and efficiently for the economic benefit of the organization.

Implications of this research suggest that agency and trust maintain a deeply interconnected and dialectical relationship which agents navigate as they build towards ontological security; that re-conceptualizing work-life as “life first” has potential for fundamentally reshaping the ways life (and work) get experienced; and that divisions between minds and bodies as they have been typically structured between white and blue collar work might be interrupted via the inclusion of the human spirit at work. These findings interrupt common practices of overwork in different ways but primarily function as a reminder that ways of thinking coincide with ways of living and working.

DEDICATION

This piece is dedicated to the seasonal workers of Glacier National Park.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Thank you to my parents, Dan and Nancy Pearson for your financial and emotional support over a lifetime and especially the last four years. Thank you to my dear advisor Amira de la Garza for your wisdom, intellectual guidance, and for the fun we have shared. Thank you to my committee members for your insights and instruction, especially Doc for encouraging me to finish the degree. Thank you Gary Lundy and Vickie Christie for your constant willingness to hear ideas and for your ongoing hope regarding the potential of the academy. Thank you seasonal workers for volunteering your time to share your depth and insights, especially Ann Piersall, Rachel Jenkins and Mary Schneider; you strong, intelligent women inspire me. Thank you Kyle Johnson, Dan Jacobs, and Matt Graves for hiring me to work in the National Park Service. Thank you Glacier National Park for being a beautiful and spiritual respite. Thank you Brian Holmes for your constant and encouraging friendship. Thank you Tiernan Warner for a safe and hospitable home to work in. Thank you Joe Wullner for just being you. Thank you Casey Moore's for being somewhere I could go just down the street to get away from it all. And thank you to my students who are always my best teachers.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
LIST OF TABLES.....	vi
LIST OF FIGURES	viii
CHAPTER	
1 INTRODUCTION	1
Background Reflections	1
Introduction	3
Literature Review & Research Questions.....	7
Literature Summary.....	30
2 METHODOLOGY & ANALYTICAL PROCEDURE.....	32
3 FINDINGS & DISCUSSION	60
Research Question 1.....	60
Research Question 2.....	90
Research Question 3	121
4 DIRECTIONS & CONCLUSIONS	153
Practical Strategies & Interventions	154
Academic & Theoretical Relevance	168
Methodological Relevance	181
Final Reflections	188
REFERENCES	190

APPENDIX

A	INTERVIEW GUIDE	206
B	INFORMED CONSENT FORM	208

LIST OF TABLES

Table	Page
1. Data Codebook	45-47

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure		Page
1.	Lessons on Trust & Agency	52
2.	Lessons on Work & Life	54
3.	Lessons on Embodiment & Spirituality	55

Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

Background Reflections

During the summer of 2006 my mother and I ran into a backcountry ranger on a hike on the southeast side of Glacier National Park in Montana. I was intrigued to see a strong young woman hiking around in the mountains alone in bear country. One year later, I found myself hiking around with her and other women who worked seasonally as rangers for the National Park Service for my thesis research regarding the identity construction of women who worked in a traditionally masculine and male-dominated work role. While my initial question concerning gendered work was prevalent for that project, I was also quickly made aware of what the participants in that study called a “seasonal lifestyle”. Since that initial research project, I have worked seasonally in Glacier every summer in concert with my work as a graduate student and teacher at Arizona State University (ASU). In many ways I have fully embraced the seasonal lifestyle I learned so much about my first summer doing research in the park.

Up to that first summer of research in Glacier, I was a hardworking, motivated young woman putting my then-husband through college and starting an arduous graduate program at The University of Montana. My notions of work to that point were limited to what I had learned from my family, in high school, and in college. What I did know was that it was important to work hard. And usually I did. That summer researching backcountry rangers changed me, though. I

talked with folks who worked outside in the mountains of Glacier four months of the year and spent the rest of the year travelling. I talked with folks who spent four months of the year working seasonally in Glacier, four months of the year working seasonally in Tahoe, and four months of the year hanging out on the beaches of Hawaii. I talked with folks who spent four months of the year in Glacier, four months wandering the countryside of New Zealand, and four months back at home in the United States with family. The notion that an individual might not always have to work, and laboriously, was a revelation.

I started my doctoral work at ASU after my first summer working seasonally as a naturalist. I think most people understand that graduate school is hard and the work demands sometimes overwhelming. I thought I was going to die. But I remembered my seasonal friends from Glacier Park who approached their lives as play, and wondered that I might not appropriate that way of working and living in my life as a graduate student. It has been difficult. I first started exploring the literature on work and overwork my first semester of school for a project on academic stress. I interviewed professors to learn about their experiences of and thoughts on the issue of overwork in the academy specifically. The greater scope of work and life literature notes however that overwork is not only a problematic issue in the academy unfortunately, but in many spheres of American society at large. Based on conversations I have had with folks working outside the academy, I believe this may be true. In fact, the normativity of overwork in our society seems so prevalent I wonder that many even recognize its

prevalence. I recall a conversation with two (white) businessmen working at a restaurant who said they could not fathom anything more important than work. (I think I mentioned sunsets.)

Seasonal workers posit an interesting contrast to current norms of overwork and even conceptions of what it means to work and live. While it is true that many people work seasonal jobs as an only viable or available option for a variety of reasons, there are others who have made intentional decisions to work seasonally in light of negative experiences in busy corporate America. I am personally fascinated by those who have chosen to take the road less travelled and have stepped outside of what has become the (over)working norm in America. These folks may have much to offer our theoretical and practical understanding and practice of work.

Introduction

In many ways, seasonal work stands in stark contrast to modern forms of labor, at least in the United States. Work arrangements in this country tend most often to trace the fiscal year based largely around accounting and taxation laws as opposed to natural weather patterns. Work since the industrial revolution and especially with the advent of technology, can be, and thus is often expected to be, done at any time. And, according to current statistics about working hours, this is often the case (Hewlett, 2007).

Overworking is a long documented social problem in the United States often addressed organizationally at the individual level via health and wellness

programs, psychological counseling, religious programs, or personality profiling (Golden, Kirby, & Jorgenson, 2006; Newton, 1995). The underlying idea is generally that the person who will make the right “fit” or who can “be” the right person whom the organization needs (i.e., the person who will overwork and sacrifice her well-being for the sake of the organization and extra money), is what is at stake as opposed to unreasonable organizational or social demands (Foucault, 1980). At the other end of the spectrum, social theorists like Nell and O’Neil (1974) or Young (1990) argue that social change in terms of work arrangements should happen at a larger social/structural level as opposed to an individual or organizational one in order to mediate for overwork.

Overwork has been linked to an abundance of negative outcomes including but not limited to stress, sickness, depression, relational issues, psychological strain, irritability, poor health, insomnia, job turnover, absenteeism, substance abuse, exhaustion, and even suicide (Cordes & Dougherty, 1993; Maslach, Schaufeli, & Leiter, 2001; Miller, Ellis, Zook, & Lyles, 1990). While underwork is likely a problem in a country as affluent as the United States, and there are those who want to work and cannot for a wide array of reasons, especially currently, overwork has been an issue of major concern for individuals across all social classes including the wealthy, the middle-class, and the poor. As Hansen (2005) so aptly demonstrates in her book *Not-So-Nuclear Families: Class, Gender, and Networks of Care*, perhaps culturally, each social class overworks for a variety of reasons; the upper class overwork in order maintain

financial status and privilege, the middle class overwork in order to attain financial status and privilege, and the lower class overwork in order to make ends meet.

Theorists and philosophers approach the issue and source of overwork differently as noted above. In his case study on professional consultants, Deetz (1998) for instance suggests that we relinquish control over our lives when we relegate them to a future promise of what we will have. In other words, Deetz suggests that we overwork in lieu of an idea about the future that is really only a distraction from our selves. We want a distraction, so we say that it is overwork towards some end, such as financial gain. Others, like Cloud (Cheney & Cloud, 2006) or Mueller (2003) argue that the politicized social systems of which we are inherently a part determine our working hour situations. If you work for a large corporate organization in America for instance, and your boss asks you to work overtime, you do it because you have to do it in order to keep your job and by extension sustain your life (e.g., mortgage, car). These theorists tend to argue that the capitalist system predicated upon consumerism which undergirds the work arrangements in this country perpetuates excessive working hours for the excessive accumulation of goods which in turn propels the system (Scher, 1999).

Seasonal work offers some deep contrasts and potentially unique insights into our country's obsession with work and our reasons why. Seasonal work is work that is literally defined by the season (Ainsworth & Purss, 2009). It is work hired specifically for the accomplishment of an organizational need based on time

of year in conjunction to landscape such as with ski resort workers who move to a cold mountain region to work for the winter season (Ainsworth & Purss, 2009) or tour reps who move to Spain to work during a busy holiday season (Guerrier & Adib, 2003). While seasonal workers can be hired for many types of work positions such as being a seasonal clerk at a hotel for instance (Adler & Adler, 2004), for this study, I am particularly interested in the experience of seasonal workers who work in an outdoor setting in order to best contrast with and try to understand contemporary (over)work practices in light of modernity.

Outdoor seasonal work, and specifically park rangers who work for Glacier National Park during the summer season, might speak to the contemporary tendency to overwork in our society for the following three reasons. First, unlike most work in contemporary society, the time and scheduling of seasonal work is dictated by the landscape where the work is accomplished. It therefore cannot be done at all hours like work on a computer often can be. Even with the advent of technology then, as the weather changes, seasonal work also changes. The patterns of the day along with the patterns of the season are what dictate working hours and working processes as opposed to bosses, accounting laws, or even say social systems such as in more traditional work arrangements (Ainsworth & Purss, 2009). Next and relatedly, working on the land is aesthetically, functionally, and some would argue, spiritually distinctive from working inside in an office (Hagan, 2006). The work is different; it is physical, often arduous, and takes place on a natural landscape. In these ways, it involves

an active meeting of the mind, body and spirit, (as opposed to minds who need to go exercise their bodies or spirits when work is over), and this difference likely changes the tone, experience, and effects of what it means to (over)work (Crawford, 2006; Griffiths, 2006). Finally, seasonal work is not typically monetarily lucrative. Those individuals attracted to this form of work inevitably work for other and/or additional reasons (Guerrier & Adib, 2003). Exploring seasonal worker motivation seems particularly intriguing in light of the standard financial or material motivations typically articulated and often assumed as the baseline for reasons people tend to overwork and sacrifice their health and well-being doing so, even if those are not the real reasons (Deetz, 1998).

Literature Review & Research Questions

For this study, I review three categories of literature broadly related to overwork and relate them to seasonal work as reported in a series of interviews and through fieldwork conducted with seasonal workers in the National Park Service at Glacier National Park. I use literature on Structuration Theory (Giddens, 1984, 1991; Kirby & Krone, 2002; McPhee & Iverson, 2009; Scott & Trethewey, 2008), literature on conceptualizations of work and life (Golden, Kirby & Jorgenson, 2006; Kirby, Wieland & McBride, 2006; Trethewey, Tracy & Alberts, 2006), and literature pertaining to meaning and embodiment at work (Acker, 1990; Cameron, 1992; Crawford, 2006; Nell & O'Neill, 1972) to pose a series of three research questions geared to better understand the issue of contemporary overwork in juxtaposition to seasonal work. After this review, I

outline the methods utilized in this project to obtain information regarding seasonal workers. First, I provide a basic overview of seasonal work.

Seasonal Work Overview

The academic literature related to seasonal work is surprisingly scant. Temporary, contingent, part-time or non-standard work has been more often studied (Burgess & Connell, 2006; Guerrier & Adib, 2003; Gossett, 2006). Major foci in this literature includes issues such as organizational commitment (Swales, 2002), concerns over the social and economic impact of non-traditional work overall (Pocock, 2003), worker performance and incentives, management concerns (Koene & van Riemsdijk, 2005), and worker organizational identification (Gossett, 2006). This literature tends to focus on non-traditional work from a managerial perspective in the sense that the underlying aim is to capitalize on this workforce most effectively and efficiently as organizational employees. Ainsworth and Purss' (2009) case study on seasonal ski resort laborers and Adler and Adler's (2004) book *Paradise Laborers: Hotel Work in the Global Economy* on the other hand, are studies geared more toward understanding non-traditional work from an employee's experience and perspective. Hagan's (2006) book *Seasonal Disorder: Ranger Tales From Glacier National Park* is another valuable resource in which the author humorously details his experiences and attractions to seasonal work as an interpretive ranger.

Seasonal work differs from temporary or contingent work in at least two important ways. First, seasonal work can be permanent (Ainsworth & Purss, 2009). A major difference between traditional work, temporary work, and seasonal work is *where* work happens as opposed to its temporality, although term lengths tend to be an important component of seasonal work. Seasonal work traces the *season* which directly relates to the weather patterns and landscape where the work is being done. For temporary or permanent work, this typically is not the case. Second and relatedly, seasonal workers are not temporary workers in the sense that they are necessarily provisional members of an organization. Many seasonal employees retain what they term a “seasonal lifestyle” in which they return to their work positions or at least the same organization for what could be an entire career (Hagan, 2006). Seasonal workers then are not inherently an additional or disposable component to an organization’s actual workforce, but can function and be valued as core and returning organizational members. So while research on temporary work relates to seasonal work in the sense that both forms are atypical in contrast to modern organizational life, seasonal work is drastically different in ways that may be particularly important to this study.

Adler and Adler’s (2004) research on hotel work highlights the experiences of four major groupings of non-traditional resort workers in Hawaii including managers, new immigrants, locals, and seekers. The motivations articulated by the members of these groups differed in terms of why they worked transiently at the resort, the amount of time they spent working, and in terms of

race, class and gender. Predictably, those in management tended to be young, white, male and from the mainland, and they were motivated to work hard in order to earn a certain level of material comfort. New immigrants tended to be from the Philippines, Tonga, Samoa and Vietnam, and were motivated to work hard in order to “buy land, [and] to acquire the material possessions that were part of the American dream” (Adler & Adler, 2004, p. 46). Locals included “brown-skinned” people born and raised in Hawaii and generally working at resorts out of convenience.

Most fascinating to me and probably most applicable to this study were the seekers: typically young, white, males out to gain experience and adventure as opposed to material possessions, who had often left traditional working lives in order to do so. “Much like the hippies of a previous era, they focused on the present, with the future occupying less importance” (Adler & Adler, 2004, p. 66). They “engaged in journeys of self-exploration and discovery, leaving the security of conventional life behind to put themselves “out there” to discern their personal capabilities” (p. 68). Adler and Adler’s seekers worked at the resort for the *experience* of it and the spiritual dimension as opposed to the money and material benefit. They worked fewer hours than the other non-traditional workers at the resort and spent more of their time focusing on fun, usually involving physically active outdoor activities where they pushed their bodies to their limits.

The seasonal ski resort laborers in Ainsworth and Purs’s (2009) study similarly argued that they worked for the *experience* of living and working in a

new environment. They were attracted to the organization because, “They valued the resort lifestyle and experience, the social activities and their ability to participate in snow sports” (p. 229). Very few participants were seeking permanent work, but instead came for the winter experience to work and play, went somewhere else to work seasonally for the summer, and returned to the ski resort again for the winter. Interestingly, Ainsworth and Purss’ participants did not distinguish between work and social life. Their work was also their play.

Agency & Trust in Structuration Theory

Anthony Giddens is a political sociologist chiefly concerned with the (problematic) ways society gets structured in modernity. In *The Constitution of Society* (1984), he offers a comprehensive, thorough explication of his theory on structuration which examines concepts of agency, structure, time, space, consciousness, and change. His theory has been applied broadly; in accountancy (MacIntosh & Scapens, 1990; Roberts & Scapens, 1985), in the sociology of technology (Orlikowski, 1992; Orlikowski, Yates, Okamura, & Fujimoto, 1995), in management (Sydow, van Well, & Windeler, 1998; Sydow & Windeler, 1998), in geography (Goss & Lindquist, 1995), in philosophy (McNally & Wheale, 1994), in political science (Cash, 1996), and most pertinent for this paper, in organizational theory (Banks & Riley, 1993; McPhee, 2004; McPhee & Canary, 2009; Poole, 1985; Poole, Seibold, & McPhee, 1996; Witmer, 1997).

Organizational communication scholars have frequently used Structuration Theory to explore such concepts as organizational climate and culture (Bastien,

McPhee, & Bolton, 1995; Helmer, Martin, & Poole, 1985; Witmer, 1997). More recently, scholars have taken it up to theorize on and examine organizational policies (Buzzanell & Lui, 2005; Kirby & Krone, 2002; LeGreco, 2007), or, more philosophically, to consider the means by which organizations get communicatively constituted (McPhee & Iverson, 2009; MCPhee & Zaug, 2000). Others have borrowed particular concepts from Giddens' theory in order to explain specific organizational phenomena, such as when Scott and Trethewey (2008) use the notion of ontological (in)security to examine the underpinnings of occupational risk for firefighters. Or, when Kirby and Krone (2002) use the theory broadly to illustrate the ways employees in a government organization create and re-create work-family policies and policy implementation through their language practices.

The theory's abstractness and its extensiveness are both to its advantage and its disadvantage. Gregson (1989) and others (e.g., Stinchcombe, 1986; Thrift, 1985) have criticized it for having little potential as an empirical generator, arguing that it is by nature too metatheoretical to have any real impact. Relatedly, some have argued that the theory's ontological emphasis functions to neglect material organizational concerns of gender, race, and sexuality -- which fundamentally shape the ontological knowledge and understanding of the agents the theory espouses to explain (Archer, 1982; Poole & MCPhee, 2005).

Despite its critiques, Structuration Theory is a particularly valuable theory for understanding our state of overwork in modernity and perhaps why seasonal

work could potentially act as a mediator to this issue in some regards. Giddens (1984, 1991) argues that at the core of being human, we are existentially fearful in the sense that we do not understand why it is that we are alive and we simultaneously fear death (see also Tillich, 1977). Because we are existentially afraid – which has increased with the advent of modernity due to the separation of space and time resulting in disembedding mechanisms that perpetuate that separation (e.g., money) – we do things like creating routines in order to establish “a sense of trust in the continuity of the object-world and in the fabric of social activity” (Giddens, 1984, p. 60). In other words, because we do not have as many tight-knit communities and localized religions that ground us in the immediacy of our lives that we can depend on as we have had in pre-modern times, we are left to counter our existential and exasperated modern anxiety by establishing a sense of our selves via routines. Not only are these routines supposed to stave off our ontological insecurity and provide us a sense of identity by giving us purpose, they in turn structure society.

As modern society has developed in concert with our political and social systems and as work has changed as technology has changed and globalization has penetrated almost every point of our globe (Reich, 1992), it makes some sense that overwork has become the norm in most contemporary societies. In many ways, it seems we have to overwork in order to maintain our social systems as we have structured them so that our societies can function, however problematically. And as we overwork in order to be part of our societies in the name of indulging

in even the basic privileges our societies have to offer, I fear that we are missing the point of life. Who have we become as human beings that we must continually be doing things (i.e., working) in order to feel normal? As Deetz (1998) notes in his case study with overworked professional consultants, it is almost as though we get caught up in our work in order to avoid inherent ontological insecurity, but then we say the reason we are caught up in our work is to afford our basic existential needs. It becomes a patterned routine that we will protect at literally any cost because the routine itself has become the very sustenance of our lives, not the food we are supposedly working for. What we do not seem to recognize is what we actually need.

What I am wondering is whether or not there is a point at which an individual human being can disengage from these routines and carve out a different working life even in a society structured around capitalism and excess such as in the United States. Seasonal workers like the ones in Ainsworth and Purss' (2009) study, and the seekers in Adler and Adler's (2004) study, seasonal ranger and writer Hagan (2006), and many of the seasonal workers and drifters I have encountered firsthand seem to be attempting to do so. Certainly different societies are structured differently in ways that matter regarding overwork. I am not addressing overwork in terms of third world countries, but am dedicated to understanding unnecessary overwork in conjunction to anxiety in the United States.

Other important points of access that connect Structuration Theory with seasonal workers are Giddens' expositions on the concepts of agency and trust. Giddens (1984) defines agency as an agents' "capability of doing things" (p. 9) or capacity to have "acted differently in any phase of conduct" (p. 9). Agency is most basically one's capacity to act. It is and has been a central question for human beings for centuries in all manners of disciplines, and is an especially important question in application to work and overworking in society now. The question regarding the limits of agency – whether they be social, psychological, economic, political, personal, spiritual, etc., – is at the forefront of a majority of the questions regarding human existence. Can we act otherwise? (Can we stop working so much?) (How) are we bounded, and to what degree?

Giddens (1991) like Goffman (1971) mentions trust as an important component to the daily routines that we establish in modernity to combat anxiety and develop self-identity. He argues it is necessary to retain a certain level of trust that life will continue as predicted in order for life to function normally. Might agency be equal in terms to trust in action? To take any action, is it not inherent that trust is present as you take that action or do that thing, (but not necessarily at the conscious level)? Any movement at all seems simultaneously an act of trust and agency; you are doing something so trust was/is present in the movement of it. It would not have been possible otherwise. Giddens (1984) himself writes that "the emotional competence associated with trust seems closely

connected with the cognitive understanding of agency as a property of distinct beings” (p. 58). We have to have trust in order to have agency.

In many ways, seasonal work requires different levels or forms of trust than other work. Because the work is not as contingent upon bureaucratic laws, but upon the weather, and because the work is not as explicitly tied to standard narratives of overwork in terms of making money, a seasonal workers’ trust itself cannot be tied to traditional conceptions of trust that seem to be perpetuating overwork. Relatedly, the trust many seasonal workers seem to retain presents itself as a fascinating exhibition of agency. Like Adler and Adler’s (2004) seekers, many seem embarked on mesmerizing journeys of self-discovery in which they follow the seasons in order to garner interesting experiences. They seem unbounded by standard norms of overwork. They seem ontologically secure and courageous in this regard. As Giddens (1991) writes: “To be ontologically secure is to possess, on the level of the unconscious and practical consciousness, ‘answers’ to fundamental existential questions which all human life in some way addresses” (p. 47). This review leads to the first research question in this study:

RQ1: What might seasonal work/ers teach us theoretically and practically about trust and agency in terms of overwork?

Work-Life Justice

When we say that we overwork, what is it that we really mean? What does it even mean to work? What does it mean to play? These questions intersect with broader questions concerning what kinds of lives we want to lead and what

kinds of societies we want to have. Typically, the issue of overwork has been conceptualized and studied in terms of work-life balance (Kirby, Wieland & McBride, 2006). Other frames used to look at the issue of overwork include work-life conflict (Golden, Kirby & Jorgenson, 2006), roles (Kirby, Golden, Medved, Jorgenson, & Buzzanell, 2003), wellness (Farrell & Geist-Martin, 2005), and even crystallization (Trethewey, Tracy & Alberts, 2006). These conceptualizations are important because the ways social issues get framed influence the ways they get addressed. For instance, calling overwork an issue of work-life conflict suggests that work and life inherently function differently, separately, and antagonistically. If it is true (conceptually and practically) that work and life conflict, the impetus towards resolution is determining how that they might not. A resolution along these lines might resolve to developing stricter boundaries between work and life which simply cannot solve the issue of having to leave work early to pick up one's sick child from school for example (Tracy, 2004).

A host of solutions have been implemented or suggested as potential mediators for the problem of overwork in the United States. Workplace flexibility has been a major push from the federal government over the past four years (Council on Women and Girls, 2010), and from popular presses over the last decade (e.g., *USA Today*, *The New York Times*). The idea here is that if workers are allotted more flexible work situations, they will be able to organize their time most suitably for their lives and ideally “work less”. Golden (2001)

points out though that, “Flexible work schedules are spreading, but workers sometimes must be willing to increase their hours markedly, work evening shifts, or switch to part-time status, self-employment, or certain occupations... This may entail a sacrifice of leisure time, compensation, or a predictable workweek” (p. 50). While the idea of flexible work seems appealing, the reality of it is that it might not solve the overwork problem at all, but just transpose it or even exasperate it. Technology advocates have argued since at least the 1960s that the ongoing development of more advanced systems would drastically increase the amount of time Americans spend on leisure (Putnam, 2000), but instead we function in an increasingly complex world inundated by the ease and constancy of information (Postman, 2005). We can work flexibly in the sense that we can nearly work anywhere and anytime. And many of us do (Kinman & Jones, 2008).

The overwork situation in this country is negatively affecting people of all ages, races and genders in interrelated but unique ways. As many have noted (Evans & Grant, 2008; Hansen, 2005; Hewlett, 2007; Jorgensen, 2006), women are often the ones who suffer most within traditional models of work which require exorbitant amounts of “face time” in the office and increasingly long hours of work each week. It has typically fallen on women to accomplish their work in the public sphere, and then to go home and work the “double shift” with the family. This leaves them little “time” to do things besides “working”, and as Warner (2005) points out, many women feel like they have gone crazy or that they are on the verge of it. The traditional work model has not necessarily served

men's interests well, either. Warner (2005) describes a household in which a male breadwinner works thirteen hour days, comes home for one mind-numbing hour of television at night, and then works all weekend (so the family can afford their upper-middle class lifestyle). Children also suffer with the overwork situation in America. Hansen (2005) illustrates the difficulty all classes of people can experience locating suitable and dependable childcare where both parents work, and also for single-parent families. In addition, I can imagine that spending time with parents who are overworked, tired, and stressed is not ideal for children when they finally do get to see their parents (Evans & Grant, 2008; Hochschild, 1997).

Older Americans suffer under current work arrangements. Thane (2010) writes that "the talents and skills of many older people and many younger women are under-used, while those active in the workforce are under greater work pressure than before" (p. 3). Thane argues that negative stereotypes concerning older peoples' work capacities and aptitudes for technology are functioning to keep them out of the workforce. Were they to be hired, they would likely enjoy an added sense of meaning and purpose (Brooke & Taylor, 2005), and work to alleviate the pressure of those who feel the most harried to accomplish all of the organizational tasks (i.e., full-time workers (especially those with advanced education), women, people aged 25 to 54, and parents of younger children, especially single parents) (Goldberg, 2000; Putnam, 2000, p. 189).

Interestingly, worker discrimination also contributes to overwork in our society. In Adler and Adler's (2004) study on hotel workers in Hawaii, (non-white, poor) new immigrants and (educated, young, white, male) managers worked more hours than the locals and seekers, but for different reasons. Many of the new immigrants worked multiple "low-status, low-paying, difficult jobs" (Adler & Adler, p. 45) in order to obtain what many consider standard necessities in America, like a home, while the managers overworked in order to garner prestige and successful careers. In corporate America where most of the country's money is handled, the central workforce overworking is largely white and male, and dominated by particular cultural and behavioral traditions (e.g., masculine hegemony) (Hewlett, 2007). So while (white, male) corporate workers may be suffering the negative consequences of overwork, they often continue to be reluctant to share their work (and resources) with minority others (Tracy & Rivera, 2009).

In light of the many constituents of the population overwork affects, other recent suggestions for creating better work situations in this country include creating more effective family support programs through child care and after-school programs (Hennessy, 2009), creating organizational policies that better include the needs and perspectives of those organizational members typically marginalized (Kirby & Krone, 2002; Lewis, 1997), instituting shorter work weeks more akin to European standards (Jacobs & Gerson, 2004), creating alternative work models like job sharing or compressed work weeks (Hewlett, 2007), and

combating stigma through talk regarding minority workers (Tracy & Rivera, 2009).

Considering the breadth and depth of the overwork problem in America, it is clearly an issue of broad social concern. At the heart of the issue I believe is a deep yearning to use the time we have in our lives well. The negative personal, organizational and social costs of overwork cannot be worth the time and energy that gets lost in the name of owning things or becoming a famous career person. We each should have the time and space we need to be the people we want to be and do the work we want to do in order to best contribute to the greater good of humanity (Neill & O'Neil, 1972). As Young (1990) so eloquently notes in terms of affirmative action and similar governmental processes, *it is necessary* sometimes to give according to need as opposed to commonly held conceptions of justice that become equal to the fair and equal distribution of goods. We all need to ask ourselves what kind of a society we desire. The one we have created in which overwork reigns, simply is not working. The plans we have created to mediate for overwork, are not working either.

Overwork has largely been conceptualized as an issue of work and life colliding. As such, it has largely been addressed along those terms. If overworking is the problem, we want more of life! Thus we have developed solutions at work to try to enhance the time we have at life (e.g., work flexibility, better technology, more effective organizational policies). I wonder what would happen if we reversed our tactics. If we were overliving, would we develop

solutions at life to try to enhance the time we have at work? (That might work!)

The point I hope I am making though is that our conceptualizations of the problem of overwork as an either/or battle between work and life may itself be the at the center of the problem (Watzlawick, Weakland, & Fisch, 1974). If our time is segregated into work time versus life time, and work time is taking up more of the pie than life, work becomes this malevolent creature we hate that stresses us out and makes us sick. What is more, cramming work and life into the only two components of our human experience can function to obscure the potentially infinite dimensions of a lifetime. Work is *part* of life, family is *part* of life, laughter is *part* of life, the natural world is *part* of life, etc. Segregating work from life conflates it conceptually and practically to the larger whole of existence. It is overwork personified. “Life appears only as a means to life” (Marx, 1844). We forget that work is a concept we have created to label what we do as human beings in exchange for symbolic tokens (Foucault, 1980) and not something every other experience should fit nicely around.

Seasonal workers do not seem to make these same distinctions between work and life or work and play. In part, this likely has to do with “place” in the sense that seasonal workers typically spend their time “working” and “playing” in the same environment. Akin to in pre-industrial times, a seasonal worker’s office is usually his or her immediate surroundings as opposed to a building she drives to every morning at nine o’clock. Seasonal workers live and play where they work; there is no physical or conceptual segregation. Relatedly, time seems much

more fluid for seasonal workers than for traditional workers. It is often time to start working when the sun comes up and to eat lunch when the work is at a good stopping point. Organizations like Google and IBM have famously created luxurious office environment/resorts where workers can sleep when they are tired or go eat in the cafeteria when they are hungry. (And workers seem really happy at these companies.) In some ways, they seem to have re-created a more organic work experience similar to that of a seasonal worker. In seasonal work, what needs to get done often gets done not solely based on mandated schedules or the market's prerogatives, but based on the right time (de la Garza, writing as Gonzalez, 2000). When the harvest is nigh, the farmers are ready. In many ways, seasonal work has to be highly intuitive and natural. Distinctions or segregations concerning the facets of life are unnecessary and potentially problematic in juxtaposition to the ways they have developed in typical organizational life which is usually highly institutionalized and regulated.

I wonder though that modern work-life as it abounds contemporarily might be reorganized via reconceptualizations of the segregations of life spheres as we have constructed and embraced them. The current Occupy Wall Street Movement protesting financial greed and corruption in the corporate world in America which is leaderless and truly grass-rooted seems like a good start. Like many anarchist groups who believe in the need to rupture society's (capitalistic) structures to refigure and reconstitute new egalitarian formations of social life (Williams, 2007; Wendt, 1992), reconceptualizations of society and the reframing

of social issues can work to rupture ways of thinking and being that fundamentally shape the ways we function as human beings. It is clear we need a new way of working, one that incorporates what we need as a community of individuals on this planet as opposed to what seems fair (to individuals) according to logics, traditions, and philosophies that have failed us (Connell, 2007; Young, 1990). New ways of thinking are imperative for new ways of being and working (Langer, 2009). Seasonal workers represent a small but compelling group of individuals working and living alternatively in the midst of a largely overworked (and overpaid) corporate America. Their ways of thinking about and living life integratedly could likely offer important insights to the larger social fabric of this country. This review leads to the second research question in this study:

RQ2: What might seasonal work/ers teach us theoretically and practically about conceptions of work and life in terms of overwork?

Meaningful Embodied Work

Our lives are literally all that we have. How we spend our time matters. Our goals and values, and our desires and opportunities, inevitably differ across the globe. But the desire to live well must be a commonality. In so many regards, we cite overwork for draining many of America's population of contented living. Another entry point into the overwork conversation then is via (work) contentment, or what communication scholars have typically labeled *meaningful work* (Broadfoot, Carlone, Medved, Aakaus, Gabor, & Taylor, 2008; Cheney,

Zorn, Planalp, & Lair, 2008). When we spend our time well, it is not often that we call it work, and usually not overwork, at least in the United States.

Marx (as cited in Rachels & Tillman) argued that the externalization of labor (i.e., the alienation of the worker from her work) resulted in a worker, “not affirming himself in his work but denying himself, feeling miserable and unhappy, developing no free physical and mental energy but mortifying his flesh and ruining his mind” (p. 174). Marx envisioned a world in which every activity undertaken would be non-alienating in the sense that he believed that work should be done for its own sake on its own terms because it was an enjoyable pursuit based on the Kantian adage to develop one’s talents best in order to best contribute to society (Nell & O’Neill, 1972). More recently, Crawford (2006) somewhat similarly argues that the central problem with contemporary work is our disembodiment from it. He illustrates how the historical progression of work from skilled manual labor in the 1600s through to the industrial revolution and Taylor’s Scientific Management through to more current forms of abstract technological “white-collar” work has gradually and unfortunately resulted in the association of work with “mind” at the expense of “body”. The consequence, he argues, is the degradation of “blue-collar” and craft work, which he says is intrinsically rich cognitively, socially and psychically. For both Marx and Crawford, humankind’s alienation from work is a major social issue not only leading to probable personal discontentedness and general social unrest, but to production for the sake of production, and excess.

While Marx's discontent with the externalization of labor directly points towards capitalism as the source of worker alienation, and Crawford's critique is more directed at social and economic developments that hailed the onslaught of experts and systemization, (and more subtly towards new capitalism) as the key to America's success, both argue that the fundamental problem with labor as it is organized is that human beings are alienated from the *craft* of their work. Though neither theorist talks about a result of this alienation in terms of overwork, the phrase "overwork" likely has to do with some form of discontent with the work itself. Production for production's sake pays little heed to material outcomes, worker needs (e.g., sleep, food, family, friends), a job well done, or to working hours. It does not matter what you are doing, how artfully it is accomplished, or for how long, when the point is to produce. Craftsmanship, on the other hand, "means dwelling on a task for a long time and going deeply into it, because one wants to get it right" (Crawford, 2006, p. 4).

A similar critique about the danger of disembodiedness in contemporary work is being launched by critical feminists in organizational studies who are urging scholars to "return the body back to work" (Ashcraft, in press; Heaphy & Dutton, 2008). This research notes that major streams of scholarship have omitted the body from theorizations on the organization and construction of work, and that this move is dangerous in the sense that it erases the ways work gets divided around embodied social differences, and how work gets known and valued through these divisions (Ashcraft, in press; Charles & Grusky, 2004).

Basically, by obscuring bodies when we talk about, write about, or reference “work”, we (can) ignore the unjust corporeal divisions by race, class, gender, sexual orientation, etc. present within our organizations and keep those divisions perpetuated.

Feminists have been arguing for decades, though, that disembodiedness at work is problematic in the sense that it keeps women and others “out of the organization” (Acker, 1990; Ashcraft, 2000; Ashcraft & Mumby, 2004; Forbes, 2002; Mumby & Putnam, 1992; Trethewey, 1997, 1999). As Acker (1990) writes, “within organizational logic both jobs and hierarchies are abstract categories that have no occupants, no human bodies, no gender.” Upon further examination, however, “The closest the disembodied worker doing the abstract job comes to a real worker is the [white] male worker whose life centers on his full-time, life-long job” (Acker, 1990, p. 149). The disembodied (straight white male) worker can, and in some ways seems required, to work all the time in order to maintain traditional American work as it has been structured (wherein certain organizational members retain control over organizational rewards and resources) (Hewlett, 2007). Working compulsively in order to maintain masculine white privilege though is senseless, harmful, wasteful, and likely meaningless on a fundamental level.

The (white, male) disembodied logic that perpetuates disembodiedness at work needs finally to go (Connell, 2007). Not only does it keep human beings from fully connecting with their work as argued by Marx, Crawford (2006) and

others, it keeps women and people who are non-white from entering certain spheres of work because their bodies have been deemed inappropriately suited (Acker, 1990; Ashcraft, in press), and as a logic, it perpetuates inappropriate overwork habits that function to maintain the capitalist system (itself) grounded in consumption and consumerism.

However, when the logic itself centers on disembodiedness or separateness in these regards, it is particularly difficult to dismantle because its existence is predicated on the ability to ignore that which is actually happening. While feminists like Ashcraft and Mumby (2004) have most recently asserted that the best response to hegemonic masculinity is to “bring the body back” in order to bridge it with the underlying presupposition of mind (and thus bring diverse “bodies” into our organizations), I propose a different tactic. My sense is that “bringing the body back” in order to reintegrate it with mind will fail because the logic of mind is so deeply entrenched in itself to maintain its superiority that it can ignore, and will continue to ignore, any attempts at reintegration from this angle. The mind is powerful. I believe that the only solution to the mind/body split as it has tended to function in Western societies, and especially in terms of the organization of work and overwork, has to come from the human spirit.

Spiritual philosophers often talk about work in terms of art. In *The Artist's Way* for instance, Cameron (1992) insists that all people are artists and that by nature of being human beings, we are creative. For her and many artists, work is fundamentally an expression and an embodiment of our spiritual selves as

opposed to a “productive” enterprise meant to sustain our material lives. Rather than working for material goods, this ontology towards work shifts its meaning to the *practice* of work. In this approach, work should be enjoyable, creative, unbound, spiritual – not harried, hurried, overdone, segregated. To interrupt the reigning logic of mind functioning in American organizations, we need a revival of the spirit, a new approach to work that values such life practices as self-reflexivity (Giddens, 1991), care (Tracy, 2008), awareness (de Mello, 1990), community (Akiwowo, 1983), and ecumenism (Fox, 1983). This revival has to come from the human spirit in order to spark an approach to life grounded in the ecology and interconnectedness of the human species in conjunction with the rest of the planet and beyond (Nhat Hanh, 1975). We have seen that our minds have limits and create divisions within ourselves and between people (Wilber, 2007). We need to work from our hearts.

In many ways, seasonal workers seem to approach their work in the spirit of art even within a capitalist American system. First and foremost, seasonal workers use their bodies as strenuously as their minds to accomplish their work. Their labor often entails intensive physical activity, takes long periods of time to complete, and requires creative and applied problem-solving in a natural landscape. They generally work in a spirit of craftsmanship, wholly connected to the process, experience, and product of their work (Crawford, 2006). And their work processes and products are tangible. The value of the work is based on how functional or beautiful the results are. Second, seasonal workers get the unique

experience of working in the outdoors, a place where it is easier for many to feel more connected to nature (Bateson, 2003). I wonder that one's ongoing proximity to the natural world functions as an ongoing reminder that the world reaches beyond one's immediate sphere of existence and works to encourage a spirit of interconnectedness (Nhat Hanh, 1975). In that sense I can imagine that seasonal work encompasses a spiritual component distinctive from traditional office work. This review leads to the third research question in this study:

RQ3: What might seasonal work/ers teach us theoretically and practically about embodiment and spirituality in terms of overwork?

Literature Summary

In review, overwork is a significant social issue in the United States affecting a vast majority of the population in interesting ways. Seasonal work/ers in this country present a fascinating alternative to traditional work arrangements in a capitalist system in terms of the overwork problem along a variety of facets. First, seasonal workers seem to possess a unique approach to work and life that foregrounds life experience, freedom, and process as opposed to material goods or stability. In these ways, seasonal workers could potentially speak to commonly held conceptions regarding trust and agency, and expand and refine Giddens' notions on these concepts as outlined in Structuration Theory. Second, seasonal workers seem to approach work and life as an integrated and holistic pursuit as opposed to a segregated and problematic enterprise. In these ways, seasonal workers could potentially speak to the ways we typically conceptualize, divide,

and experience work boundaries in the United States. Finally, seasonal workers seem to approach their work as an embodied and spiritual craft as opposed to something accomplished quickly and efficiently for the economic benefit of the organization. In these ways, seasonal workers could potentially speak to the ways we have typically constructed and experienced work as a disembodied and alienating activity.

Chapter 2

METHODOLOGY & ANALYTICAL PROCEDURE

In this section, I outline the methodologies utilized to obtain information regarding seasonal workers in order to answer the research questions posed above. Specifically, this section provides context into the National Park Service and Glacier National Park where the seasonal workers for this study were located, information and background regarding the participants who were involved, details surrounding procedural techniques including garnering organizational access, obtaining and collecting interviews, and engaging in fieldwork, notes on ensuring methodological rigor in this study, particulars on data analysis and interpretive procedure, and finally, insights on using poetry as a methodology in research.

The National Park Service

The National Park Service (NPS) is a bureau within the United States Department of the Interior, which is the nation's principal conservation agency (U.S. Department of the Interior, 2011). The NPS mission is to “preserve unimpaired the natural and cultural resources and values of the national park system for the enjoyment, education, and inspiration of this and future generations” (Webb, 2003, p. xi). The organization was created on August 25, 1916 when President Woodrow Wilson signed an act which enabled the official protection of America's National Parks (National Park Service, 2011a). The NPS comprises 397 areas, including every state except Delaware, the District of Columbia, American Samoa, Guam, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands for a

total of over 84 million acres of land. Just over 280 million people visited these areas in 2010 (National Park Service, 2011a).

The NPS employs about 22,000 people including permanent, temporary and seasonal workers. Approximately 10,000 of those employees are temporary or seasonal workers hired annually by the Seasonal Recruitment Operations Center NPS Human Resources Offices. The organization is headed by a Director, (currently Jonathan Jarvis), who is nominated by the President and confirmed by the Senate who presides from the headquarters office in Washington, D.C. The Director is supported by senior executives who manage national programs, policy and budget (National Park Service, 2011b), and seven Regional Directors who oversee Park Superintendents of corresponding regions and work to implement Park Service policies. Park Superintendents each direct their particular park area and the employees therein. While this chain of command seems fairly straightforward, a quick glance at the organizational chart displays a predictably convoluted, bureaucratically derived hierarchy (http://www.nps.gov/news/upload/WASO_Org-Chart.pdf).

Glacier National Park

The research for this study was conducted in Glacier National Park which was established in 1910 when President Taft signed a bill to make it America's 10th National Park. Glacier Park is located in the northwest region of the United States in Montana. It encompasses approximately 1.4 million acres of wilderness that includes mountain ranges, deep valleys, alpine meadows, dense forests,

waterfalls, about 200 lakes, and remnants of 60 glaciers that sculpted the geological terrain (Leftridge, 2003; Molvar, 1999). About 1.6 million people visit the park every year, and most visitors come to see the famous Going-to-the-Sun Road which divides the park into the West and East Sides. A small percentage of visitors take advantage of the 750 miles of trails that are maintained by rangers, trail crews and volunteers.

There is a friendly rivalry between NPS employees on the West Side and those on the East Side. Each group lays claim to living in the most beautiful place in the world, and there are some key differences. The West Side of the park is generally more populated due to its proximity to a major airport and urban facilities. The East Side of the park is more “untamed.” Part of the East Side’s wild feel stems from its proximity to the Blackfeet Indian Reservation which lies directly east of the national park boundary. Wild horses and cattle from the Reservation often find their way into park lands which has been a source of contestation for years between park officials and Native Americans who lay historical claims to the land. The wildness of the East Side is also due its remote locale. East Side NPS employees often stock up on groceries and do laundry on weekly trips over to the West Side on days off.

The terrain on the West and East Sides is strikingly dissimilar. The West Side is more densely forested, signifying a maritime influence. Cedars, birches, and larches can be found at lower elevations on the West Side, with Douglas firs and lodgepole pines covering more elevated landscapes. The East Side of the

park is where the plains meet the mountains. The terrain is rugged, and primitive. The winds often blow up to 80 miles per hour, and shape the patterns of the vegetation there (Molvar, 1999). Winters are harsh as evidenced by the few scattered homes tucked into the hillsides at the front of the mountains on the reservation.

Participants

The participants in this study included male and female seasonal and permanent NPS employees in Glacier National Park. A total of thirty-four Park Service employees were formally interviewed, including twenty seasonal employees and fourteen permanent employees. Additionally, fifteen seasonal and ten permanent employees were informally interviewed (i.e., they were not audio-recorded), making the total number of participants in this study fifty-nine. Thirty-two of these participants were male and twenty-seven were female. All participants were white except for one permanent District Ranger of Native American descent and one seasonal African American trail laborer which reflects the overall lack of racial diversity in the Park Service organization at large. Participants ranged in age from eighteen to seventy-one although the average age was thirty-one years. Most participants had worked in Glacier approximately six years, although some seasonals had been returning for over twenty and some permanent employees had been working for the Park Service nearly thirty.

Participants worked in a wide variety of positions for the park including district rangers, backcountry rangers, trail crews, fire management, fire lookout

hosts, stock training, research directing, invasive species control, biological technicians, interpretive rangers, safety officers, backcountry permitting, visitor use assistance, law enforcement, bear management, wilderness management, wildlife research, human resources, and chief rangering. In each of these jobs besides district and chief rangering which are only permanent, both permanent and seasonal positions are available.

Basic Procedures

Before conducting any research, I first obtained academic permission from the IRB office at ASU which was granted towards the end of May 2011. The next step towards negotiating organizational access was applying for a research permit through the NPS Research Review Board in Glacier National Park. This process entailed writing a short research rationale, providing an overview of my basic methods, ensuring the organization that participants would be protected, and ensuring them that the research would not interfere with either their or my own daily work assignments. I was approved for a one year research permit starting in June 2011.

To recruit participants, I utilized both formal and informal techniques. First, I developed a recruitment email which specified my aims to understand the nature of seasonal work from the seasonal worker's perspective by conducting interviews and fieldwork which was sent parkwide over the Glacier Park email listserv. Unfortunately, many seasonal workers do not retain park email addresses as they spend much of their working time in the field, so it was necessary to

determine an alternative approach. Next, I developed a similar but more concise email message which was sent to the Human Resources office who included the message as part of what the park calls “The Morning Report”. This report includes general and current park information and activities, gets emailed parkwide and to local organizations, and gets read aloud over the park radio system every morning. Finally, I utilized purposeful snowball sampling methods by locating contacts I previously knew from the organization about the study via cell phone, email or face to face contact (Lindlof & Taylor, 2002, p. 124). These contacts then provided additional contacts.

Interviews

Interviews are often used by communication scholars in qualitative research (Ashcraft, 2005; Holmer-Nadesan, 1996; Trethewey, 1997; Willis, 1977). Lindlof and Taylor (2002) argue that interviews are “particularly well suited to understand the social actor’s experiences and perspective” (p. 173). By eliciting stories, accounts, and explanations from participants, one can begin to understand their unique perceptions and understandings (Lindlof & Taylor, 2002). After participants were contacted and had agreed to an interview, a time and place was secured. Interviews took place in offices, on trails, in a barn, on mountain tops, in fire lookout towers, in restaurants, in cabins, in ranger stations, rafting on rivers, in housing units, on walks around the headquarters office, and in bars.

To begin interviews, I introduced myself and said I was interested in understanding seasonal work, particularly in the Park Service. Then, I reviewed

the informed consent form, asked participants if they had questions, and inquired about audio-recording. Interviews ranged in length from 22 minutes to 140 minutes. The average interview was approximately 60 minutes in length. Participants had the option to choose pseudonyms for research reports in order to protect confidentiality, and a handful of participants chose to do so. During interviews, participants were asked open-ended questions from an interview guide (Lindlof & Taylor, 2002) (See Appendix A). The questions on the guide invited participants to articulate their conceptions on: seasonal versus permanent work in the NPS, job happiness, work backgrounds, work and play, work motivation, organizational politics, hardship, relationships, conflict, bureaucracy, positives and drawbacks of seasonal and permanent work, work and place, work and choice, money, technology, spirituality, friendship, conceptions of the meaning and purpose of work, and social and familial expectations about work. All recorded interviews were transcribed which yielded 650 single-spaced pages of data.

Fieldwork

Communication scholars have also used participant observation as an effective qualitative methodology (Collinson, 1988; Deetz, 1998; Hodgson, 2003; Kondo, 1990). Lindlof and Taylor (2002) define participant observation as “the professional craft of experiencing and recording events in social settings” (p. 134). Participant observation allowed me to directly observe such things as the means by which participants seemed to experience work contentedness,

functionally navigate work and play, manage organizational politics, and interact with technology. Lindlof and Taylor (2002) outline several possible research roles in ethnographic research, including the complete participant, the participant observer, the observing participant, and the complete observer (p. 144-150). For this study, I interacted with participants as a participant observer although I was also very much a complete participant in my organizational role as the backcountry volunteer coordinator. So while I worked full-time for the NPS organization over the summer, all participants understood that I was simultaneously conducting research for my dissertation. This role was beneficial in the sense that I could identify very closely with the seasonal worker experience and could be privy to every aspect of this position, but it was difficult in the sense that obtaining an objective perspective of my friends and my own experiences was impossible (Ellis, 2007).

Over the course of four months, I spent almost all of my formal work time and most of my social time with seasonal workers in Glacier Park. Some of the work activities included: making visitor contacts, checking camping permits, sawing fallen trees to move them off of blocked trails, posting bear warning signs, posting fire warning/closed signs, assisting injured visitors, radio communications with dispatch, cleaning pit toilets, building pit toilets, digging drains, digging snow paths, building trails, peeling logs, changing camping permits, fixing bridge cables, pulling weeds, issuing warnings to citizens disregarding NPS rules, rebuilding campsites, assessing vegetation damage, providing historical and

practical information to visitors, checking for bear activity, and shoveling fill. Some of the social activities included: pot lucks, poker games, off-trail hikes to historic cabin settlements or to historic cave paintings produced by infamous early Park poachers, unscheduled overnight stays in rustic patrol cabins, swimming sessions in cool mountain streams, dances, storytelling sessions, bonfires, and (seemingly) luxurious meals after long dirty days on the trail.

These observations generated 460 single-spaced pages of typed field notes. Generally, field notes began as “jottings” which were “key words and phrases” (Emerson, Fretz & Shaw, 1995, p. 20) recorded by hand in a notebook upon returning from the field. I dialogued initial impressions, key events, how participants experienced and reacted to events, sensory details about action and talk including verbatim quotations from participants, and my own estimations about participants’ motivations (Emerson, Fretz, & Shaw, 1995; Lindlof & Taylor, 2002). These handwritten notes were later typed up and expanded on during lulls between observations, usually within a day or two of observing. Additionally, I kept a personal journal to record private thoughts and emotions in order to best chronicle my own experiences and transformations.

Ensuring Rigor

To establish credibility within this study, I utilized prolonged engagement and triangulation, and hope to utilize peer debriefing and member checks as outlined by Lincoln and Guba (1985). First, I spent four months working and socializing in Glacier Park with participants for this particular study though I have

been researching and working in this context now for five years and hiking there over twenty. Second, I triangulated findings by utilizing multiple methods and multiple sources to verify data. Both interviews and participant observation were performed in order to compare themes and enhance the richness of my understandings of the seasonal work/er experience. Also, I interviewed and observed both seasonal and permanent NPS employees in order to garner diverse perspectives and standpoints from the organization concerning the nature of seasonal work.

Third, in terms of peer debriefing, I invited my academic committee to continue to interrogate my findings. Throughout the results writing process, I presented ideas and hypotheses to colleagues who refined my thinking by critiquing my ideas and observations. Essentially, I asked if the ideas I presented “make sense,” and if the connections I established between data and research seemed reasonable. Fourth, member checks were executed during the data collection process. During interviews and in the field, I often asked participants to verify my understanding of events, including their actions, words, and motivations. I also asked participants to verify findings I learned from other participants (who remained unnamed). I continued the member checking process through the writing of results which included contacting participants to ask them for verification regarding the conclusions I was finding, and which will eventually include offering them and the NPS organization a copy of this paper for their information and input when the paper is completed.

Data Analysis & Interpretation

To begin data analysis, I first reduced the data set to a manageable level of information. To do so, I reviewed all field notes and interview transcriptions and selected portions I felt intuitively related to the research questions. Specifically then, I looked for data that seemed to speak to the issue of overwork in the United States in terms of seasonal workers' senses of trust and agency, conceptions on work and play, and experiences and thoughts on the embodiment and spirituality of work. Arguably, any data could potentially be relevant for answering questions of this nature. Thus, I clearly used my own sense of what was important, in addition to garnering insights from study participants in terms of the data I most closely paid attention to. However, I tended to err on the side of inclusion with the data in order to most effectively answer the questions posed here and to remain open to relationships between concepts and ideas I may not initially have noticed (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

Once data were reduced to a manageable size in terms of data which felt and seemed most relevant to this study, I used standard analytic methods akin to a modified grounded theory approach (Charmaz, 2006; Glaser & Strauss, 1967) which begins by "coding as many categories as possible" to begin the analytic process (Lindlof & Taylor, 2002, p. 218). This methodological approach allowed me to maintain the "inductive spirit" (Lindlof & Taylor, 2002, p. 219) of qualitative research as categories and themes got derived directly from the data while simultaneously allowing me to keep an eye on that which seemed most

important for answering the research questions. Utilizing both open coding (the initial, open-ended coding of data where any category of meaning is possible) and in vivo coding (exploring specific terms used by participants to name their experiences), I read through half of the data set line by line looking for “chunks of meaning” contained within the data. Approximately 100 themes were defined with this process, in addition to a handful of related codes per each theme. These 100 themes were organized into three broad conceptual categories pertaining to people (i.e., seasonal workers), place (e.g., Glacier National Park), and the Park Service organization. The list of themes was used to spark the memo writing process aiming to clarify, define and sift through categories and to begin understanding the relationships between key concepts by writing about their possible intersections and divergences (Charmaz, 2003).

Strauss and Corbin (1997) write that concepts “provide a way of grouping/organizing the data a researcher is working with” (p. 52), or in other words, offer an overarching frame within which the researcher can understand his or her data. In this way, codes or concepts function in both a narrowing and expansive capacity; the data get reduced and specified, but at the same time an opening for further analysis along more certain terms gets made. After initial codes were developed via open and in vivo coding, they were combined to form the basic components of a codebook which I used to engage in focused coding analysis for the remaining data (Lindlof & Taylor, 2002, p. 220). Concepts can vary in their levels of abstraction depending on the research goals and familiarity

with the data and research context. For this study, I chose to use relatively abstract codes as conceptual frames in order to allot sufficient space to build and understand the theoretical relationships between the codes themselves. For instance, I chose the abstract code “planning” as a central concept representing seasonal workers’ orientations towards time and personal levels of responsibility in terms of life experience. This code intersects with the code “luck” (another abstract concept) in interesting theoretical ways in the sense that they feel contradictory as terms, but through further analysis explicate a fascinating approach to life combining an openness to the ways that life meanders, with heightened attention to the details of daily planned experience. As I employed focused coding, “constant comparative methods” (Lindlof & Taylor, 2002; Glaser & Strauss, 1967) were utilized in that I looked for similarities and differences between themes and categories within data sets while remaining open to “new cases”. (See Codebook Below)

Data Codebook	
Concept	Properties: expressions regarding
planning	orientation and approach towards everyday life and the future
money	attitudes regarding \$\$\$, amount earned for work, planning for/with
luck	orientation and approach towards past experiences, personal attribute
freedom	personal value, attribute of work as seasonal employee in NPS
(in)security	personal value, frustration with seasonal work, positive attribute of seasonal work
change	attribute of seasonal work, positive and difficult attribute of work
career	notions of working life patterns
detachment	positive attribute of seasonal work in wilderness, *zen* practice towards life
flexibility	work attribute allotting conducive forms of work/play both at work and during leisure
benefits	organizational advantage allotted to permanent workers but not seasonal workers
permanence	orientation towards work (in juxtaposition to seasonal work)
tradition	conceptions of normative work and life
experience/s	work and life value for seasonal workers (in juxtaposition to "other" values)
place	work and life value for seasonal workers (in juxtaposition to "other" values), source of spiritual connection
hard work	using the body in physically arduous ways to accomplish work tasks
blue collar	embodied fieldwork that gets paid less within the organization but gets to "see" more
divisions	between permanent/seasonal workers, between worker categories, in perceptions of respect/value
community	perceptions of like-minded individuals working together in the park, work and life value for NPS
technology	values of/on and differences in utilization between permanent/seasonal workers
seasons	landscape patterns seasonal life and work gets structured around

Data Codebook	
Concept	Dimensions
planning	major expressions of anxiety towards the future ----- no expressions of anxiety
money	the world revolves around money therefore I will take a permanent position ----- no real conception thereof
luck	conceptions of luck as random ----- conceptions of luck as spiritually meaningful
freedom	conceptions of self as free and drawn to seasonal work ----- conceptions of self as socked into work
(in)security	choosing one's work because it is essentially insecure ----- wanting to leave one's insecure work
change	loving work/season changes ----- wanting to quit work because of constant changing
career	expressions regarding certainty of career ----- openness in terms of career path/choices
detachment	personal valuation of quiet and remote ----- difficulties of remote living (e.g., relational maintenance)
flexibility	work flexibility as conducive to one's life ----- work flexibility as conducive to organizational goals/benefit
benefits	urgency regarding the importance of or "benefits" change ----- understanding/satisfaction with benefits
permanence	striving towards permanence as an organizational member ----- avoiding permanence
tradition	non-normative and content (for both self and others) ----- non-normative and anxious
experience/s	being seasonal for experience/s ----- having/describing experience/s doing seasonal work
place	being seasonal in order to explore/be in interesting places ----- particular descriptions of Glacier as place
hard work	hard work as personal value ----- hard work as favorable component of fieldwork
blue collar	blue collar work as baseboard of org ----- bc work as necessary evil
divisions	the necessity of divides in terms of work duties ----- the arbitrariness of divides
community	community as major draw for the work ----- too much time spent with the same people
technology	technology as infringement of wilderness ----- technology as necessary, valuable and important
seasons	the centrality of seasons in life ----- seasons of life as arbitrary but present

Data Codebook									
Concept	Examples								
planning	"I never wanna be wasting my time"								
money	"I live like a millionaire on a journeyman's wages"								
luck	"I fell into the PS quite by accident, I started working there just by pure chance"								
freedom	"The best thing about the job is freedom, simply put"								
(in)security	"The market is always up and down and jobs come and go and there's always that insecurity anyway"								
change	"I guess for me part of the happiness is the change even though it's hard and stressful"								
career	"There's this ladder that people are climbing whether they want to be on it or not. I chose not to be on it"								
detachment	"You're detached from everything"								
flexibility	"It was an opportunity to travel and work at the same time"								
benefits	"Glacier doesn't have any benefits but there is the beauty, the majesty, is that the eternal benefit"								
permanence	"The biggest difference now that I work permanently is the mortgage and kids"								
tradition	"My father thought it was a waste of time that I could be doing something more"								
experience/s	"I've always been a work to live kind of person"								
place	"I get really really excited and attached to Glacier"								
hard work	"I feel good challenging my body"								
blue collar	"I wanted to do something where I could be outside, be outdoors"								
divisions	"Trail crew is pretty much considered dirt bags of the park"								
community	"You make really intense friendships"								
technology	"I think that's the biggest change as a permanent employee, you tend to just be in front of a computer"								
seasons	"You actually get to know the place in a much deeper intimate level"								

After initial coding, axial coding was engaged. During this process, I “sorted, synthesized, and organized large amounts of data and reassembled them in new ways” (Charmaz, 2006, p. 60). In this way, an axiom is essentially a theme representative of the interrelationships between concepts. Strauss and Corbin (1997) discuss putting concepts together in a way that “feels right” to the researcher. Deconstructing and reconstructing data in new ways is therefore grounded in a “gut feeling” that reflects “the essence” of what participants are saying as reflected through the particular researcher’s eyes. As a simultaneous participant observer and full participant in this research, my sense of what participants meant and how they felt of course reflects my own experience and feelings as an organizational member. At the same time, my status as a researcher in the organization undoubtedly shaped my perceptions and experiences as I endeavored to navigate the dual role of researcher and organizational member. I have aimed to remain open to the inevitable differences between myself and participants based upon this dual role while concurrently recognizing our inevitable similarities as organizational members. As Strauss and Corbin (1997) write though, “more than one story can be derived from the data” (p. 50). The story explicated here reflects my own curiosities couched in this context in conjunction to the theories and questions guiding this analytical procedure. With axial coding, I collapsed the initial codes into categories of meaning and relationship as they pertained to my research questions and used the derived conceptual categories to develop/narrow my codes to twenty concepts.

Next, I engaged in dimensionalization which means that I “identified properties of categories and constructs” (Spiggle, 1994, p. 494; Strauss & Corbin, 1990) for the core concepts. To do so, I returned to the data for exemplars representative and reminiscent of these concepts, and looked for variation and commonality within these examples. In other words, I located multiple properties of the concepts by examining how the concepts were being used in different facets by participants that pointed toward the significance of the code for them. For instance, for the code “tradition”, I noted that participants referred to themselves as “non-traditional” people and workers, they said that others referred to them in this regard both positively and negatively, and they tended to frame “traditional work” in negative terms.

After identifying these properties of the code, I used the properties to frame the dimensions or range of responses participants tended to fall within along these lines. In the case with the code “tradition”, I noted that participants tended to explicate varying levels of anxiety regarding their status as “non-traditional” workers in terms of both their own and others’ senses of them and their work choices. One of the dimensions of the code thus entailed a contentedness scale regarding participants’ overarching feelings concerning their identities as seasonal workers in juxtaposition to more commonly held (conceptions of) contemporary work traditions. This process not only assisted in recognizing the variety of responses within the data at large towards a common

theme, it pushed me to broaden and extend my conceptual understandings of the data to more thoroughly and completely answer the research questions.

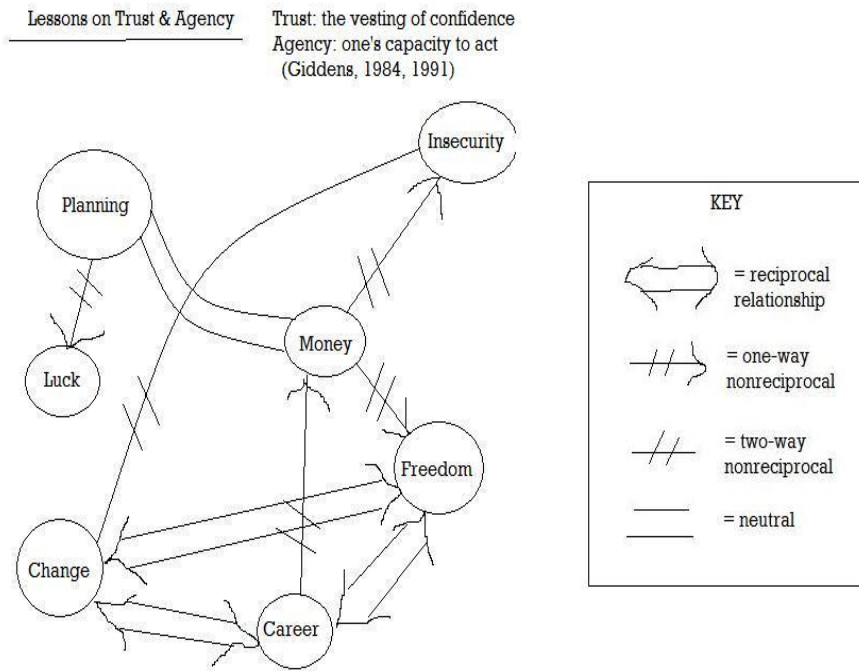
The final stage in this analytical procedure involved axial mapping between codes (See Axial Maps below). For this process, I identified those codes seemingly most relevant to each research question based on my theoretical sensitivities (i.e., the literature reviewed) and tacit knowledge (de la Garza, writing as Gonzalez, 2000) as a researcher and worker in this context, and began a literal visual mapping of the relationships between these codes in order to develop and draw out the ways the concepts speak to each other and together towards the broader questions framing the study. This process encouraged a unique conceptual and practical understanding of the data in the sense that understanding the intersections between codes at this juncture represented layers of understanding and analysis: conceptual categorizations, true definitions, properties of codes, and dimensions of properties (Clarke, 2003). In many ways, this step represented a peak in the data analytic process where the various levels of procedure and examination intertwined in visual form. As Clarke (2003) notes, axial mapping works to promote unique insights and to elucidate the extended complexities of a social situation.

The act of mapping involved writing/drawing the concepts for each research question on a separate sheet of paper and then reflecting on their interconnections and meanings. Clarke (2003) writes that it is important to remember not to “assume directionalities of influence” and that “boundaries are

open and porous; negotiations are fluid and usually ongoing” (p. 560). Keeping this in mind, I literally drew lines, arrows and simple phrases between concepts to derive fresh insights and meanings regarding the categories. Upon the completion of each visual map, I wrote short memos regarding the mapping process as well as about the new relationships between concepts I noticed. Below, I display each axial map and verbally summarize the conceptual relationships, though the relationships between concepts will be fully elaborated on in Chapter 3. While in some ways, these maps oversimplify the variety of responses and relationships participants had to and with these concepts, the mapping process functioned as a catalyst for writing the results of this study as axiomatic poems grounded in the concepts most relevant for this research. What is more, the visual representation of these concepts moved them from mere text into form, a transition which prompted the movement of data from verbal text to poetic text; poetry itself a textual form keener on evoking images and figures.

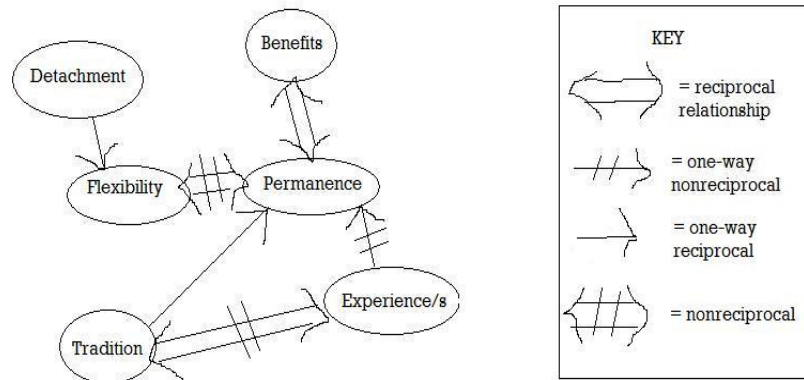
Each map displays the key concepts to be extrapolated on to answer the research questions. The arrows in the diagrams illustrate a relationship between the concepts as articulated by the majority of seasonal workers in the study. Two-way relationships signify conceptual and practical significance for participants (e.g., change as a concept generally did not exert itself as insecurity as a practice; insecurity as a concept generally did not exert itself as change as a practice). One-way relationships signify practices or concepts exerted or not exerted as practices or concepts (e.g., the practice of planning fell outside participants’

conceptions of luck; the concept of career did not match with the practice of acquiring large amounts of money). Neutral relationships signify concepts matching with concepts for participants (e.g., money as a concept was largely irrelevant to planning as a concept). For each map, I offer a brief conceptual summary of the relationships between concepts as articulated by participants, but these relationships will be highlighted using poetry and further discussion later in the dissertation.



This map displays concepts speaking towards RQ 1: What might seasonal work/ers teach us theoretically and practically about trust and agency in terms of

overwork? The concepts change, career, freedom, planning, money, luck and insecurity surfaced specifically or were implied in most interviews. For the seasonal workers in this study: money was not a motivating factor in their decisions about career, money was not conceptualized as a route to experiencing the richness of life, living fully and richly meant making choices about what one did with one's time and career; having career choices was especially central for living an interesting unfettered lifestyle, change as a mantra of life meant identifying careers that could provide that experience; the capacity to make career choices was central to living a lifestyle of changes, freedom as a mantra of life meant living a life full of changes; change as a mantra of life meant living a life full of freedom, future scheduling obscured the coincidental components of life, life changes and change as a mantra did not encourage a feeling of insecurity, having money or not having money had little influence over feelings of in/security, money was useful for preparing for a future but not central.

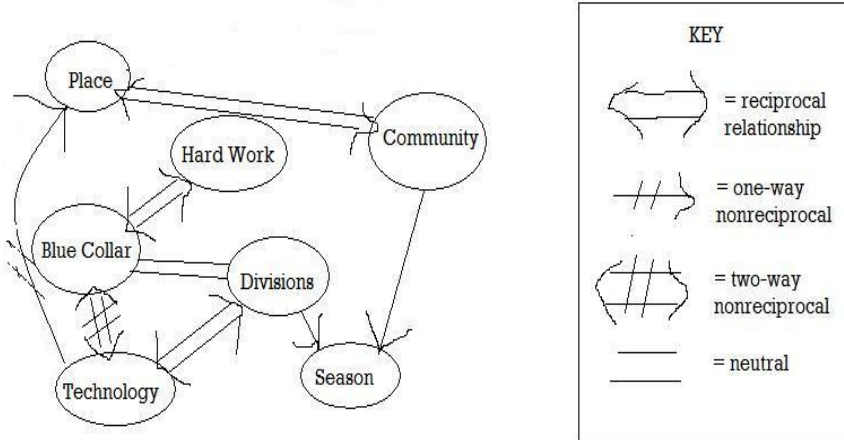


This map displays concepts speaking towards RQ 2: What might seasonal work/ers teach us theoretically and practically about conceptions of work and life in terms of overwork? The concepts tradition, experience/s, benefits, detachment, flexibility, permanence, and tradition surfaced specifically or were implied in most interviews. For the seasonal workers in this study: staying within a traditionally defined lifestyle could not enable the garnering of interesting experiences; to acquire interesting experiences in one's life, one had to step out of a traditional life path, a traditional life and career meant staying put both conceptually and literally, acquiring interesting experiences meant disengaging from conceptual and literal notions of stability, conceptions and practices of stability in life could not allow for fluid movement in-between; conceptions and practices of fluid life movement could not allow for conceptions and practices of

stability, having no strings enabled fluidity of movement, and organizational and social benefits get allotted those who conceive of and practice traditional notions of stability; traditional notions of stability dictate who gets to enjoy organizational and social benefits.

Lessons on Spirituality & Embodiment

Spirituality: contemplative artistic approach to life
 Embodiment: awareness and occupation of corporeal self
 (Cameron, 1992)



This map displays concepts speaking towards RQ 3: What might seasonal work/ers teach us theoretically and practically about embodiment and spirituality in terms of overwork? The concepts place, community, season, hard work, blue collar, divisions, seasons, and technology surfaced specifically or were implied in most interviews. For the seasonal workers in this study: the attraction to and utilization of technology did not make sense in the wilderness, like-minded people

tended to congregate to the mountains; the mountains lured certain people who tended to have commonalities, people with similar mindsets had similar feelings and lifestyles pertaining to seasons, divisions of pay and organizational benefits got made around those who lived by the changing of the seasons as opposed to those who did not, divisions of pay, work activity and place of work got made based around utilizations of technology; technology is conceptualized as creating divisions between those who do and can and those who do not and cannot, technology is typically not available for field workers; field workers eschew the utilization of technologies, field workers used their bodies in physically arduous ways; working bodies in physically arduous ways meant being a field worker, and field workers conceptualized unifications of their minds and bodies.

In the next section, the axiomatic relationships established via traditional qualitative coding and axial mapping are expounded upon and explained as I delineate the results of this study in response to the research questions. The results are written as axiomatic poems (de la Garza, personal conversation, 2012) constructed from the original data, much like the poems de la Garza, writing as Gonzalez (1997) uses. The analytical process revealed the important themes and axioms couched in the data that speak to the research questions and then the original data was returned to and used to construct poems around/about those axioms. The axioms work as textual categories expressed in a non-hierarchical or causal style containing a composite of similar situations in order to best communicate the experiences and thoughts of seasonal workers and answer the

research questions. As a whole, the poems express themes from the data by describing phenomena based on actual situations as opposed to being impressionistic or purely creative (Van Maanen, 2011). The poems function as a sort of *creative poetic nonfiction*, or a blurring of standard genres of nonfiction and poetry (de la Garza, personal conversation, 2012; Gutkind, 2005). They are presented in three groupings reflective of the axial categorical relationships developed and derived from the data as represented in the mappings above. The three levels of poetry represent three distinct components of the analytical process which is discussed at length in the Methodological Relevance section of Chapter 4. Before moving to the poetry, the next section articulates the richness and rationale of using poetry in research.

Poetry as Method

In a recent graduate seminar in performance studies (Spring 2010), professor Ragan Fox noted that he believed the future of qualitative work in communication studies would be written in poetic form. Since the early 1990s, scholars in our field have sometimes used poetry to craft entire research reports (Faulkner, 2005), document autoethnographic experiences (Pelias, 1999), or to document ethnographic experiences (Brady, 2000). With its many uses, poetry in research has been called by many names, including autoethnographic poetry (Furman, 2003), narratives of the self (Denzin, 1997), poetic transcription (Glesne, 1997; Madison, 1991; Richardson, 2002), investigative poetry (Hartnett, 2003), poetry and interpretive poetry (Langer & Furman, 2004), ethnographic or

anthropological poetics (Brady, 2004; Denzin, 1997), or just poetry (Faulkner, 2005; Richardson, 1997).

Like with most novel research traditions (at least novel within a particular tradition), major debates have ensued regarding the appropriateness and legitimacy of utilizing poetry in academe (Faulkner, 2007). Ontological critics argue that the credibility of poetry is couched on its ability to represent essential human characteristics, which they argue is problematic and impossible (Silverman, 2007). Epistemological critics argue that poetry's claim to harness the ability to express the experience of "the other" in accessible efficient terms simply is untrue (Marechal & Linstead, 2010). Marechal and Linstead (2010) note however that the value in poetry as a research tool is its capacity to bridge the inner (ontological) with the other (epistemological) as it allows for this dialectical tension to be maintained in representation as a living contradiction.

Other researchers have expressed concern over the evaluation of and standards for poetic representation (Gingrich-Philbrook, 2005; Percer, 2002). What is good poetry critics ask? Richardson (2000) argues that rigorous standards of art and science should be applied to poetic representation. Percer (2002) notes that academics with little background or knowledge in poetry probably have no business writing it. But Faulkner (2007) argues there are ways around these issues; rigorous criteria for good poetry could and should be elaborated and the craft of poetry developed as an *ars poetica*, or art of poetry, in

which the researcher develops expertise based on her own style in terms of the well-liked style of poets already established.

Notably, academic researchers have successfully employed poetry as a method of research representation. de la Garza, writing as Gonzalez (1997) for instance writes about her experience writing an ethnography in poetry for her study of non-Indians learning and practicing Native American spirituality. Her aim was to document field observations through poetry of events that actually happened as opposed to documenting her own editorial opinions and reflections. The result, she writes, is a series of poems that are “contextually situated and allow for a simultaneous manifestation of emotion, spirit, intellect, and description” (de la Garza, writing as Gonzalez, 1997, p. 489). Faulkner (2010) writes that the act of writing poetry and learning it as a craft works as a qualitative tool for “knowing”, or a sort of methodology for understanding yourself and others via the craft of writing it. In addition to functioning as a rich and unique form of expression then, poetry can act as a means of capturing context and presence in a manner other forms of writing cannot which uniquely teach the researcher and reader in the process. As Fairchild (2003) notes, “A poem is a verbal construction employing an array of rhetorical and prosodic devices of embodiment in order to achieve an ontological state, a mode of being, radically different from that of other forms of discourse” (p. 1).

Chapter 3

FINDINGS & DISCUSSION

In this section, I articulate the findings from this study via axiomatic poetry crafted from fieldwork and through interviews with seasonal and permanent workers in the National Park Service. For each of the three research questions, I offer three levels of poetry constructed from the data that speak to the concepts derived from the analytical process: Level 1 poems taken directly from interview clips, Level 2 poems using participant observation data to build context into the findings, and Level 3 poems which summarize the overarching lessons and findings for each section. After each section of poetry, I discuss the relationships between the concepts as present in the poetry, and finally the theoretical and practical lessons the poetry speaks to in response to the research questions posed in this study.

RQ1: What might seasonal work/ers teach us theoretically and practically about trust and agency in terms of overwork?

Poetic Lessons on Trust & Agency: Level 1

I go where I want

And do what I want

Don't worry about money

It's always there

People call me free spirit

Not certain what that means but

I never had a plan

I do what I need

I do what I want

Nepal was calling

So I went

Never wanted a career

Just interesting things to do

I had to do

I wanted to

For some reason

It has worked out

I've been lucky

People worry

About money

And taking risks

I can't work

80 hours/7 days

For 80 hours worth of stuff

(That's stuff you won't have

When you die)

I live free

I'm lucky

I've been lucky

Maybe later life is screwed

But I sure like

Living life now

Getting paid

Just to be me

When things are tight

It all works out

I like movement

I like rhythms

I like seasons

I do what seems fun

At the time

Follow my bliss

Nothing's certain

American economics, pshhhh

Abstract nonsense!

Necessary just to get around

(I budget well)

You don't need money

For the fun stuff

I don't have things

But what I do have

I sure love

I went on this road trip west with my friends

And we ran out of money at the Grand Canyon

And we asked at the front desk if they needed help

Which they did

It was this serendipitous accident

It was this incredible journey

I wouldn't change

I get bored

I like to learn

I like to see

Like exploring

I live like a millionaire on journeymen's wages

For the small amount of work I've done

I sure am proud of what I have

There's security

In having a year round salary

And benefits

But honestly people who have children

Don't have the choices that I do

I'm fortunate

My happiness comes from the unknown

I'm just lucky

Right place

Right time

Watch what you ask

'Cause you'll get it

It's a little about getting paid to hike

I get paid for this?

I don't worry

What I need

Is in my pack

Get fed up with society

Politicians wear a mask

I'm romantic

I love the stars

No pretension

They ask when

I will settle down

Get a real job

Be a real man

I say this wandering

Is real

It gets lonely but

I'm just me

Following myself

See where it leads

(It led me here)

I don't plan but

(Somehow I do)

I plan to have enough to eat

Someplace to sleep

My truck works, too

We all will die but

Not right now

There are sunsets

There are travels

I've been lucky

You could say

I write my own ticket

It's a fun one

I've hardly worked

On my deathbed

I'll be happy

One guy tells his friends
I'm rich
'Cause I am in complete control
Of my own time
Most precious thing

To this day I never have said
I want to be a _____
I've said
I will do this
I will do that and
Then I think I will do this

Make the leap

Not looking for anything
Just journeying

I was living like Gandhi
And I was happy

It's hard to base a career on serendipity

Though I've done it
Make your own luck

I'm not afraid
To do new things
I've got interests

I throw a net

I throw a net

I throw a net

And something sticks

I never want to waste my time

Go go go go go go go go

If I could do it and I don't

I see that as potential waste

It just fell into my lap

Sitting in my parents' living room

On the floor

He calls and offers me this job

And I'm like, bingo!

It's just this windy curvy road

A person never could predict

But it just falls right into place

It's just felt charmed

It's a feeling

At gut level

I didn't want to do something

I didn't want to do

What the heck

I'll apply

And I got it

It wasn't a specific plan

I decided I'd

Have no regrets

My life's been rich

It's a great ride

I live for the experience
It's freedom, if I put it well

I change things up
When I get bored
I go somewhere
I do something
I like the change
Routine gets old

People say
They wish they'd thought
To work up here
And then I think
Well you sure could
You know
We can do anything
(At least I have)

When I leap
I don't worry
Where I will land

It's about the leap

It's just pure luck

And when the seasons change I go

I'm used to following the wind

I make my own luck but I know

There's something watching out for me

Poetic Lessons on Trust & Agency: Level 2

[Agency Embarked]

argillite rocks

the size of moons

the color of seas

from 10,000 years

he pauses for a drag

lets smoke out slow

“you know,” he says

“i came out here

to get away”

the river's high

this time of year

cerulean tones

and swirls of light

refract off water

[Trust Inherent]

the smells of leathers &

thick rich horses' coats

“yah” he urges

the horses move

“yah” he hollers

and gets his dancing

“i wanted this job

10 long years

i waited, worked hard

that whole time”

he eases from the saddle

in the corral

“the way things have worked”

he pauses

“it’s almost like

something else

is going on”

[This Is Everything I Own]

this is everything i own

it's just about three backpacks full

--a few t-shirts

--my danner boots

--my marmot coat

--some Kerouac

--and yeah, my tent

[What I Want/What I Need]

“i live like a millionaire

on journeyman's wages”

he squints into sun

echoing into the spaces

of his Norwegian eyes and

his Norwegian smile

tooth-gapped

quick-handed

ex-pro skier

trail crew leader, 10 years

in the making

“what i want is this” he smiles wide

motions toward maps of Americas
photos of Hawaii, the Himalayas
hung patiently on
the wood walls
of his quaint, clean and
rustic cabin
his mountain home now, five seasons

[Something Else

Was Going On]

Three Forks Grill

has tablecloths

black & white photos

of railroad conductors in the '40s

an upstairs patio

over the bar

where all Montana brews are sold

she walks in

we surprise each other

in dressy clothes

(not rafting gear

par usual)

order chocolate torte
she talks about her dead husband
missing two years in the Wyoming woods
her wedding band still proudly worn
“we hiked his few ashes up Swiftcurrent,” she says
“when i released them
the wind swirled in a circle
around us,” she pauses
“like something else
was going on”

[Coming West]
t-shirts, levis
strung on a line
outside the 10 x 10 foot sides
Scalplock Lookout
windows over purpled crocus
shooting star filled valleys
10,000 foot peaks
silence fills the open space
Big Sky Country
clouds of animal shapes

“do you get wildlife this high up?”

“i’ve seen things,” he says

“that drop a man down to his knees”

yes, grizzly bears

yes, mountain marmots

yes, wolverines

yes, skies of infinite and untold things

“i came west 10 years ago

from New Jersey”

the smells of white desks

days’ coffee and

square and sterile conversations

seep through his deep & fervent

exhale

[I Had Everything]

he walks into the Remington Bar, Whitefish, MT

glowing, floating, wizard eyes

“how ya doin?” he asks, light as rain

“spent the months off wandering New Zealand

playing music just to get by

it was magic,” he says

“i had everything i needed”

Poetic Lessons on Trust & Agency: Level 3

Removing ourselves from damaging routines

We look at the center of who we are

(At our natural wildness)

We look at our values

And why we are doing

What we are doing

(A TRUE ONTOLOGY)

What do we really want as humans being?

Looking down death and our fear of it

We make the leap! The net appears!

Trust in luck and serendipity

Take risks

Make and take movements

Overwork is NOT inherent

There are new/endless possibilities

Disrupt naturalized logics

Of how we are supposed to be

We have choices

Looking at our true motivations

We let go of social approval and material greed

We embrace change

And we have courage

Narrative Summary of Conceptual Mapping for RQ1

Here I outline the relationships between the concepts as explicated through the poetry in concert to the axial mapping process. For the seasonal workers in this study, having a career was not high on the radar in terms of personal fulfillment, and especially in terms of commonly held notions concerning the importance of career for making money and garnering social and/or economic security via the accumulation of material goods. Seasonal IT Manager Glenn for instance noted that he had “never wanted a career” but instead had chosen to “follow my bliss. I just do whatever sounds most interesting at the time.” For these folks, having a career was far from mind in terms of settling down with a partner and children in a home, for instance. They were more intent on having interesting experiences of travel, wandering and following their whims than settling into a traditional career path or more expected general lifestyle. For these workers then, money was not equal to the kinds of freedoms often associated with that term in popular social rhetoric in the United States. Freedom for these seasonal workers meant the antithesis of money and expectation; it meant doing something or working somewhere for the experience, challenge, and joy of it. Like backcountry ranger Rachel mentioned, “You don’t need money for the fun stuff. To me, a fulfilling interesting life means following out whatever interests

you the most.” It meant the capacity to make decisions about what one was interested in doing and learning, and then doing it.

Change, then, was an inevitable and embraced component of their lives. Their work choices were largely based around what sounded fun at the time and how they could change their lives to suit their inklings. When things got dull, they made a change in order to keep the momentum of their lives going. Trail crew laborer Ben for instance, moved to Montana from Missouri to work on a volunteer trail crew, then moved to California to learn how to do rock work, then decided to volunteer for the Peace Corps in Nicaragua. In many ways, change sat at the base of their existence; when something became routine, they mixed it up by challenging themselves to learn a new skill or travelling to a new place. Seasonal work fit into this mode of living in the sense that it offered these individuals a place to be and work for a relatively short and demanding period of time before they could move on to the next adventure. Their work then was based out of its capacity to suit their needs and lifestyle values of change and the ability to maintain a sense of freedom via perpetual movement and motion even while working within an organization. Again, settling down into a firm routine was least appealing to these workers.

While these seasonals were keen on change and making movement in their own lives, their orientation towards planning those changes was fascinating. Most often participants attributed their experiences, good fortune, and livelihoods to good luck. Fire ecologist Dennis told a story about going on a road trip with

friends only to run out of money and start working for the National Park Service, which he called “a serendipitous accident.” He also talked about the span of his life and career as “an incredible journey I wouldn’t change.” They insisted they had never had a life plan or inherent purpose beyond the rich experience of the everyday, and that they usually just happened to be in the right place at the right time in terms of garnering interesting work. Backcountry permit director Brian said he had just recently realized he had a career in the sense that his life had always been about “throwing a net and seeing what stuck.” So although the seasonal workers compelled themselves towards and from a mantra of change and challenge, they ascribed their blessings to random luck and serendipity based on a focus they had cultivated for the dailiness of life. Planning then was based on an immediate need like finding food, shelter, or community.

The big picture of these participants’ lives seemed unquestioned but present. They did not seem anxious about the future or caught up in planning or controlling the evolution of their lives. What mattered was the present in terms of the experiences they were having or could have, or what was needed for bare survival. At the same time, death was often a topic of discussion especially in light of *how* the seasonals chose to live. In other words, there was a striking amount of reference to living fully and richly in light of the fact that death was an eventual reality. Their reasoning was along the lines of “why not live well now because I will die soon” kind of thing. Trail crew laborer Dylan said succinctly: “Well, I’m gonna die soon, might as well enjoy it now.” Planning for a long-term

future along the lines of career in light of a potentially imminent death did not make sense. Death was broached pragmatically, not anxiously, and the seasonals engaged in a surprising level of what could be conceived of as great physical and social risk.

For many in modern American society, the notion of not planning ahead or developing a steady reliable career and stable familial structure is anxiety-ridden. For the seasonals in this study, the notion of planning ahead and following traditional paths was anxiety-ridden. In that regard, these seasonal workers were embarked on non-traditional journeys where notions of what it means to be secure seem almost to have been reversed. Whereas many in modern society seem to fear change, openness, and potentiality in terms of life and career, the seasonal workers here tended to fully embrace change and potential and noted that they felt sadness if and when potential was not realized. Backcountry ranger Sally told me: “I need to feel that I’m moving towards something. I never want to be wasting my time. If there’s something I could do and I don’t do it, I see that as potential waste.” If there was a mountain to climb and they did not climb it for instance, they felt an important opportunity missed. Change, movement and instability grounded them in themselves and their identities as seasonal workers. Taking risks along the lines of not relying on standard norms of identity, social structure, or social approval brought satisfaction and security to them. Even taking extreme physical bodily risks like climbing up steep peaks, camping for months in a row in the wilderness, or fording across raging mountain rivers –

activities many would deem unnecessary and/or dangerous – were seen as necessary opportunities of life. Ironically, they seemed to find security via the non-secure; the thought of traditional, more settled (working) lives made many of them squirm.

Participants' orientations toward money and security were also fascinating. First, many participants pointed out that traditional conceptions of monetary security were false as evidenced by current economic times. They begged the question, why rely on a social/economic system which promises stability and happiness but rarely delivers? IT director Glenn said, "The market's always up and down and jobs come and go and there's always that insecurity anyway." They noted both the disparity between what traditional working life entailed and promised in terms of material gain in conjunction to their perception of traditional workers' (and their own) experience of that life, and they suggested happiness and security pertained more to valuing who one was, what one already possessed and valued, and to the extent to which one enjoyed the experiences of life. Money then had little to do with their identities as human beings, their capacities or plans for rich experiences, or their projections towards a future life. If anything, money was typically conceived of as an afterthought or necessary evil for functioning in society. Many, however, noted the importance of budgeting well and using their money wisely to stretch it as far as possible for travel over the winter season so it was important to them in that regard. Trails leader Glenn for

instance often emphasized the necessity of “saving to travel freely over the winter season.”

Seasonals also emphasized how important it was not to worry about money in the sense that it drew one away from the present experience of life. They told stories about experiences where they were nearing the end of their monetary supply only to have a work opportunity arise. Bear researcher Mike talked about winter travels in New Zealand where he and his friends would play music for money when it was needed and how “what I needed, was always there.” In this way they expressed that the presence/absence of money, while seemingly necessary within the current economic system, was in some ways arbitrary in tandem to the serendipitous meanderings of life. For some seasonals, getting paid functioned to support their travel habit and transitory life. For others, getting paid seemed incredulous in light of their deep satisfaction with their work and lives like when biological technician Courtney repeatedly exclaimed: “I get paid for this?!” Still others noted that getting paid was not nearly as important as having command over one’s life and time which their employment as seasonal workers allotted them. For these individuals, working seasonally and feeling responsible for one’s life thus trumped other more lucrative work options.

Theoretical and Practical Lessons on Trust & Agency

What can we learn from the seasonal workers in this study regarding trust and agency as outlined by Giddens (1984) in his theory on structuration? First, I think it is important to examine the root of Giddens’ ontological assumptions in

juxtaposition to the knowledges and expressions articulated by the participants here. Giddens and others (e.g., Tillich, 1977) have argued that human beings are inherently existentially fearful (of death) and ontologically insecure, especially in light of the onslaught of modernity and our distancing within time and space. For this reason, he suggests that we build and establish predictable routines in order to anchor ourselves to something and essentially ward off the awareness of our impending death. Not only do these routines keep us distracted from the fact that we are going to die, they give us something to do (e.g., work), and then in turn, structure our social systems. Unfortunately, and as articulated in the first chapter, it seems that these routines have become a compulsion for many people and especially in the United States such that overwork has become the normative and accepted tendency usually with negative repercussions (Hewlett, 2007; Newton, 1995). In many ways it seems that we have come to rely upon our routines of work so fervently that we have forgotten what it is that we are working for and why.

The seasonal workers interviewed and observed for this study offer a compelling alternative to the typical models of work we find most commonly in our society today. To start, I believe many of the participants in this study functioned not from an ontology of insecurity, but of security. Their decisions about their lives and the experiences they encountered did not seem based upon fear or social expectation, but upon a strong sense of self-knowledge, identity, and awareness. Giddens' philosophical argument grounded in ontological insecurity

cannot hold across the map if there are individuals who seem to function otherwise. If routinization is a human response to existential anxiety, but we find in a subset of people, an absence of routine or even anti-routinization, anxiety must not be inherently deep-seated (for them). In other words, they must be functioning/working/living out of other motivations.

Many of the workers in this study have refused to settle down along the social and economic terms – the routines – established by our governments and organizations (i.e., by large groupings of individuals), as acceptable, normal, and worthy. Instead, they have worked to carve out their own ways, couched not upon (illusions of) stable and secure social structures, but upon their own senses of what is important and based on what they desire. For them, value in life does not mean steady career paths, money, long-term goal-setting, marriage, family, mortgages, expensive vehicles, excessive clothing, or any other form of the accumulation of goods and settling down along the terms typically mapped out as appropriate in modernity in America. Rather, these workers have chosen to wander free, scrapping for money when necessary and knowing they will come across it when it's needed. They have chosen to embrace change as a fundamental, exciting core of life not to be feared, but to be exploited in all its gloriousness in the form of travel, challenge, and daily lived indulgence. In this sense, the people in this study challenge Giddens' fundamental notions of human beings as ontologically insecure and compel us to look toward other reasons overwork runs rampant in modern life.

If we look closely at contemporary overwork, we typically encounter unhappy people working vigorously for their happiness in terms of money, possessions or family (Hansen, 2005). Often these articulations do not get made in terms of one's own needs, but in terms of others' needs, in terms of the sustenance of one's work/life, or in terms of one's social responsibilities (Deetz, 1998). Often, we articulate that we are overworking for somebody or something else, and I believe this may be part of the great lie and distraction keeping most of us enamored by the ontological falsity that we are inherently insecure and anxious along those lines. What I wonder is that we are fearful, not of our deaths, but of our lives (Mandela, 1990). It has been normalized to think and feel that we should fear death and to internalize that notion; it surrounds us in modernity. It is a common map or script according to prevalent media sources, certain histories, numerous philosophies, religions, etc.

If it is true that death is our deepest fear underpinning our behavior as Giddens (1984, 1991) and others suggest, hiding or escaping from that fear (via routines, for instance) is an accessible and viable option. We are afraid to die because *that* is terrifying, therefore we work ourselves (to death, as a routine) based on an assumption about our existence (as lifeless) which propels the very behavior *actually* killing us and keeping us working long hours at jobs that we despise. We fear that if we were to slow down, we would find only anxiety and emptiness so we continue overworking which perpetuates increasing anxiety because we keep running from our true selves (de Mello, 1990). We have bought

the ontological lie that we are dead, and so we kill ourselves (via distraction). But I believe it is a lie that we are ontologically insecure, and many seasonal workers seem to live this recognition.

The seasonal workers in this study have removed themselves from many of the well-established routines and patterns of modern life. They spoke about making decisions in their lives such as moving to the mountains of Glacier Park to work seasonally as a ranger as opposed to continuing a corporate career or spending winters in Antarctica working at the U.S. Embassy instead of getting married or buying a house that looked and seemed disastrous and bizarre to family and friends. Yet they persisted. Something greater called to them. They talked about it in terms of a wildness or a wild spirit which they believed they inherently possessed and were compelled to follow at any cost (Griffiths, 2006). For most then, becoming a seasonal worker went far beyond a summer job or a fleeting romantic excursion into the mountains for a time; it was an approach to life (Hagan, 2006).

A self-willed, vibrant, assured way of making decisions about one's life that started with a deep understanding of who one was and what one wanted; a true ontology (Akiwowo, 1983). An ontology grounded in freedom and trust that one could know oneself at a deep-seated level and know what to do and where to go even in opposition to all of the best advice and intentions from loved ones, educators, self-help books, therapists, or social structures. A stepping out of an expectation that life should be approached fearfully and apprehensively in lieu of

our impending deaths; an ability to supersede the tendency to cling to routines as stabilizing and real, and setting out to the wind instead; an accomplishment of fear as a movement into the great unknown with the understanding that everything is unknown. An ontology with the understanding that if you make the leap, a net appears (Gutting, 2012). For the seasonal workers in this study, the limits of agency seemed unbounded.

Another key component of the “seasonal worker ontology” as noted by the participants in this study was their sense of luck and serendipity in concert to their active momentum in life. I was surprised by the sheer number of people who alluded to “something greater going on” using those terms or the words “luck” or “serendipity” when describing the meandering paths and experiences of their lives. It was as though they possessed an understanding of or at least an acknowledgement towards another dimension or realm to life that could not quite be articulated. But though they could not specify what exact phenomenon or concept they were implicating, they described situations of extraordinary good fortune when life seemed to coalesce and provide them what they needed at the time, whether it was a job opportunity they particularly wanted, an experience of travel to a particular place, or even the healing of a broken relationship.

The seasonal workers here accounted for these experiences as an abstract “serendipity”, but wholeheartedly seemed to trust this notion as an effective and invigorating approach to life. Their understanding of this concept and experience thus seemed simultaneously “inside” and “outside” them in the sense that it was a

personal experience they themselves had experienced, but also an experience beyond themselves basically impossible to account for. Their secure ontology then seemed anchored in this abstract trust in “something else” (perhaps in the concept of trust itself?), that got realized through the daily, sometimes risky, movements of their lives. Their capacities as seemingly unbounded agents were not typically construed as a self-reliant and singular pursuit then, (though many did express loneliness); their agentic capacities were conveyed as an active trust in something beyond themselves, but as an act or movement taken solo as an individual human being him or herself.

So what do we specifically learn about trust and agency from the seasonal workers in this study in terms of overwork? I do not believe it is necessary we all become seasonal workers in order to garner the richness of life and the ontological security many of them seem to espouse. The question then becomes, how do we translate the lessons they have generously offered us into the lives we have or the ones we can envision if we so do wish. Maybe most importantly, the seasonal workers in Glacier National Park can teach us that overwork is not an inherent condition of modernity. Their approaches to life and work illustrate new possibilities and disrupt the naturalized logic which (explicitly and implicitly) suggests that there is one track or way of being human in today’s society that is possible. We have choices and whether we are aware of them or not, we make them. Along those lines, these seasonal workers point us towards re-evaluating or re-considering the values driving our current work practices. Money is not the

only motivator, if it is even a viable or actual motivator now or merely a script we have become accustomed to rehearsing. These seasonals prod us to consider the motivations behind our work, and perhaps to refocus them toward a different end and a different process.

We also learn that while making choices grounded in a different awareness of what we want may be difficult and can lead to great costs of social approval and even perhaps material loss, it can be done. We learn that we can embrace changes in life wholeheartedly and trust we will be alright and maybe even great. We learn to have a trust in something other than our selves, like luck, but that it is up to us to act on it. We learn and can be inspired that there are human beings with courage making choices about how they want to live as opposed to merely doing what they are told and buying what they are sold. We learn to look death in the mouth and to use that as a motivation to soak up every moment of our lives as opposed to living with our heads down in the dirt.

RQ2: What might seasonal work/ers teach us theoretically and practically about conceptions of work and life in terms of overwork?

Poetic Lessons on Work & Life: Level 1

When you get to that level

Of responsibility

The hours it takes to maintain that position

Don't leave a lot of time

For other things

I left my corporate job

For this

I was working in this office in New York right next to the airport

And I would sit in my cubicle

All day

Watching flights come in and out

And one day I thought

I can't do this anymore

So I came West

Backcountry for 80+ days

Last summer

Detachment

From it all

Quality of life

You can do what you love

You should do what you love

Because it's your life

Quality of life

Being left alone

Doing things at my own pace

I don't like to be rushed

True happiness

Is being alone

Seasonal to permanent

Meant benefits, retirement, two kids, a house, a mortgage, yeah

More debt

But more stability

I've done everything

I was a photographer

I drove a cab

I've done printing

I work with computers

I'm a videographer

This past winter I took

Seven month's vacation

At home

Plenty of time

For doing your work

Then I went and lived

In our cottage in Maine for three months

Collecting unemployment and food stamps

I had a Volkswagen Beetle all paid for

I said, I could live the rest of my life like this, who needs the rat race?

I live by a budget

It gives flexibility

Flexibility is important

It is control of your time

I have free time

(But no benefits)

As a permanent employee

I spend less time in the field

I got married

I built a house

I have less flexibility

But I do have

Health Insurance

You can work four months

And play for eight

If you are frugal

Go to New Zealand

Go to Mexico

Stay in the States...

I value my time off

That's why I work

If you get permanent

You do kinda feel

More locked in

My work is my play

I do the same things

When I'm playing

When I'm working

Getting laid off

And starting over is great

I save enough in the summer

To get me through ski season in the winter

I fell in love (with my work)

There's a disconnect between

Permanents and Seasonals

The first thing when I heard my schedule was

Oh my god, nine days on straight

Five days off straight

Immediately I thought of

All the hiking I could do and

All the places I could go

Seasonals are here

To play

And to work

I can't come up with anything I'd

Want to do all year I

Love seasons I

Love changes,

Experiences

For some reason

If benefits became the most important thing

I'd probably leave

The Park Service

Seasonals are pretty much

By the seat of their pants

Permanents get a wistful look

And say those seasonal years

Were best

I'm like, play, be free

There's a stigma a lot of people are raised with

You will get a job and you will get a career and you will go through all of these
steps of life

It's all lined out

Traditional

There's this ladder people climb

Whether they want to be or not

That feels tiring

It feels tiring

It's willingness on peoples' part

To step out of tradition

Do things a little different

I wonder

What is wrong with me sometimes

Why can't I

Settle down

Stay in one place

(There are things

That are easier)

Like Not Moving

Opportunity to travel and work

At the same time

So I started

No benefits

For seasonal workers

But beauty

Majesty

Eternal benefits

Lasting longer

Than healthcare, dental care, or whatever

My father particularly thought

This was a waste of time

I could be doing more

(That changed when he came out here)

I've always been a work

To live

Kind of gal

You can be out there

Catching sunrises

And when it rains you see rainbows in all the valleys

The whole of Glacier Park

Is my office

I think they thought

That's good for a couple years

Then it was like, okay

When are you getting a real job

What a loser

But it's pretty obvious

After 8, 10, 12 years

I'm not coming back to Ohio

For that good paying job

And suburbia and stuff

In my free time

I hike up mountains

Like when I work

Roll out of bed

Stretch a little

Find your motivation

After a hard days' work

Get the water boiling

Hike to work

Take a couple breaks

Later that day, Hike Home

Jump in the lake

Take a nap

Cook dinner

Do dishes

Go to sleep in your tent

The more I stay

The more I love

It's the best job

The longer I'm there

The more I feel

I can't go back

To a regular job

There's a sense of peace

There's a nirvana

I love it, I'm blessed, I love it

Poetic Lessons on Work & Life: Level 2

[And the Seasonals Don't]

office walls

computer screens

a telephone

green uniform

shield-shaped badges

loaded pistol gun

crossed legs

so tell me . . .

“i have health insurance”

(and a view of sidewalks

in Glacier National Park)

“and the seasonals don't”

[I Gave Up]

2,200 feet, 3.1 miles

salmon pink moss campion

lavender star asters

the ancientness of white bark pines

the stark shrill shriek of nutcrackers

we're here so he can teach me things:

names of floral
patterns of fauna
but silence mostly fills the gap
of those five feet we keep between
our leaded movements
up the mountain
the ridgeline offers some respite
a dust storm he calls “the wind ghosts”
this place, he says, is spirit-filled
and we meander
alpine meadows
“go ahead, break into song”
then raven’s nests
amongst the rocks
“the raven is the animal
i come here every year to see”
“...gave up on earning my degree”

[At Play, At Work]
in the mornings
right before it’s light
we cross Poia Creek

35 degrees

with our shovels, chainsaw

and pulaskis hung casually

intentional over our shoulders

(our feet cramp up)

we rub them dry

pull up wool socks

lace steel-toed boots

head out to work

-carving trenches in mud-melted snow

-moving rocks in canvas bags down trail

-digging pits in groves of thick doug firs

10 hours pass

we saunter back

to Poia Creek

this time we stop

muddy shirts on rocks

tools rest in grass

bodies glisten in sun

[Life Comes First]

it's 5 a.m.

and to the east
the sun moves slow
over Rep Gap Mountain
the coffee's on
tarp flap is flapping
in the morning breeze
"this is the life," he says
leans over, pouring water
from the rusted pot

[False Divides]

"come on in"
white walls, 8 x 5 space
computer screen
"my hair was down to here"
he motions to his waist
clean-cut now, uniformed
"those days in the woods-
i remember telling my boss
i'd work seasonal
the rest of my life"
"well?"

“it’s called,
a mortgage”
(it’s called false divides)

[Settling Down]
yellow raft
carves up & down
the North Fork of the Flathead River
on shoreline: bald eagles, osprey, fishermen
we wave
take turns on oar
rapids, hold on, ok
“it was a matter of being outside,” he says
“then i met her”
an eagle drifts by overhead
“i still get out some of the time...”
we bob into a whirlpool
spinning slow

[At Work, At Play]
10 hours clearing drains
up Red Gap Pass

first time all season
government break around 3:30 p.m.
peanut butter sandwiches, chocolate pieces
warm coffee in thermoses
“gonna have to kick it in gear
to make the ridge walk still this evening”
ALL up, pulaskis stashed
up one peak
a view all sides
greens & whites & yellows mix
obscure shades
of some painter’s dream
up two peaks
and some other views
Chief Mountain north
Many Glacier south
Swiftcurrent west
Great Plains east
we scramble down
a rocky slope
dodging aspens, doug firs, western larch
one man, another, another

another, another, me

2,000 feet more down to the tents

and to dinner

Poetic Lessons on Work & Life: Level 3

Quality of life comes first!

Living the lives we so desire

We laugh about Theory

And detach ourselves from expectations

Letting go of false futuristic promises

We garner interesting experiences

And restructure central pursuits

We are creative

Finding what we need when we need it

We stop dividing up our lives

And living life as some sort of tradeoff

(Remember it is arbitrary)

Re-conceptualizing work/life

Life Comes First

Seasonal workers get insurance

Permanent workers get flexibility

We enjoy our lives and our work

We focus on what is most fun

Fully engaging

Living light-hearted

Taking our time

Structuring it well

We start with minutiae

Society changes

Narrative Summary of Conceptual Mapping for RQ2

For the seasonal workers in this study, stepping outside of the traditional norms of work was imperative in order to garner interesting experiences. They talked of leaving lucrative, but boring and repetitious corporate American careers in order to move west and live an adventure instead. In their more traditionally crafted lives, they noted that they felt as though they had been taking paths laid out for them via society and family as opposed to taking their own, more interesting journeys like when 50-year-old backcountry ranger Rachel noted that “climbing a traditional organizational ladder had always felt tiring and silly” to her . In order to engage in more quirky and unusual experiences then, they embarked on non-traditional lives, working part of the year as seasonal workers and spending part of the year on “vacations” either abroad or even at home. For them, leaving traditional work was a quality of life issue. Backcountry ranger Ashley said repeatedly that “quality of life” was most important to her and that “you can do what you love and that you should do what you love because it’s your life”. They noted the stress associated with more traditional careers

including the amount of time that got spent doing (office) work, the overwhelming feeling that one was always climbing up a long, competitive ladder, and the disinterest with their actual work experiences in contrast to the varied, practical and intriguing kinds of work they got to practice working for the Park Service and that they enjoyed (e.g., taking park visitors on hikes, using pulaskis for trail work).

Along these lines, many participants also mentioned the trend they had noticed in other work forms that required and demanded they acquire and cultivate specialized skills in some regard, but that this condition did not interest them. Backcountry ranger Rachel noted that she “couldn’t come up with anything I’d want to do all year. I love seasons, I love changes, I love experiences.” They were more interested in learning and doing a multitude of duties, a possibility in seasonal work where you get tasked with managing a wide variety of situations in unpredictable outdoor settings with park visitors. Some even expressed concern that the Park Service was trending towards specialization, which alarmed many in light of the enjoyment they entertained as diversely qualified employees and in light of the Park Service tradition of multifaceted and widely capable rangers. Having a wide array of experiences was thus important to these seasonal workers in terms of simultaneously having interesting and engaging lives and work. Seasonal IT manager Glenn for instance told me he had “done everything. I was a photographer, I drove a cab, I’ve done printing, I work with computers, I’m a videographer...” They were unrelenting in their pursuit of work and lives they

loved even if it meant stepping out of tradition and being misperceived by others. Without prompting, most seasonals mentioned “love” in regards to “work”; quality and richness and diversity of work/life was valued more deeply than other aspects.

For most seasonal workers, tradition was equal to a permanence to which they did not aspire. Having the capacity to change up work in terms of having different occupational seasons like ski instructing in the winter and trail work in the summer or just having that winter time to play and travel, was foremost. Fire ecologist Dennis, who was a seasonal Park Service employee for twenty years before transitioning to permanent status noted: “You can work four months and play for eight if you’re frugal. People go to New Zealand, you can go to Mexico, you can just hang around at home. That free time off is invaluable and precious.” The perception of the permanence of traditional work in light of its steady routines was not inspiring to them, nor was the perception (and former firsthand experiences) that traditional permanent work acquired most of your *time*, often in the name of offering some external benefit such as the ability to own and occupy a home. From the seasonal perspective, and especially from the permanent employee perspective present in the poems above, there was an obvious and immediate divide established regarding the divergent responsibilities and social obligations between seasonal and permanent workers in the Park Service. The first response from all permanent employees interviewed for this study regarding the most prevalent change following their transition from seasonal to permanent

employees for example, was fervently and resolutely summarized in one word: mortgage. Becoming a permanent worker meant simultaneously establishing spatial permanency in the form of work and in the form of a house (marriage, debt, and often children). Backcountry permit director Brian for instance noted that “moving from seasonal to permanent status meant benefits, retirement, two kids, a house, a mortgage, yeah more debt, but more stability.”

According to both seasonal and permanent employees then, the trade-off for moving from a seasonal lifestyle to a permanent one was that of relinquishing adventurous experiences both in play and in work for a fixedness or permanence along the lines of a more traditionally conceptualized modern life. Both seasonal and permanent workers expressed a range of feelings on this matter. Some permanent employees expressed satisfaction in the fact that they had attained permanent status in the NPS, a difficult feat to accomplish in light of the scarcity of available positions. Park research director Tara for instance told me she “felt lucky” to have found permanent NPS work because “there are so many folks who work seasonally for years and years hoping some opportunity will come along.” Some argued that once you reached a certain age (and 28 years old seemed to be about the time), it was necessary to “settle down”, buy some things, and generally enter a more traditionally defined lifestyle. Some looked wistfully at their fascinating seasonal histories while articulating to me the importance of having health insurance. Some seasonals expressed satisfaction in the fact that they had been able to live non-traditionally in a traditional world. Trail crew laborer Ben

for instance mentioned that “it might be impossible to go back to a regular job after experiencing the sense of peace and nirvana possible” in his Park Service work. Some worried that once they reached a certain age, they might be compelled to “settle down” and buy some things. Wildlife technician Courtney said that though she “loved her seasonal work” she could see herself “settling down at some point in order to find a mate and steady career.” Some wondered if there was something fundamentally wrong with their personhood that they could not find it in themselves to follow a more traditional route. Interpretive ranger Megan for instance said she sometimes “wondered what was wrong” with her that she could not “settle down in one place because there are things that are easier, like not moving.” Most wondered why they could not live the lives they so desired while also enjoying organizationally mandated health insurance.

Another major trade-off between seasonal and permanent work as articulated by both seasonal and permanent workers pertained to the exchange of flexibility between the two work lifestyles. For seasonal workers, the capacity to work only part of the year and play for the rest was the major attraction of their work, not necessarily in terms of the *amount* of free time, but in terms of the greatest capacity to organize one’s life in terms of how one spends one’s time. IT Director Glenn said that “having the flexibility to have control of your time is the most important thing.” This orientation towards work and life was not only present in terms of working and playing seasonally, but in terms of the kind of work positions and roles the seasonal workers pursued – roles that enabled them

to typically work at their own pace, often alone and outside, and doing activities they would normally engage in even on time off. Seasonal law enforcement ranger Reggie talked about “being left alone to do my work at my own pace in the mountains.” The permanent workers in this study reminisced about the former flexibility of their lives as seasonals, noting that though they had garnered a form of organizational and economic stability, the flexibility of their lives was lacking in terms of free time and even decisions about work tasks which were now geared towards office work, technology and people management. Wilderness ranger Kyle said, “I often struggle being a permanent employee attempting to get out into the backcountry like I did as a seasonal. Now I’m tasked with paperwork and emails and there’s less and less time for fieldwork.”

Work and life flexibility was often expressed as a form of detachment from modern conceptualizations and practices of work and life. For seasonal workers, flexibility was important for the detachment and/or separation from the busyness of contemporary life which might compel them to exist (harridly) and partake in activities they did not find worthy of their time (e.g., paperwork). Trails laborer Dylan for instance said that “the best thing about working for the park is going into the backcountry. I was there for eighty-plus days last summer and you get to be detached from everything; technology, girls, busyness. You work hard, but when your work is done it’s done.” Using time to enjoy the natural world, to live simply and self-sufficiently, and to experience what they termed “inner peace” during their time out in the woods detached from the

modern world was more important than engaging life otherwise in order to reap the typical organizational benefits (e.g., insurance, retirement) as a permanent or more traditional worker. In fact, some seasonal workers went as far to say that if they ever found themselves focusing on “benefits” as their work motivation they would quit their jobs in order to re-prioritize their lives. Seasonal law enforcement ranger Rachel blatantly announced, “If I ever find myself focusing on benefits as the most important thing in life, I will probably quit the Park Service.” Depth of experience and quality of life were articulated as most meaningful in terms of work and play, and organized benefits were arbitrary in juxtaposition. For many seasonals then, if being a permanent employee meant relinquishing free time and flexibility for benefits, the Park Service could hire others willing to do so.

Theoretical and Practical Lessons on Work & Life

What can we learn from the seasonal workers in this study regarding work and life in terms of overwork? Much of the work-life literature is geared towards practically remedying the divides between work and life that have ensued in modernity creating difficult circumstances for people of all walks of life including women who are often called upon to work double shifts at work and at home (Evans & Grant, 2008), older workers who cannot get hired due to negative stereotypes and conceptualizations about what work means and who does it (Brooke & Taylor, 2005), or minority workers who often have to work long hours in order to afford basic necessities (Adler & Adler, 2004). At the heart of the

matter in most of this research is a deep concern for the quality of life for people across a wide spectrum of socio-economic positionings (Young, 1990). We wonder how we can make work and life more enriching for us all in light of the social structures we have and are creating.

A major emphasis that has been proposed in both popular and scholarly presses to bridge divides between work and life is workplace flexibility (Golden, 2001). Being able to work flexibly has been proposed to allot workers a greater capacity to organize their time and to thus assist in the management of the various facets of life (Council on Women and Girls, 2010). Unfortunately though, and as Golden (2001) poignantly illustrates, working flexibly does not necessarily mediate for overwork and could even perpetuate it in the sense that one can almost work anywhere at any time in this day and age. The vital quality of life issue then gets evaded and the problematic conceptual divides between working and living get maintained as we continue to develop band-aids for the deep social wounds we have created by segmenting life into components like those of a pie chart that need to be balanced and managed.

One of the most compelling aspects of the seasonal workers in this study was their insistence and follow-through that quality of life came first before any other concern. In this study initially, I was curious to apprehend seasonal workers' orientations towards work and play in the sense that I imagined their approach to be unique in contrast to how academics and others have conceptualized work/play in light of the fact that seasonal workers tend to work

where they play and/or engage in the same activities for both work and play. The question regarding their conceptualizations on the matter, though, seemed silly to most participants who laughed about the notion of theorizing (generally), and especially theories on work and life. I believe their evasion of the question though is an answer to the question in many regards. For most of the seasonal workers in the study, living *life* was preeminent and nothing else mattered. My sense is that theorizing about the intersections between work and play felt like a waste of time to them; I am lucky they took time to talk with me at all! Through this experience and others, and based on their responses to other questions, I believe they can shed light on the work-life conundrum as it has typically been engaged.

For the seasonals here, detachment from traditional social structures and the kind of working and living experience which that entailed (e.g., fast-paced, competitive, technological) was necessary to live the kind of lives that they desired. In order to carve out the time and space they wanted for the kinds of experiences they were interested in, they had to essentially detach themselves from certain forms of work tradition, and with that certain social/organizational benefits. For them though, quality of everyday life superseded these forms of benefit, and thinking in terms of work and life thus made no sense; there was only *life*, and decisions to be made along those terms. Work then, was acted upon and responded to as a component of life. Choosing what one did for work was of utmost importance to some and of no particular consequence to others. For some,

work was a literal continuation of their play; an active engagement in the activities they most enjoyed. For others, seasonal work allotted them the flexibility they wanted with their time and for their interests. They worked for short periods in different capacities garnering a mix of skills and experiences enriching themselves. Life came first and figuring out work came after.

I wonder if our social and organizational structures functioned more along the lines of “life” first (like the seasonal workers here), as opposed to something like “profit” first, how they might be modified. With profit at the root of organizational (and then, personal) functioning, life becomes organized around the pursuit of accumulating things and its “quality” becomes secondary. Any central value not grounded in “life” first seems potentially problematic because life in its richness and fullness is then not paramount. This is how I feel that divides begin to get made; when we focus on things besides living deeply and fully, we focus on something else and then attempt to fit “life” in after the fact. For instance, if we focus on capital gain and economic development as we so often have in the United States, we suddenly find ourselves in somewhat overwhelming circumstances with overworked, stressed and anxiety-ridden people who have seen and experienced the extent to which their focus can take them (along with a society), and they desire more diversity and fullness in their lives (Hewlett, 2007). Unfortunately, too often, this aspiration for greater fullness gets endeavored as an application to current work/life conditions (in the form of workplace flexibility, for example), and not as a centerfold from which every

other component of life emanates. Without total restructuring from the ground up and a rupturing of the divides we have created separating us from the fullness of life, any addition to an already problematically-structured enterprise will likely fail.

If life comes first, how might we structure work? Like Young (1990), I believe our social and organizational structures should strive to go beyond an equal and fair distribution of goods and look to what our needs are as unique individuals. The seasonal workers in this study are creatively accounting for their needs via creative work-life practices which require most of them to live as transients in a sense, finding what they need as they can. But though they say they would not want their lives another way, a lingering sadness sometimes surfaced when they discussed their status as outsiders in a world largely structured around material gain and their incapacity to be organizationally cared for based on their disinterest or frustration with standard organizational procedures and the livelihoods that typically coincided. The constant divides being articulated between the seasonal and permanent workers in the Park Service illustrate well the larger divides our American society is facing. Not everybody's needs are being accounted for as illustrated through the ongoing Occupy Movement. Historically, a small percentage of (white male) workers in corporate America have defined our work practices and who gets what benefits and how (Acker, 1990). While the seasonal workers in this study have managed to construct non-

traditional lives based around their needs and desires in the midst of a hefty capitalistic machine, their paths of resistance have certainly not been easy.

For the permanent workers in this study, transitioning from seasonal to permanent status was equal to living more traditional lifestyles in the form of acquiring homes, marriages, children and debt. And health insurance. For the seasonal workers in this study, having health insurance could never be worth the flexibility in lifestyle, work task and openness in terms of work pace which they garnered as seasonal workers. Here again, divides got made between the Park Service employees in terms of what you had to do to live the kind of life you wanted. If you wanted health insurance, you had to settle down (buy a house, get married, have some kids) and work in the office. If you wanted outdoor adventure, you had to forgo health insurance (a house, marriage, and kids).

We seem to forget sometimes the arbitrariness of the social structures we have created and that we base our lives around (Foucault, 1980). The divisions and trade-offs we think about, talk about, and that we practice, are not inherent. What I wish for us all is life in its fullness, no divides. If we want children, we should have children. If we want adventure, we should have adventure. If we want health insurance, we should have health insurance. Life first means a direct and true examination of the ways that we are living that create divides between people and for ourselves and that do not serve us well. A re-conceptualization of what is important about life and how we each can realize our selves to our fullest capacities is pressing in this country and guarantees to rearrange our practices of

work. We need more people like the seasonal workers in this study to insist on life first; to refuse to live a life structured around work as a form of profit, to refuse to perform work that is dull, lifeless and stressful, and to refuse to settle down along lines of tradition because it is convenient. And we should have health insurance, too. We should get to have our cake and eat it.

So what do we specifically learn about work and life from the seasonal workers in this study in terms of overwork? First, I think we learn or remember that life and work can and should be enjoyable. Approaching life as a fun experience to be had switches our mentality from that of drudgery and responsibility to one of a light-hearted but full engagement with our surroundings. And when we are light-hearted and fully engaged in our lives, it tends to become easier to appropriately and effectively say “no” to injustices and “yes” to possibilities. When we know to our core that life is beautiful, then that knowledge accompanies us and spreads out in every sphere of life. It becomes easier to say “no” to piles of paperwork and “yes” to our families. It becomes easier to say “no” to non-stop computer screens and “yes” to the mountains. These small decisions that we make potentially amount to major shifts in social and organizational structures. Small ruptures coalesce.

Along those lines, we also learn that we can take our time, both literally and figuratively. We can create the lives we want by structuring our time as we see fit for the kinds of experiences we want. We can work at paces which seem reasonable. We can take risks and try new things. And when we make decisions

based on what it is we truly want and need, it is likely the excessiveness and nonsensicality of hyper-capitalist structures will begin to slough off. We are the ones structuring society. We need to ask ourselves what kind of society we want, but start with the minutiae of our own lives. If we ask ourselves these questions and act out our lives as a response much like the seasonal workers in this study, overwork for the sake of overwork and possessiveness of work processes and capital, might be history.

RQ3: What might seasonal work/ers teach us theoretically and practically about embodiment and spirituality in terms of overwork?

Poetic Lessons on Embodiment & Spirituality: Level 1

I always wanted work in a

Dirty sweaty environment

Earn my showers

And leave my mark

On the trails

I always have loved

Being outside

I felt that I was part of something bigger

Than the park, than myself, than the others

I LOVE being strong

I love it

Carrying fill bags of gravel and rock

And moving giant rocks

And mopping up sections of trail that are flooded

My crew, my co-workers

They're my family

It's physically demanding, exhausting, grueling

No room for wimps

You really have to wanna get the crap

Beat out of you

That's what's gonna happen

I feel more of a woman

I can feel my muscles

I can feel my body

I can feel my breasts

I can feel my womb

You get to spend

Copious amounts of time

In the Great Outdoors

There's plenty of time

To do your work

(It doesn't seem like work to me)

You get to know a place

Intimately

In all of its seasons

The trees aren't lying to you

The trees are being

The tree's a tree

The bear's a bear

The bird's a bird

The bird's not trying to be a fox

Get your head down

Get your hands dirty

Keep your head down

Get your hands dirty

And Work

Man has no control

Over the elements

You're workin' with nature

Up close and personal

It's real

It's dangerous

Some people like to call us

Trail Artists

It's like getting paid to have a gym membership

You're walking up to 20 miles in a day

You're moving stones

It shows you human body

Capabilities

I figured I'd stay in the field my whole life

Not thinking your body might break down

You make really intense friendships

In the most beautiful places in the world

If I can protect the field workers

And let them do their work

And kind of absorb the b.s. from above

And the heavy hand of government

That's very satisfying

You may have more relationships

Via technology

But they're weak

I don't know if you can call them

Relationships

You're developing relationships

With computers

In your head

I have always always loved the park

It's very very significant to me

You work alone

Pretty much all day

Outside

All day

Every day

Seeing my accomplishments

Was great

But it is so hard on your body

I make myself seasonal

For this job

It's hands-on

It's non-traditional

There's responsibility

And decision-making

I work here because I love it

Working in Glacier has less to do

With any propensity or desire to work for

The Park Service

And more to do with

That corner of the world

And that landscape

Glacier Is

My spiritual home

It's an experience that allows you

A tremendous amount of time outside

Observing natural cycles, seasonal changes, fluctuations . . .

The job gives you so much adventure

And time out in the natural world

You're working with them

You're cooking with them

You're eating with them

You're living with them

You're hiking with them

You're playing with them

I respect the people

Out in the field

Not shuffling papers

Or dealing with theory

We're all working towards
The same mission and goal
Of protecting this place
Keeping it natural
And accessible
For people to come see and to experience

There are people
Who are really dear to me
Who I really love
Who are like-minded
We adventure on weekends

The analogy that comes to mind is when
You're on a bicycle moving forward
And that momentum
Keeps you on your wheels
But when it stops
You fall over

Forward Motion

Both literally

And figuratively

There's something to moving forward physically

That corresponds to the same feeling of moving forward

In mind

And heart

It feels good to be pushing your

Physical limits

It feels good to be asking something

Of yourself

I like the feel of

A cog

In the greater wheel

That's the biggest change

As a permanent employee

You sit in front of a computer

On the phone

Because now you are one of

The Bureaucrats

(And when I say bureaucrat it's not
In a negative sense
It's just something that has to be done
And I'm a long-time believer
That the job isn't done
Until the paperwork's done)

Glacier Park in general
There's no place
Like it

I will never forget sitting there at lunch one day
And people were talking about their latest hike or birds they saw or bear sightings
And I go, wow, what a difference this is
From corporate America where you're talking about
Whatever sales call or the football game last weekend

The best jobs are seasonal jobs
We are working with the forest
Not with the red-tape

Glacier still feels like

A real place

(GET RID OF THE BUREAUCRACY)

I like seclusion

Just Being There

Out in the woods

Wilderness Coma

By the end I was like swinging a 15 lb sledge hammer and crushing rocks all day
without getting tired

And I have pictures from then that are like

Oh my God

I'm rugged!

Mt. Wilbur

Is outside my cabin door

I like that

There was a shift from designing my life around

What I could do so I could ski

To what I could do to

Work in Glacier

Until I die

Poetic Lessons on Embodiment & Spirituality: Level 2

[And a View of Sidewalks
in Glacier National Park]

office walls

computer screens

a telephone

green uniform

shield-shaped badges

loaded pistol gun

crossed legs

so tell me . . .

“health insurance”

[Happy Together]

music tonight

at The Stonefly

michael’s country band is on

we crowd together in pick-up trucks

& mini-vans with no windows

dressed up to dance

in cowboy boots and tennis shoes

smoke breaks out back
dancing inside to waylon & willie
later we head down to the river
for a quick dip in freezing water
and talks about the depth of life
and talks about the breadth of life
star-gazing in the midnight sky
plans to hike Mt. Jackson next
(who wants to go?)
in the morning we head off to work
and laugh about the night before

[Embodied Work]

“this trail was lost
for 40 years” she says
ambling careful over
patches of amber brackenfern
cow parsnip, yellowed yarrow
we hike 7 miles
feet just visible
to old Kootenai patrol cabin
“looks like we’ll need to fix

this hitch rail”
she gets an axe
in between throws
she wipes the sweat and bark
from her face
“you know,” she says
“i love the movement
of this work”
she throws again
she throws again
she wipes her face
she turns & smiles

[Park Service Mission?]

we’re gathered around a picnic bench
the annual backcountry meeting
ten backcountry rangers
two district rangers
6 miles deep into the Belly River
“they’re cutting funding for next year,” he says
“but,” matt says, “the weeds on the west shore of Lake McDonald...”
“i know”

“but,” rita says, “the eagles at the head of Kintla Lake...”

“i know”

“but,” ken says, “the patrol cabins up near Logging Lake...”

“i know”

“but,” brady says, “the park service mission to preserve this resource?”

[They’ve Got It In Control]

we filter into the park orientation building

seasonal employees line each row of chairs

 bearded disheveled men

 earthy robust women

some returning 30 years . . .

in front stand all of the big wigs

aka all the headsheds

erect, full green & grey, flat hats

one by one they speak to us

give us the rules

“here’s what to do”

soft murmurs move

around the room

then question time

“what about housing?”

“what about insurance?”

(they’ve got it in control

they say)

[What To Report]

spent 10 days straight

at Cobalt Lake

the mules walk our gear out

we follow

to frontcountry

from backcountry

lodgepoles to aspens

cobalt to asphalt

---now paperwork---

+ how many days

+ what did we do

+ what did we see

+ (what to report)

the front doors at the headquarters

are locked

inside: offices, offices, offices, offices

hardbacked chairs, computing systems

(it feels like
coming out into the sun after
a darkly lit and dream-like film,
100 Years of Solitude)

[Minds, Bodies, Hearts]

40 degrees this morn
out of our tents
struggle on wet clothes
grab pulaskis
crew talk by fire
some hacky sack
slow climb up Piegan
day 8 of 10
tired legs/tired minds
BIG appetites
halfway thru work
we call it quits
to climb Mount Gould
arms reach
legs stretch
we keep moving

minds, bodies & hearts

[Trail Artists]

“it’s a craft really,” he says

pulling stones down

for the wall

“the best way to move a rock is”

he grunts, crouches himself low

begins to push, rolls it in place

pausing, breathing

the sweat dripping

“some like to call us trail artists”

[Meeting Up]

the bunkhouse

has been home to trails

for 40 years

3 of us live there now

meet the other crew

at the tool shed in the

mornings, we stretch, we move slow

long hitches, back to the house

make weekend plans

meet at the bar

drink pbr

meet at biker's

for barbecues

(and whiskey snorts)

meet back at bunk

meet back on trail

Poetic Lessons on Embodiment & Spirituality: Level 3

Having a lot of heart

We have passion for work as a craft

And concern/care for each other

Working hard

We challenge our bodies

And commit to a larger cause

Loving the wilderness wild

We Get away From it All

Observe the natural world

Respect quiet and spiritual

Wearing our hearts on our faces

We open our hearts

We wake ourselves up

We go to the mountains
And learn from those who have gone
Recognizing our capacities for positive
We cultivate goodness in any sphere
Bridging divides
Building interconnections to nature
Our bodies are present
We make beautiful things
We make movement
Like the seasons
Building communities and connection

Narrative Summary of Conceptual Mapping for RQ3

For the seasonal workers in this study, place, and specifically being in Glacier National Park, was a fundamental component of their work and livelihoods. For most, being outside and spending time outdoors had been a pressing desire for most of their lives which they could realize as employees in Glacier Park. Being in the landscape of Glacier then functioned as a form of connection for them in many regards. It enabled them to fundamentally connect with nature to a degree many of them had been working towards and for since childhood. It enabled them to connect with other human beings who felt similarly about the outdoors and to build strong kinships with those people like when backcountry ranger Sally told me, “There are people there who are really dear to

me, who I really love and are like-minded and want to adventure on the weekends.” It enabled them to connect with a larger overarching organizational and philosophical mission of conservation and concern for the wilderness via the Park Service. It provided them with astounding experiences of natural grandeur and the opportunity to observe natural seasonal processes and changes. It allowed them to disconnect from the busyness of modern life, especially in terms of technological advancement and a hectic living/working pace. And many referred to the landscape of Glacier in spiritual terms, articulating that their senses of spiritual connectedness and/or groundedness originated or got cultivated in the Rocky Mountains there. Trails laborer Joe for instance told me, “Working in Glacier has less to do with any propensity or desire to work for the Park Service and more to do with that corner of the world and that landscape. I’ve always thought of Glacier as my spiritual home and kind of home turf.” For many, their senses of spirituality often pertained to *movement* in some capacity, whether they expressed this in terms of the extensive bodily motion required of their work and implicated in their play, or via their keen observations of and embodied participation in the changing of the seasons as they transitioned between locales.

Community was extremely important to the seasonal workers, but interestingly juxtaposed with their desire for solitude and quiet. Community tended to be discussed broadly in terms of common mindsets and philosophies towards life, park knowledges in terms of best places and scientific/historical understandings, and specifically in terms of general shared life experiences and

outdoor adventures. Many talked about how unique it had been for them to encounter others with similar values, interests, and lifestyles, and that the community of people they had discovered in Glacier inspired them to return every season to the mountains. Backcountry ranger Ashley told me, “We’re seasonal and we’re very community based. We share very similar values, very similar goals and ideals, and we are very tight-knit living together and working together and coming back to see each other year after year.” They expressed a deep appreciation and respect towards others who they perceived as having a true understanding of and initiative towards the Park Service mission of preservation and wildness, and many seasonals traveled or lived together during the winter seasons. On the other side of things, they also expressed frustration with the sheer amount of time often shared with others who worked on the same crew or who lived in the same complex. Balancing the time spent between esteemed others with their desire for alone time and reflection in the woods sometimes became difficult in concert with the fact that survival in the mountains often depended on authentic reliance on one another.

Hard work was celebrated as both a privilege and necessity of seasonal work. Participants emphasized the importance of doing their work well and wholeheartedly, and they repeatedly expounded upon the extreme physicality of their work. They told me that they often craved the fully engaged and focused experience of their mountain work during the off-season because they liked the feeling of using their bodies to their full capacities and even observing their

bodies physically changing over the span of a season. Trails laborer Ben for instance said, “It’s like getting paid to have a membership to the gym. Except you get to be outside the whole time. Crazy.” Participants seemed to enjoy the process of doing physically laborious work in terms of doing the work itself and experiencing their bodies in unique ways, but also in terms of the functionality and outcomes of their efforts as visually and usefully productive (e.g., fixing trails, building pit toilets for park visitors). They seemed to take great pride in the craft of their work and expressed the highest esteem for individuals with especially well-developed and masterful skill sets which had been developed over time (e.g., artfully cutting down thick brush with a brush cutter along particularly rocky terrain). For instance, at the trail crew tool refresher course meeting, both seasonal and permanent workers expressed admiration towards long-time trails laborer Biker for his artful utilization of the brush cutter. He led the group session for this tool summer 2010.

Many participants also mentioned concern regarding their capacities to maintain the level of physical engagement and endurance necessary to perform their work well over time. Backcountry ranger Ashley who had worked on trail crew previously noted: “I loved being outside all the time and I loved being able to see the accomplishments of my work, but I just got burned out on the hard physical labor where people who do that a number of years start having arthritis, etc. I don’t want to do that to my body.” They wondered if they would be able to keep pace or intensity with others as they aged and their bodies weakened or even

got injured on the job. Permanent workers especially noted the physicality of seasonal work as problematic for the long-term and they even cited it as a central reason for transitioning from seasonal to permanent work. Backcountry permit director Brian told me, “I figured I’d stay in the field my entire life not thinking your body would break down and you wouldn’t be able to do that at a certain point.” They reasoned that in light of the fact that their bodies would eventually give out, it was imperative to obtain a permanent position with the Park Service which entailed more traditional forms of office work despite the fact that working in the outdoors (as a seasonal) had been their initial draw to the NPS organization at large.

For this reason, many seasonal workers often referred to transitioned permanent workers as sell-outs in the sense that they had sacrificed what they really cared about (i.e., being *in* the resource working on the land) for a more traditional stability. Even many of the permanent employees looked mildly sheepish when they discussed their concerns about the arduousness of seasonal work in lieu of their decisions to transition. (They did sound sort of like wimps.) For what could be taken as further evidence of their mild shame regarding this issue, they often talked about their permanent work as a form of protection for seasonal work. Trails boss Dan often highlighted his capacity to “protect my workers from the bullshit.” In other words, they often noted that the most important component of their work was their capacity to “make things easier” for seasonals by protecting them from the government so they could spend as much

time as possible outside and most effectively navigate the red-tape and bureaucracy. Backcountry permit writer Brian said, “I can protect the field level people and let them do their work and kind of absorb the B.S. from above, or deflect it, or somehow redirect it so that it works for the field people and there’s not just the heavy hand of government coming down.” While this may be true, as a researcher, I was fascinated again by the divides and hierarchies that got made between spheres of work and especially here in terms of embodiedness from both seasonal and permanent workers. Bodies existed within the field but got erased (and paid more) within the office.

Another closely-related component to getting paid more and not having to work in physically laborious ways as a permanent employee was the difference between seasonal and permanent employees’ relationships to technology. Seasonals tended to pride themselves on not having to do paperwork, not having to do computer work, not having to be inside, staying out of the organizational politics as much as possible, and just generally “getting away from it all” out in the wilderness. Trail laborer Ben’s articulation that he “was a romantic and loved the stars in contrast to society and technology which is lying to you” summarizes this feeling. In contrast, permanents expressed deep frustration and sadness over the amount of time they spent doing paperwork and computer work, especially in light of their memories of carefree summers as seasonal workers. Environmental protection director Mary looked down at her hands when telling me she was “buried under paperwork and I never get outside anymore.” In general, there was

a very negative orientation towards technology from most participants in this study. However, whereas seasonals could physically distance themselves from computer/phone technologies at work, permanent work revolved around them. As such, most permanent workers emphasized that while computer work was boring, repetitive and draining, it was necessary in order for the organization to properly function. If somebody had to do that work, they were willing to do it for healthy salaries and government benefit packages.

Theoretical and Practical Lessons on Embodiment & Spirituality

What can we learn from the seasonal workers in this study regarding embodiment and spirituality in terms of overwork? Marx, and more recently Crawford (2006), have argued that the externalization of labor is problematic in the sense that it alienates human beings from the craft of their work and often results in excessive production (for production's sake). For decades, critical feminists (e.g., Acker, 1990; Ashcraft, in press, Ashcraft & Mumby, 2004; Trethewey, 1997) have been arguing that (white, male) organizational structures and logics have functioned to keep women and others' bodies out of the organization. This (white, male) disembodied logic has prided itself on its' capacity to privilege mind over bodies and thus perpetuate divisions between (white, male) human beings and their (white collar) work, as well as between white male workers and non-white workers in terms of who gets to do what kinds of work.

In many ways, I observed these same kinds of divisions at work in the Park Service between the seasonal and permanent workers involved in this study. Seasonal workers worked out in the field of Glacier Park and expressed pride and even a spiritual connectedness via the utilization and movement of their bodies. Permanent employees worked inside in traditional office spaces (in the midst of GNP!) doing paperwork and technologically-oriented labor (instead of working with their “bodies”), and expressed disdain but pragmatism towards the work in lieu of organizational benefits (i.e., abstract systems). While the seasonal workers expressed deep regard for the craft of their work and towards the craftsmanship of others, the permanent workers said they worked bureaucratically (doing what?) in order to protect the seasonals’ capacity to do their craft work. While the seasonals expressed ongoing privilege and thanks regarding the beautiful space/place in which they got to live and accomplish their work, the permanents said it was worth giving that up in order to protect their bodies from potential damage and aging and to garner higher wages and retirement. In the Park Service, clear divisions of labor were equal to clear differences in the utilization and presence of bodies, which points directly to the white, male disembodied logic and alienation of labor problems so many have historically been theorizing.

In light of the development of modernity in concert with the economic and social systems in which we find ourselves, what might be done to mediate for these divisions? As outlined in the beginning chapter, contemporary feminist theorists have been arguing we need to “bring the body back to work” (Ashcraft,

in press; Heaphy & Dutton, 2008), or in other words, talk about, reference, and write about bodies and the (in)visibility of them in order to illuminate what has been obscured. I am skeptical about this approach however because highlighting injustice does not inherently erase it; divisions of labor have been a prevalent issue in America for at least one hundred years. Furthermore, those (white males) in command of most organizational resources are not likely to change their work practices and approach because it gets pointed out that they are making considerably more money than others which is unfair and/or that they are being sexist or racist (Young, 1990). (They probably already know those things.)

The (white, male) disembodied logic at play in capitalism, (itself created by white males), is deeply entrenched in the pursuit of mind which says to compete with others, to make as much money as possible, and to “win” at any cost (which in addition to other things can lead to excess in terms of the production of material goods and in terms of working hours), and which finally makes no sense as far as what we actually need to exist as human beings (Crawford, 2006; Marx, 1844). Another approach to our divides of work should be attempted, and perhaps along the very lines of the split logic perpetuating those divides itself; that is, by integrating a missing component between the gap of minds and bodies by which we have philosophically structured most organizations: by insertion of the heart. And seasonal workers have a lot of it.

I have been privileged to know the seasonal workers in Glacier National Park. They have illustrated to me beautiful and wholehearted ways of living and

being that I would not know otherwise. Their true and deep passion for the craft, art and specificity of their work was inspiring. Their penchant for being in the mountains of Glacier Park with friends and by themselves was unique and enlivening. The concern they expressed for one another was honest and humbling. Their dedication to hard work and to challenging each other in that regard was admirable. Their commitment to the National Park Service in terms of its mission of preservation and usability was striking. Their love of wilderness was fierce and true and carried out. Their opinions regarding technology and modernity were refreshing and resistive. Their sensibilities for the spiritual and sacred were present and quiet. Their observations of the natural world were keen and deeply appreciated. Their spirited approach towards life could not be contained in office walls. They wore their hearts on their faces.

Many of these attributes and qualities speak directly to the logic of disembodiedness at work in the Park Service but also at work socially and organizationally in the United States. We hear traces of self-reflexivity (Giddens, 1991) from these workers as they articulate their appreciation for the quiet and thoughtful personal and social time they spend out in the wilderness. We hear articulations of care (Tracy, 2008) as they express concern and gratitude for the communities of people working up in Glacier and for the wilderness landscape and the Park Service mission. We hear unique forms of awareness (de Mello, 1990) as they articulate their capacities for wildlife observation in the woods along with their senses of the spiritual nature of that place. We hear deep

appreciations for community (Akiwowo, 1983) as they articulate their high regard for others who love and work to protect wilderness. We hear them talk about their work as art and craft (Cameron, 1992; Crawford, 2006), as something important to be done for the enjoyment of its *practice* and to be done excellently in good time. We hear a sense of interconnectedness with the natural world and with each other (Nhat Hanh, 1975) as they articulate their commitment to Glacier Park's wilderness and the community there.

These attributes interrupt disembodiedness or the logic of mind by drawing attention to other aspects of what it means to be human beings. If we look closely at these qualities listed above though, another related and unfortunate division between male and female (i.e., masculine and feminine) might surface that needs to be addressed. Typically in America, qualities such as care, community and awareness have been associated with women and used maintain stark gendered divisions of labor (Ferguson, 1984; Holmer-Nadesan, 1996). If maintaining organizational and social resources means acting competitively, selfishly and greedily in concert with modern capitalism, and if what we are concerned about is maintaining power and control, divisions will continue being made along these terms. (This is the same issue as mind ignoring heart because heart has been relegated to some other sphere, like the home.)

But we need to let our hearts speak. We need to hear what the seasonal workers in this study are telling us in terms of our capacities to live fully embodied and spirited lives. And we need first to want to really live. We need to

get in touch with and remember who we are, wake ourselves up, let our hearts open, let their lessons through (Nhat Hanh, 1993). Sadly, it is often incredibly difficult to “know” we need to open because we have wandered far away from our place of spiritual groundedness and have become engulfed in the mind of economic gain or social approval. We have overworked ourselves and in the process have ignored the parts of ourselves that go missing in this process. But the mountains can and do interfere with these processes. I know because I went myself and I was changed. I believe we all should go because the lessons about the interconnectedness of all things penetrate there in a way that words cannot. But if we cannot go, we at least can learn from the people who have and try to let those words speak to us.

We cannot all be seasonal workers in Glacier National Park. But recognizing the divisions we have made and identifying from whence they came (i.e., from our minds) is important. Divisions perpetuate divisions. When we look closely, we recognize the capacity and need in each of us for positive elements such as care, concern, and community (Nhat Hanh, 2009). We cannot all be seasonal workers in Glacier National Park. But we can cultivate the goodness in our hearts and bring it forward in whatever sphere of work we find ourselves. We can bridge our divides by focusing on our commonalities, not in a manner that erases our unique embodied differences or that tries to make common that which is not (Connell, 2007; Young, 1990), but in a manner that encourages

interconnectedness and concern for the greater whole of humankind in concert to the natural world of which we are a part.

So what do we specifically learn about embodiment and spirituality from the seasonal workers in this study in terms of overwork? First, I think we get reminded that bodies are always present, even in office buildings. Permanent workers in the Park Service who have transitioned from seasonal status do not lose their corporeal form because it now sits in front of a computer as opposed to a mountain. By remembering that we have bodies, we remember that work can be approached as an engaging craft, and that orientation can switch the experience of life from a focus on efficient outputs to a focus on the (spiritual?) process of creating something beautiful and/or functional. We get pushed to imagine how our work approached as a craft might differ in terms of our experience of work and life; if we were to be fully engaged in our work, what would that mean? How would our experience and/or organization of time differ? Would we work fewer hours or work more slowly and carefully?

We also get reminded that bodies, spirit and movement are closely intertwined. Perhaps we get sparked to physically challenge our bodies in order to also see our spirits grow. Bodily movement seems to encourage other movement. Or in other words, hard work usually pays off in sometimes unimaginable ways. We remember that community and having people who sincerely support and appreciate us is really important to our spiritual well-being. We remember that we are fundamentally connected to other people via our desire

to be part of something greater than ourselves, like the National Park Service and its mission for example. And we remember that our environments matter in terms of our experiences of connection to our surroundings. Being outside in nature connects us to our relationship to the elements and our deep need for each other if we are to survive as a human race.

Chapter 4

DIRECTIONS & CONCLUSIONS

In this section, I articulate future directions and conclusions which can be garnered from both the process and the product of this dissertation. I first offer practical strategies and interventions which might be considered and/or implemented in both the National Park Service and in American society in general based on the findings for each of the three research questions. Next, I discuss further the academic and theoretical relevance derived from the findings of this study. Then, I expound upon the methodological insights this study produces with the inclusion of axiomatic poems to delineate the findings and respond to the research questions. I close with some final thoughts concerning the state of overwork in modernity and the feasibility of seasonal work as a response.

Practical Strategies & Interventions

Here I again offer the short third-level poems in summary of the lessons learned from seasonal workers regarding each research question, specific instances of the social and organizational challenges seasonal workers sometimes endure based on their orientations towards life and work as reflected off of the

poems, and thoughts on practical strategies and interventions which might be taken in light of these challenges.

Real & Practical Strategies for Developing Trust & Agency

Removing ourselves from damaging routines

We look at the center of who we are

(At our natural wildness)

We look at our values

And why we are doing

What we are doing

(A TRUE ONTOLOGY)

What do we really want as humans being?

Looking down death and our fear of it

We make the leap! The net appears!

Trust in luck and serendipity

Take risks

Make and take movements

Overwork is NOT inherent

There are new/endless possibilities

Disrupt naturalized logics

Of how we are supposed to be

We have choices

Looking at our true motivations

We let go of social approval and material greed

We embrace change

And we have courage

While the life and experiences of a seasonal worker can teach us many things regarding trust and agency, those lessons are sometimes hard earned. To reach a point where removing yourself from society's patterns is the healthiest option for you in order to maintain your values is to reach a point of no return in many ways. Once you have exited the rat race, (because it *is* a race), it is difficult to return for a number of reasons (Hewlett, 2007) -- though it might be important for you to find other work later in life when hiking twenty miles a day with a chainsaw is just not feasible or even desirable anymore and you need an income for basic survival. The trust and agency which the seasonal workers in this study harnessed was inspiring and courageous, but there are serious individual and social considerations which get implicated through the decisions that they made. In other words, there are sometimes great costs to taking the path less travelled (Frost, 1977; Thoreau, 1854), and the seasonal workers interviewed and observed for this study want you to know that.

For me, one of the most difficult aspects of this study was the extent to which so many of the seasonal participants said they often experienced acute and deep loneliness and persistent feelings of being misunderstood. One lovely participant spoke often and sadly about being ostracized from his religious family

who could not understand his decision to move to the mountains to work in environmental preservation as a lookout host. So while participants may indeed have possessed an admirable and carefree ontological approach to self and life, others who did not possess this approach (and who were not interested in relating to it or understanding it, including family and friends in addition to typically mainstream others), were not necessarily kind, open or accepting towards those with this trusting and agentic mentality. Negative responses by others to their sometimes wild, fearless, risk-taking ontology materialized itself in multiple forms including meanness, abandonment or disownership by family and friends (though sometimes only for a season), general difficulty “fitting in” with others, and for the seasonal workers themselves, an expectation of explanation that was impossible to communicate to others with entirely disparate modes of thinking and being. When you are asked to explain the choices you have made based upon a general feeling of unease regarding mainstream society and your incapacity to fit the mold or you have a particularly strongly held opinion regarding others’ ways of living, it is perhaps philosophically difficult to explain yourself without simultaneously segregating yourself even further away from other people. For some participants then, choosing to remain quiet about their values and living them out through their behavior instead was a more suitable option. At the same time though, being quiet about one’s values, and maybe especially when they are passionately felt, feels strange and again perpetuates a loneliness that can be challenging to navigate. This may be part of the reason the community of like-

minded folks many participants found in Glacier was of unique and utmost importance to many of them.

Along those lines, participants also expressed frustration with their experiences of what felt like constant resistance to mainstream American life. Though they maintained a trust that life and work would emerge (and it did), there were definite periods of time when they wanted work and it was not available for a wide variety of reasons, particularly because there were only certain jobs they were willing to take, were qualified for based on their experiences or skills, or that fit their seasonal schedules. One older male participant fervently insisted that I underscore the struggle seasonal workers sometimes encountered finding the work that they needed based upon the lives they desired. This particular man had worked his whole career with horses, his deepest most enlivening passion, but he had waited and applied for ten years to garner the position he most wanted in Glacier National Park. While he maintained his trust that his dream would someday come to fruition, life in the meantime was a constant and tiring effort of hard work and dedication because he would not settle for less than what he wanted.

Practically then, I think the seasonal workers in this study might tell most Americans to loosen up a little bit in terms of what and who is acceptable in society. They might tell you to focus on learning what you can from people who differ from you in terms of their orientation towards living and working. They might tell you as a friend or family member to be a little more tolerant and a little

more understanding. They might tell you that though they have made choices about who they want to be and what they want to do, that there is something larger happening in their hearts and spirits propelling them forward and that their choices are not grounded in rebelliousness towards you for its own sake. They might tell you that they just want to be themselves and that understanding *you* is a challenging component of their own lives in its own right. I think the seasonal workers in this study might tell the Park Service that they ought to make things a little easier on their seasonal workers and place more concrete organizational value and esteem towards seasonals who work diligently and wholeheartedly for the organization. This might realize itself in the form of simple recognition of years invested and/or personal and sincere acknowledgement. They might tell the NPS that being a seasonal worker can be difficult in the sense that it gets misunderstood and that it can be difficult to line up supplementary work in the off-season when it is needed or desired. The Park Service might do more along the lines of inter-organizationally assisting seasonals with work in other parks or with other organizations during their particular off-seasons. Along these lines, the federal government needs to rescind the 1,039 hour limit which seasonal workers are allotted to work every year (so that they are not also paid in benefits). Relatedly, they might tell the Park that they ought to offer organizational guarantee of rehire for good and valued employees who currently have to reapply every season even for the same positions.

Real & Practical Strategies for Developing Work & Life

Quality of life comes first!
Living the lives we so desire
We laugh about Theory
And detach ourselves from expectations
Letting go of false futuristic promises
We garner interesting experiences
And restructure central pursuits
We are creative
Finding what we need when we need it
We stop dividing up our lives
And living life as some sort of tradeoff
(Remember it is arbitrary)
Re-conceptualizing work/life
Life Comes First
Seasonal workers get insurance
Permanent workers get flexibility
We enjoy our lives and our work
We focus on what is most fun
Fully engaging
Living light-hearted
Taking our time

Structuring it well

We start with minutiae

Society changes

While the life and experiences of a seasonal worker can teach us many things regarding work and life, those lessons are sometimes hard earned. Living life wholeheartedly and as presently as possible is an admirable feat in the sense that most participants refused to plan ahead for their futures, preferring to fervently enjoy the currency of their lives. At the same time, saving money for difficult times or having any guarantee of being organizationally cared for in the future seemed challenging to many as seasonal Park Service employees. Living life from an approach of “Life First” had its own difficulties then.

Interpersonally, participants discussed the difficulty of maintaining important relationships in their lives whether that meant with immediate family or with their romantic partnerships. Living life first often meant moving with the seasons, going where one was compelled to go in order to most ardently follow one’s fancies. Unfortunately though, for many seasonals this also meant moving long distances away from family and friends, and with their tendencies towards technophobia, keeping in touch with important people in their lives was tricky.

Similarly, many participants noted the difficulty in sustaining romantic relationships, both in the sense of preserving them during long periods of separation during work out in the mountains and in terms of foreseeing futures

together. They talked about engaging in shorter-term seasonal relationships, but expressed frustration without the prospect of finding a significant other or maybe even having children in light of their wishes and tendencies to follow the seasons.

Relatedly, and seemingly inconsequential but directly interconnected was the seasonals' articulations that they were exhausted from the sheer amount of moving from place to place which their lives entailed. Though moving and movement in general were particularly appealing to most participants for the adventurousness it involved, the pragmatic aspects of moving their things, identifying new housing, finding a new job, finding somewhere to store their things, making new friends, figuring out transportation, saying good-bye to loved ones, and other aspects of moving which many of us do not tend to consider once we have settled into a stationary life, became tiring and burdensome for most at some point. And in addition to being physically and emotionally taxing, some participants mentioned a strong desire to someday have someplace they could call home.

When I first started research in the Park Service, I commonly overheard seasonals discussing their discontent with the organization's policies regarding benefits for permanent full-time workers only. Throughout my experiences as a ranger and more recently during my research for this study, there were no exceptions. Every seasonal interviewee mentioned Park Service benefits policies as a major drawback of their lifestyle and of their work for the NPS organization. As noted in Chapter 3, permanent employees also mentioned benefits, but as a

reason for moving to permanent status. When pressed to extrapolate as to why seasonal workers were not offered similar options, senior permanent employees pointed out that they were not responsible for those decisions, and that it really boiled down to being an issue over money. Being that seasonal workers stressed outright that having interesting lives were more important to them than having money, I wonder that the Park Service has been able to (inadvertently?) capitalize on the seasonal mentality that life comes first before material gain. Perhaps they do not *have* to offer organizational remunerations to seasonal employees because they know the divide between money and experiences/life is present for many of these individuals who always will choose life and therefore will not necessarily press the issue.

Seasonals mentioned other ways in which it seemed they were being taken advantage of. For instance, seasonal wages are significantly lower than permanent wages in the NPS. I was shocked to learn that the superintendent at Glacier National Park was making over \$120,000 annually plus a tremendous federal government benefits package. While seasonal wages range, there are limits to the extent to which certain jobs in the park get compensated. For instance, a standard seasonal naturalist giving hikes and public talks about wilderness issues will always be capped at a GS-05 pay rate (approximately \$14.74/hr) (National Park Service, 2012) no matter how much experience or how many years he or she has been working for the park. It was also common for seasonals to work an exorbitant amount of overtime without registering it for fear

of possible backlash (i.e., not garnering rehire), and also, unpaid overtime hours tended to be structured into work functionally in the sense that trail crew laborers for instance, had to spend approximately one working days' worth of hours (unpaid) packing, purchasing food, and preparing for their stints out in the woods.

Practically then, I think most seasonal workers in Glacier might say to you that relating to them might take different measures than you are used to. Writing letters or crafting packages and sending them might be a good place to start. They might say to you that meeting them on their own terms of relating, though perhaps unusual for you and/or time-consuming in a unique way, could pay off in spades as far as maintaining a relationship with them. They might say that they care about you but that it is difficult to often be the one expected to meet you on your terms. They might say that our social definitions of relationships and how children get raised are arbitrary and that we might try imagining different ways of doing those things. They might tell the Park Service that they could consider helping seasonals to move by offering moving funds or even storage units for the winter. They might tell the Park Service to *offer them benefits* of some variety or to at least offer health insurance during the time of employment. They might tell the Park Service to increase wages based on skill levels and experience. And finally, no one should go unpaid for work exerted if those are the terms which we have agreed upon as a society in which to reward someone. Overtime work should be compensated properly, no questions asked.

Real & Practical Strategies for Developing Embodiment & Spirituality

Having a lot of heart
We have passion for work as a craft
And concern/care for each other
Working hard
We challenge our bodies
And commit to a larger cause
Loving the wilderness wild
We Get away From it All
Observe the natural world
Respect quiet and spiritual
Wearing our hearts on our faces
We open our hearts
We wake ourselves up
We go to the mountains
And learn from those who have gone
Recognizing our capacities for positive
We cultivate goodness in any sphere
Bridging divides
Building interconnections to nature
Our bodies are present
We make beautiful things
We make movement

Like the seasons

Building communities and connection

While the life and experiences of a seasonal worker can teach us many things regarding embodiment and spirituality, those lessons are sometimes hard earned. Living and working close to the wilderness and challenging your body and spirit to expand are fulfilling and beautiful pursuits. At the same time, in a society that values high technology and efficiency over craft and functional aesthetic, living and working as an embodied spirit can sometimes be a challenging task in its own right. When society demands you move quickly in order to produce quickly and earn a substantive profit quickly, those of us who prefer to work and approach life as artists sometimes get left in the dust. One of the challenges then of being a person who appreciates craft is locating a suitable environment in which to work that allows one to labor at a reasonable pace to produce the results one desires. For the trail artists in this study, finding labor that fit these measures was often exceedingly difficult. One trail laborer in particular, also a painter and a poet, often described his general dissatisfaction with and difficulty obtaining good work outside of the mountains of Glacier.

Another major concern for the seasonal workers in this study was the very real probability that their bodies would grow weary with the work. Trail laborers especially emphasized the physical intensity required to accomplish their work well, the injuries they sometimes sustained during work or at play, and the concern for the long-term effects their bodies might eventually succumb to.

Though working diligently and arduously was perceived of and articulated as a most enlivening and somewhat spiritual component of their labor, stories about individuals who had to quit due to persistent knee problems, back injuries, or arthritis were often told as cautionary tales. Trail and backcountry work is extremely intensive labor. Working in these capacities requires focused physical and mental attention which can be grueling to endure over long periods of time no matter how dedicated a worker is. And finding good paying work outside of the backcountry in contemporary society that matches the skills one acquires as a laborer can be a challenge, too.

Seasonal workers also spoke a great deal about feeling secondary to the Park Service organization in terms of being listened to and respected as essentially blue-collar (*embodied*) workers. Though they were the employees managing and maintaining the backcountry for the most part, their needs and opinions regarding the state of the wilderness often went unheard and unattended to. In particular, backcountry rangers often noted the scarcity of tools and other resources they had access to which they urgently needed in order to effectively care for the backcountry wilderness. At one backcountry meeting, a number of backcountry rangers expressed deep concerns over invasive weeds spreading and the lack of support they were obtaining from their supervisors for combating this issue. On the same note, divisions between employees who did and did not utilize their bodies for their work often got made and got enacted as very strict hierarchies. To illustrate, one backcountry ranger recounted a story when a group

of trails laborers and her were assisting in a search and rescue operation by carrying an injured woman up a trail in a wheeled litter when they came across a permanent law enforcement ranger who refused to help because he told them “it was not his job”.

Finally, and as mentioned previously along other terms, embodied work tends to get paid less in modernity than other (white collar) work. The seasonals in the Park Service were no exception. While seasonal embodied work was framed as being more fulfilling from both permanent and seasonal workers, one wonders if framing it thus ultimately serves the best interests of the NPS organization who can capitalize on workers ardently geared towards working (arduously) outdoors and being in the wilderness of Glacier (getting paid less) than working indoors using technology. Being an embodied spirit likely works as an identity of sorts for many seasonal employees, an identity that in some ways prides itself on living and working a coarse, harried, wilderness life that money cannot contain. Unfortunately, however, this identity potentially limits any changes along the lines of them rallying for better pay that might actually benefit many of these workers especially as they age and their bodies tire of living and working to extremes.

Practically, I think most seasonal workers in Glacier might say to you to slow your working and living pace down in order to enjoy yourself and the process of doing your work well. They might say that they are not strange for desiring to work this way, that there are others who care just as fervently for the

art of life and work as they do. They might say we need more artists and work options for them. They might tell the individuals of the Park Service to stop creating false hierarchies based around pay and/or work locale between the people who work for the organization. They might say that all workers there are equally important (or that the seasonal workers doing the physical fieldwork are actually more important), and should be respected and listened to as such. They might say that they should be given all of the supplies they need for the work they need to do to keep Glacier and its wilderness functioning effectively. They might say to structure outdoor work units in trails for instance for older workers who want to work outside because of the physical and spiritual joy that it brings them. And they might say that they should be paid as well as anybody else, and maybe even more.

Academic & Theoretical Relevance

This study adds to the academic literature in a number of important ways. To start, overwork is a very serious and real issue in the United States spanning economic and social classes (Hansen, 2005) and with deleterious effects for people akin to stress, depression, substance abuse and job-related problems among other things (Eisenberg, Monge, & Miller, 1983; Leiter & Maslach, 1988; Pincus & Acharya, 1988). This research is an effort to understand the epidemic of overwork in contemporary American society using three diverse literatures not typically geared towards understanding this issue, but as outlined in the introduction, integrally and importantly related. Using interviews and

observations of seasonal workers in concert with my own experiences as a seasonal employee in the National Park Service, this study works from literally the ground up to understand overwork with an eye towards offering potential options for mediation from an angle not typically considered in our traditional social fabric.

In this section, I articulate how the findings in this piece build on previous work regarding temporary and seasonal work/ers (Adler & Adler, 2004; Ainsworth & Purss, 2009; Guerrier & Adib, 2003), what the findings mean in terms of trust and agency as conceptualized in Structuration Theory (Giddens, 1984, 1991; Kirby & Krone, 2002; McPhee & Iverson, 2009; Scott & Trethewey, 2008), how this work expands literature pertaining to work and life (Golden, Kirby & Jorgenson, 2006; Kirby, Wieland & McBride, 2006; Trethewey, Tracy & Alberts, 2006), and finally, what this study might mean in terms of meaning and embodiment at work (Acker, 1990; Cameron, 1992; Crawford, 2006; Nell & O'Neill, 1972).

Most research to date on non-traditional work/ers approaches the issue from a managerial perspective, or more specifically, from an approach that seeks to capitalize on workers generally as a usable resource (e.g., Burgess & Connell, 2006; Koene & van Riemsdijk, 2005; Swailes, 2002). While this approach is not likely meant as an intentional exploitation, understanding work or workers in terms of their usability for an organization feels manipulative and unhelpful for them in addition to being a perpetuation of broader standard and capitalistic

structures and systems (Cheney & Cloud, 2006; Deetz, 1992). This study aimed to closely understand the experiences, values, and motivations of non-traditional workers from the ground up in an attempt to offer rich insights into unique ways of living and working as opposed to harnessing their thought processes and value for organizational purposes or to identify more effective methodologies for molding them into ideal (capitalist) workers (like the rest of us) (Willis, 1977). I aimed to focus on what *could be learned* from their orientations towards life such that our contemporary structures of work which tend to perpetuate overwork and unhealthy people, might obtain an opportunity to change and grow along these lines.

Like Adler and Adler's (2004) research on hotel workers, the participants in this study, like their "seekers", were intent on living interesting lives and garnering interesting experiences. They similarly tended to challenge their bodies physically, spend a great deal of time doing recreational activities, and they often talked about their work in spiritual terms. Unlike Adler and Adler's (2004) participants though, the seasonal workers in this study were not typically young white males from affluent backgrounds who had embarked on experiential journeys to tropical locales where they could find easy work and engage in detached explorations. As hopefully got illustrated, the non-traditional workers in this study were dedicated, hard-working and committed workers. The implicit and explicit conclusions which get made in Adler and Adler's (2004) study regarding the irresponsibility and privilege retained by "seekers" then, do not

inherently hold true. We are thus compelled to take what the “seekers” in this study had to say a little more seriously as opposed to writing off their insights as mere “privilege”.

Similar to the ski resort laborers in Ainsworth and Purss’ (2009) study, many of the seasonal workers in this study conceptualized their work along the same terms as their play and had pursued their work positions for this reason. For many of the seasonal participants in Glacier though, while work sometimes meant play, it also was quite arbitrary in the sense that the seasonal style/quality of life mattered more than the particular work opportunity. Whereas many of the tour reps in Guerrier and Adib’s (2003) research noted their exhaustion with play being work in the sense that they sometimes began to feel as though they were constantly performing for others, the outdoor context in which the seasonal participants here worked likely interrupted that experience. What gets learned here then is that conceptions of work and life (at least for these seasonal workers) seem directly related to values and motivations in concert to context. Continuing to investigate non-traditional workers’ values then, promises to lend further insights into these scholarly discussions. Further, I submit that the study of non-traditional work and especially *seasonal* work (which is appallingly understudied), continue to be explored in light of our pressing social issues at hand. Inevitably, and as outlined throughout this dissertation, non-traditional workers offer non-traditional insights and perspectives that by nature compel us to consider other possibilities of living and working and structuring our societies.

The seasonal workers in this study offer a compelling examination of conceptualizations and practices of trust and agency as discussed by Giddens in his works on Structuration Theory (1984, 1991). In the Introduction section of this paper, I theorized that the relationship between these concepts was potentially more integrally linked than typically noted. I wondered whether one's capacity for agency directly correlated to one's capacity for trust because in order to make any action (in order to have that capacity), inherent trust that one could make that action itself must already be present. In the Discussion section of this paper, I talked about the simultaneity I observed concerning this relationship in Giddens' terms as an ontological security by which the seasonal workers seemed to operate. Participants seemed fully grounded in themselves and their "capacities to do" (Giddens, 1984, p. 9), but their capacities to be grounded in themselves were themselves grounded in an abstract knowledge pertaining to their capacities, or a trust.

One of the questions this observation summoned for me was whether agency or trust were borne first; in order to act it seems one needs to have trust, but in order to trust it seems one needs to have agency. If we break this relationship down though, trust is ultimately a theoretical concept whereas agency is based upon an actual agent's capacity to make some kind of *movement*. In this regard, it seems that trust is couched upon agency, but in a dialectical and reciprocal relationship; we make a movement of some variety (and trust is also present in this movement), and more trust gets built, we make riskier movements,

more trust gets built, we make riskier movements, and so on and so forth unless a situation gets encountered that reduces our trust which becomes another starting point in the cycle. I see Giddens' (1984) concept of practical consciousness working in social life via these routinizations of our behavior and our decisions to move or stay inside of those routines. Perhaps life is always a process of building trust towards our ontological security, and some of us are further along in that regard, like many of the seasonal workers I was privileged to be involved with for this study. Perhaps then, there is a point that can be reached where one's sense of oneself and one's sense of trust moves beyond the routines of everyday life which are inevitably uncertain, and gets anchored in the knowledge of the larger experience of life as this fascinating journey of growth and change. Trust during difficult times of life then, can be present as a true ontology not shaken by everyday experiences, just present (Akiwowo, 1999). But it seems that movement is always necessary (not frenetic overworking, but intentional focused attention), and maybe especially through hard times (Epstein, 2008).

In application to our situation of overwork, it seems that *movement* is also necessary both for individuals and as a social collective. As individuals comprising our organizations, exercising our agency by taking risks along the lines of modifying our overwork practices has the possibility of growing our collective trust. As we grow our collective trust by working on this issue ourselves, it is possible that the larger social fabric will begin to change its practices (Cheney, Zorn, Planalp & Lair, 2008). And as argued earlier, if trust

were the ontology undergirding our existence, overwork would seem unnecessary and trite (Nhat Hanh, 1993).

Structuration Theory has another important suggestion for interpreting the lives of the seasonal participants in this study along the lines of trust and agency. Giddens (1991) writes about the trajectory of the self within modernity as a “reflexive project for which the individual is responsible” (p. 75). Creating a coherent narrative regarding one’s identity (re)constructs an agent’s experience and conceptualization of time such that it allows the agent to “live life presently” as opposed to thinking about time as though it contained a “finite quantity that is running out” (Giddens, 1991, p. 72). In many ways, the trust and agency exhibited and spoken about by the seasonal workers in this study point towards Giddens’ notions of reflexivity and identity within modernity. The participants’ narratives regarding their limitless capacities to live as they pleased in terms of going and doing what they wanted for career and travel illustrate a point of understanding regarding the underlying tenuousness of modern life which cannot be halted by the anchoring to traditional markers of security, as is commonly hypothesized (e.g., “money, property, health insurance, personal relationships, marriage contracts” (Giddens, 1991, p. 73)).

Because the seasonal workers in this study understood “the harsh psychological truth that there is no permanence” but perhaps only the possibility of a groundedness within oneself (Giddens, 1991, p. 73), they seemed to have taken initiative for the (literal) experience of their own lives, (and provided

accounts to me along these lines). Participants' agency or capacities to do, then, were seemingly unbounded in part because they took seriously the truth that our selves are all we have, which brings forth "a diversity of open possibilities" (Giddens, 1991, p. 73) in terms of how one spends one's time because one's time is not geared towards garnering an impossible security outside oneself. Their narratives regarding the open potentialities of life thus reflect a sort of self-actualization along the path of Giddens' notions of a self-reflexive project in modernity.

One of the questions this unique understanding regarding the tenuousness of life invokes is from where this understanding emerges. Potentially, working seasonally in Glacier Park invites non-traditional conceptions of identity in light of the fact that one's identity cannot be based upon traditional markers (e.g., money, health insurance) because they simply are not present. The agent is thus pushed to consider who he or she is or could be in lieu of the absence of these pursuits or symbolic indicators. Another central and related possibility for the accounting of heightened self-reflexivity for the seasonal workers in this study is the unpopulated and rugged mountain context within which they live and work. Spending copious amounts of time outside alone provides ample time and space to think about and consider one's identity, in conjunction to experiencing the minimum of what is actually needed for survival in terms of food and shelter.

Giddens (1991) argues that the backdrop of late modern life is the primacy of lifestyle in the sense that we are forced to choose a way of being and living that

simultaneously suits us functionally and symbolically as a form of self-identity. According to this theory, the choices we make about how we live reflect a larger narrative about who we are. The seasonal workers' stories about their decisions to live transitorily, to take risks, to follow their whims, and to live very basically, convey a romantic, appealing story concerning what it means to be a seasonal worker that inherently obscure other interpretations of the meaning behind that experience. The danger of telling a romantic tale about one's lifestyle choices is the possibility for the appeal of that narrative to obfuscate the lived difficulties (e.g., no health insurance) that could potentially be addressed at a larger social level were the self-narrative modified to include them.

The academic literature has offered various ways of (re)conceptualizing work and life in an attempt to address the very real difficulties people of diverse economic and social situations encounter (Farrell & Geist-Martin, 2005; Kirby, Golden, Medved, Jorgenson, & Buzzanell, 2003; Trethewey, Tracy & Alberts, 2006). Typically then, theorists have approached the issue of quality of life and the organization of time along those lines, from a philosophical ideal or conception pointed towards its realization on the ground (for a good exception, see Hansen, 2005). While theorizing about better ways to manage our lives and our time is imperative (and I am doing it right now), it seems another way to reach understandings regarding best lived practices is to observe and/or speak with folks who seem to genuinely enjoy their work and lives and to theorize from the ground up.

This study adds to the work-life literature through an examination of the specific and real work/life practices of (seasonal) workers who might urge scholars to re-think (not think?) their approaches to quality of life issues as a form of segregation in terms of time and spheres of life (Langer, 2009). As expounded upon in the Discussion section, seasonal workers tend to approach life simply as life. Theorizing about it and ways to manage it in general seemed humorous to most of them. Certainly, I am not suggesting that this branch of scholarship regarding work and life (or that scholarship in general), should dissipate. Figuring life out via thinking is centrally important and the unique problems the people of the world are facing tremendous. At the same time and as I got reflected back to myself as a researcher in the Park Service, how we frame our lives or our experiences has much to do with how we *live* our experiences (Langer, 2009). What I mean essentially is that our frame dictates our response or riposte.

Harvard social psychologist Ellen Langer's (2009) studies on the psychology of possibility regarding health and age illustrate well the power of mind to literally shape our physical realities. In the same way, it seems probable that conceptualizing work and life as antagonistic experiences could result in lived antagonistic experiences. More than anything, I am grateful for my time with the seasonal workers in Glacier for laughing in my face when my thought processes became overly complicated. What I learned from them was to let things go in a sense (Cameron, 1992), to keep things simple (Thoreau, 1854), and to let

life (and work) emerge. As academics, I think that we could learn a lot from this approach to life (and work). We might take ourselves and our ideas a little less seriously and maybe enjoy our work a little more. We might discontinue solving the work-life problems of others and focus on solving our own issues (which may be at the heart of the problem itself) (Watzlawick, Weakland, & Fisch, 1974).

In application to overwork, living life with an organic attention to its processes has the potential to at least dissipate the stress one might experience in any attempt to resolve a perceived antagonism between work and life. If our lives were structured around what it is we actually need for survival, or if they were fundamentally grounded in a more simple approach, excessiveness itself and the compulsion or necessity to overwork to support our consumptive habits should fade (Cheney, Straub, Speirs-Glebe, Stohl, DeGooyer, Whalen, Garvin-Doxas, & Carlone, 1998). Living more simply might mean making simpler decisions about the basics of our lives; living closer to where it is we are working to cut down on commute time, living in smaller housing so we can conserve energy fuels and costs, having fewer children to support and manage, using public transportation, buying groceries and eating at home, purchasing fewer technological devices, etc. (Jensen, 2011). This seems like a basic truth, but we sometimes need to be reminded that the richness of our lives is not based upon the richness of our bank accounts.

Divisions between minds and bodies trace as early back as the Western philosophers Plato and Aristotle. Though Marx did not speak to the

externalization of labor along those terms, contemporary writer and philosopher Crawford (2006) argues that the denigration of blue collar work in American society is directly linked to the bolstering of white collar technological (mind) work in conjunction with the necessity of efficient production in new capitalism and the inability to create craft (or bodily) work in these conditions. Crawford (2006) celebrates the utilization of the body to accomplish work and criticizes a social system which refuses the acknowledgement or importance of craftsmanship as an enrichment for the human soul. In the same way that feminist writers (Acker, 1990; Charles & Grusky, 2004) disparage the erasure of the body in organizations in lieu of a sphere only for minds and a means for the erasure of the lack of bodily diversity in organizations, we see that divisions of mind and body can be traced to a number of contemporary social issues (Nhat Hanh, 2009).

Using the divides present between Park Service permanent and seasonal workers in terms of technology and bodily work, I argue that “heart” and the human spirit (which the seasonal workers themselves have in abundance), might be used as a starting point for bridging a number of the social divides we have created. This study adds to the literatures above then by first highlighting the connection between literature regarding the externalization of labor and craft and feminist literature pertaining to divisions of labor, and then offering a simple and practical solution of “heart” as a spiritual means for bridging these divides.

This combination of literatures to address a practical issue reminds us of the generative possibilities of scholarship in conjunction with each other – even

when seemingly disparate in many regards. It also illustrates again the interconnection between theory and practice (another divide) (Tracy, forthcoming), and emphasizes that the ways we conceptualize life in some ways are equal to the ways we approach and experience living. Capitalism is much larger than who we are as individual human beings, however, becoming aware of the ways our social systems function to shape our experiences can propel us to make movements of change in our own lives which are the foundations upon which our governments are founded (Nhat Hanh, 1993). This reminder also points to the customary feminist mantra that “the personal is political” (Foss, 1996). Spirituality, as a way of living and being, while historically segregated to “the personal”, inevitably links into the other spheres of our lives. Embracing that component of ourselves might prove to enhance and develop our organizational practices (de la Garza, writing as Gonzalez, 2000).

In application to overwork, bridging minds with bodies via spirit – or in other words, functioning as wholesome human beings, has the potential to rebuild our natural senses of when we have worked a sufficient amount of hours and need a break. Sacrificing one component of ourselves for work becomes impractical when being wholly present and living and working from this state of being is foremost. Furthermore, if we insist on working in capacities that “engage all of our senses” (Crawford, 2006), working a lot would not be problematic as it tends to be where we neglect certain aspects of ourselves in our work such that it becomes necessary to supplement in other ways.

Methodological Relevance

Though I consider myself a poet and have been writing poetry since I was a child, using poetry as a method of qualitative inquiry and research representation for others was both challenging and informative. While poetry has been used in a variety of manners for qualitative work since the 1990s, and there have been wide debates regarding its capacities to work effectively in research (e.g., Faulkner, 2007; Gingrich-Philbrook, 2005; Marechal & Linstead, 2010; Percer, 2002), very few researchers have documented exactly what the process of doing qualitative poetry entails. The benefits of poetry as method have been highlighted and its merits tested (Faulkner, 2010), but its practice, unlike most qualitative methodologies in communication, has largely gone undocumented. In light of that fact, in this section, I trace the methodologies utilized in this study to present the research findings and discussion soundboard under the expert guidance of Amira de la Garza (personal conversation, 2010), relating them to more common and familiar qualitative practices (e.g., Lindlof & Taylor, 2002).

After traditional grounded level coding (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Lindlof & Taylor, 2002), identification of the most prevalent axioms and themes in the data (Charmaz, 2006), axial coding and mapping (Clarke, 2003), and the dimensionalization of major concepts, including their properties and ranges (Corbin & Strauss, 1990; Spiggle, 1994), I returned to the axial maps and the conceptual dimensions as references for the data to be used to express the axial maps and dimensions most fully and effectively. Going back and forth between

the data and the maps akin to the grounded theory process, I collected interview clips which seemed to best speak to each of the concepts themselves as well as the relationships between the concepts, and these were compiled into an excel spreadsheet much like the initial codebook derived for the study. To write the poetry from this new codebook, I referenced each research question and the axial concepts therein and began piecing the most striking and telling interview clips together in a word document. Throughout this process, I inevitably utilized my senses of what was important to include and that would best address the research questions posed in the study based on both my theoretical sensitivities and embodied tacit knowledge (de la Garza, writing as Gonzalez, 2000) as both a researcher and employee for the National Park Service over the past five years.

To construct the first-level poems, I collected portions of the interview clips together in a word document much like a bricolage (Tracy, forthcoming) and began intuitively placing these groupings in sequence to each other such that the relationships between the axioms would be present but that the concepts for each of the categories could also stand alone. This process propelled me to simultaneously craft and begin to understand answers to the research questions as new insights and relationships in and between the data sprang forth as the words and ideas got reflected off each other and off of me. Goodall (2008) and Richardson (2000), among others, often discuss writing as a methodology of inquiry. We begin with an idea or sense of what we want to say, but through the process of writing, we learn what we actually think or what our understandings of

the “data” are, for instance. The process of constructing the poetry in response to the research questions felt similar in the sense that my understandings of and relationships with the data grew as the poetry began to take on a life of its own; importantly though, my sense of the answers to the questions was very vague prior to this process.

To construct the second-level poems, I returned to each section of first-level poetry and worked to incorporate imagery, repetition, space and stylistic sound – the basic elements of poetry (Gordon, 2004; Hugo, 1979) -- via word arrangement in order to create an overall aesthetic and context for the reader (Fairchild, 2003). I hoped for the work to contain an *ars poetica* (Faulkner, 2007) while simultaneously highlighting the most important axioms for each of the research categories. What is presented in the end I hope, are visually and orally appealing creative nonfiction poems (Gutkind, 2005) which as a whole speak more than the sum of their parts via a blend of individual seasonal worker voices which address the research questions pertaining to theory and practice in a uniquely grounded way.

To construct the third-level poems included earlier in this chapter for the Real and Practical Strategies section, I returned to the Discussion section of the paper and took jottings (Emerson, Fretz & Shaw, 1995) on the broad lessons learned from the poetic Findings in response to the research questions. These jottings were typed up and written in first person plural in order to create a sense of open inclusiveness to illustrate the generosity by which the seasonal workers in

this study offered their time and their insights, and to create a meeting place or invitation to the reader to locate him or herself in the text (Pyne, 2010). The three groups of poems in the Directions section for each body of literature then acted as a soundboard for considering the practical difficulties these seasonal workers encountered in response to their orientations towards and regarding trust and agency, work and life, and embodiment and spirituality. The overall process of constructing and responding to the poetry was thus iterative (de la Garza, writing as Gonzalez, 2000); from using traditional grounded theory methods transitioning into axioms and axiomatic mapping, from using the axioms and their maps to constructing poems and constantly referencing the axioms, to responding to the poems via narrative and discussion, to crafting more poems based on the discussion generated from the original poems, to responding to these poems in terms of real and practical strategies for and from the point of view of the seasonal workers in this study.

Writing poetry as research was challenging in three important and related ways. First, and akin to most qualitative research, I hoped that the presentation of findings accurately represented the meanings and intentions of the participants in this study (Ellis, 2007). Because the interpretation and analysis of the work is more heavily built into the form (Pyne, 2010) than in traditional prose, I hoped that what does not get said in the silences, punctuation and turns of the poems stays as true to what does get said through the words and phrases, and that all together, they say something notable and valuable about the lives of seasonal

workers in Glacier National Park. Second, I essentially had no map to follow (Fox, 2007) for constructing axiomatic poetry outside of traditional instructions of poetry (Hugo, 1979) and those of qualitative methodologies and analysis (Charmaz, 2006; Lindlor & Taylor, 2002; Strauss & Corbin, 1997). The gap between researchers who write and use poetry in their work and the process for getting there (i.e., *the method*) thus became a functional challenge for me, but ultimately and hopefully a chief contribution of this work overall. In collaboration with Amira de la Garza, and in reference to other research poetry (e.g., Faulkner, 2005; Pelias, 1999) and texts written towards utilizing poetry as method (Faulkner, 2007), the process of writing axiomatic poetry as research as outlined above in this report will hopefully function to make the process more transparent for other writers and future work. Finally, this work was challenging in the sense that while the poems might make sense to the seasonal workers from whom the data was collected and for whom this study is for, my hope is that the poems speak to a broad audience and effectively communicate the mindsets and experiences of seasonal workers in Glacier Park such that it moves others to at least consider a distinctive way of living and working in modern life. Writing prose enables more direct guidance from the writer to the reader in terms of meanings, but I hope that the data is rich and telling enough that the reader feels almost as if you “have been there” (Geertz, 1973) such that the spaces between the words and the lines, like the Montana sky, compel a deeper understanding of the possibilities of life.

Using poetry as a method of research representation was uniquely informative and valuable for this study in at least three important ways. First, the non-literal representation in form leaves room for the complexity of the relationships between concepts in the data without being non-specific. In other words, in many ways the intricacy of the results got maintained and even enhanced as poetic form as opposed to being condensed to a quote or phrase in conjunction with the researcher's interpretation. While the possibility of alternate meanings and interpretations makes the understanding of the data more open-ended on the reader's end, this openness also keeps intact the multifariousness of life (Trethewey, Tracy & Alberts, 2006). Second, the creative poetic process was generative in the sense that constructing the axiomatic poems inspired fresh insights regarding the meanings of the data as it was pieced together and combined to create a greater whole. The smaller portions of data thus spoke to each other and back to me, then back to each other as an aggregate which then generated insights through the narrative conceptual summary which produced insights for discussion and extrapolation for theory and communication. Lastly, and perhaps most interesting for methodologists, the different forms of poetry represented in this piece illustrate different points, levels and layers of qualitative analysis (Ronai, 1992; Tillman-Healy, 1996). Using poetry to represent findings reflects an earlier stage of the research analytical process than the poetry which represents discussion. This study thus illustrates how poetry can be utilized

effectively to different ends for different purposes as a form of both representation and analysis.

On some final methodological notes, scholars who desire to use poetry in their research should consider taking writing courses and/or studying the craft of poetry to most effectively incorporate it into their work. As Percer (2002) notes, academics with little background or practice in creative writing might do well to stick with traditional writing practices. The act of writing poetry is a skill or craft much like doing rock work on the trail was for the seasonal workers in this study; it should be studied, learned, practiced and explored before being utilized in non-traditional ways (Hugo, 1979; Pyne, 2010). In addition, feminist-oriented scholars might keep in mind that the utilization of poetry in research as both a methodological process and a form of representation is particularly well-suited for the expression of marginal voices in the sense that their voices can get center stage (Oleson, 2000). While one of the major aims of feminist research is to offer women and others a place and opportunity to speak unique standpoints and experiences (Allen, 1996), much of this work gets written up in traditional forms which ultimately privilege the perspectives and thoughts of the researcher. Using direct interview clips and fieldwork memos to craft poetry, however, immediately and openly highlights their words and thoughts providing a distinctive space for typically marginalized participants to speak. What is more, poetic texts function well to illustrate the emotions and feelings of participants (Oleson, 2000), and to thus illustrate to audiences these elements concerning what it means to be the

other. Finally and importantly, this study at large is a testament to the generative possibilities of traditional qualitative methodologies for producing innovative research forms (Lindlof & Taylor, 2002). The study and practice of traditional methods then can, and should continue to be, fundamental in any qualitative methodologists' education and scholarly life. In order to innovate, it is essential to first understand what is being innovated.

Final Reflections

I was on a hike in the Bitterroot Mountains in south central Montana when the idea first came to me that I should do a study on women who work in Glacier National Park. The following summer I found myself following them around in the woods, and spending a great deal of time alone out in the mountains. It was exhilarating and it changed me. Since that time, I have worked seasonally as a ranger every summer in concert with my work as a graduate student at Arizona State University. I have deeply loved both of my lives. The lessons I have learned as a seasonal worker have deeply enriched my life as a student and teacher and the lessons I have learned as a graduate student have deeply changed my ways of interacting with the world.

One of the best things I have learned during my time as a seasonal worker has been to slow down a little bit and enjoy myself. Life is too precious to live otherwise. Work is important, but it is a part of life like family and friends and mountains and laughter are. I am deeply indebted to the seasonal workers who allowed me to be part of their lives over the last five years or so. The richness

and beauty of life I experience now are in part because of them. So, my final word on overwork from both an academic and a seasonal perspective is to stop it, and go and see the sunset. Now I'm off to chase the wind.

REFERENCES

- Acker, J. (1990). Hierarchies, jobs, bodies: A theory of gendered organizations. *Gender & Society, 4*, 139-158.
- Adler, P. A., & Adler, P. (2004). *Paradise laborers: Hotel work in the global economy*. NY: Cornell University Press
- Ainsworth, S. & Purss, A. (2009). Same time, next year?: Human resource management and seasonal workers. *Personnel Review, 38*, 217-235.
- Akiwowo, A. (1983). *Ajobi and ajogbe: Variations on the theme of sociation, series 46*. Ife-Ife: University of Ife Press.
- Akiwowo, A. (1999). Indigenous sociologies: Extending the scope of the argument. *International Sociology, 14*, 115-138.
- Allen, B. J. (1996). Feminist standpoint theory: A black woman's (re)view of organizational socialization. *Communication Studies, 47*, 257-271.
- Archer, M. (1982). Morphogenesis versus structuration: On combining structure and action. *British Journal of Sociology, 33*, 455-483.
- Ashcraft, K. L. (2000). Empowering "professional" relationships: Organizational communication meets feminist practice. *Management Communication Quarterly, 13*, 347-392.
- Ashcraft, K. L. (2005). Resistance through consent? Occupational identity, organizational form, and the maintenance of masculinity among commercial airline pilots. *Management Communication Quarterly, 19*, 67-90.
- Ashcraft, K. L. (In Press). Bringing the body back to work: "Incorporating" occupational identity. *Organization Science*.
- Ashcraft, K. L., & Mumby, D. K. (2004). *Reworking gender: A feminist communicology of organization*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Banks, S. P., & Riley, P. (1993). Structuration theory as an ontology for communication research: In S. A. Deetz (Ed.), *Communication Yearbook, 16* (pp. 167-196). Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

- Bastien, D. T., McPhee, R. D., & Bolton, K. A. (1995). A study and extended theory of the structuration of climate. *Communication Monographs*, 62, 87-109.
- Brady, I. (2000). Anthropological poetics. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *Handbook of qualitative research* (2nd ed., pp. 949-980). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Brady, I. (2004). In defense of the sensual: Meaning construction in ethnography and poetics. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 10, 622-644.
- Broadfoot, K., Carlone, D., Medved, C. E. Aakaus, M., Gabor, E., & Taylor, K. (2008). Meaningful work and organizational communication: Troubling boundaries, questioning positionality and empirical engagements. *Management Communication Quarterly*, 22, 152-161.
- Brooke, L., & Taylor, P. (2005). Older workers and employment: Managing age relations. *Ageing & Society*, 25, 415-429.
- Burgess, J. & Connell, J. (2006). Temporary work and human resources management: issues, challenges and responses. *Personnel Review*, 35, 129-40.
- Buzzanell, P. M., & Lui, M. (2005). Struggling with maternity leave policies and practices: A poststructuralist feminist analysis of gendered organizing. *Journal of Applied Communication Research*, 33, 1-25.
- Cameron, J. (1992). *The artist's way: A spiritual path to higher creativity*. New York, NY: Tarcher/Putnam.
- Cash, J. D. (1996). *Identity, ideology and conflict: The structuration of politics in northern Ireland*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Charles, M., & Grusky, D. B. (2004). *Occupational ghettos: The worldwide segregation of women and men.*, Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.
- Charmaz, K. (2003). Qualitative interviewing and grounded theory analysis. In J. A. Holstein and J. F. Gubrium (Eds.) *Inside interviewing: New lenses, new concerns* (pp. 311-330). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Charmaz, K. (2006). *Constructing grounded theory*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

- Cheney, G. & Cloud, D. L. (2006). Doing democracy, engaging the material: Employee participation and labor activity in an age of market globalization. *Management Communication Quarterly*, 19, 501-540.
- Cheney, G., Straub, J., Speirs-Glebe, L., Stohl, C., DeGooyer, D., Whalen, S., Garvin-Doxas, K., & Carlone, D. (1998). Democracy, participation, and communication at work: A multidisciplinary review. In M. E. Roloff (Eds.), *Communication Yearbook 21* (pp. 35-91). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Cheney, G., Zorn, T. E., Jr., Planalp, S., Lair, D. J. (2008). Meaningful work and personal/social well-being: Organizational communication engages the meanings of work. *Communication Yearbook*, 32, 137-185.
- Clarke, A. E. (2003). Situational analyses: Grounded theory mapping after the postmodern turn. *Symbolic Interaction*, 26, 553-576.
- Collinson, D. L. (1988). Engineering humour: Masculinity, joking, and conflict in shopfloor relations. *Organization Studies*, 9, 181-199.
- Connell, R. (2007) *Southern theory: The global dynamics of knowledge in social science*.
- Cordes, C. L., & Dougherty, T. W. (1993). A review and integration of research on job burnout. *The Academy of Management Review*, 18, 621-655.
- Council on Women and Girls. (2010, March 31). A conversation on workplace flexibility. Retrieved from <http://www.whitehouse.gov/blog/2010/04/01/a-conversation-workplace-flexibility>
- Crawford, M. (2006). Shop Class as Soulcraft. *The New Atlantis*.
- de Mello, A. (1990). *Awareness: The perils and opportunities of reality*. New York: Doubleday.
- Deetz, S. (1998). Discursive formations, strategized subordination, and self-surveillance: An empirical case. In A. McKinley & K. Starkey (Eds.) *Foucault, management and organization theory* (pp. 151- 172). London: Sage Publications.
- Deetz, S. A. (1992). *Democracy in an age of corporate colonization:*

Developments in communication and the politics of everyday life.
Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.

- Denzin, N. K. (1997). *Interpretive ethnography: Ethnographic practices for the 21st century*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Eisenberg, E. M., Monge, P. R., & Miller, K. I. (1983). Involvement in communication networks as a predictor of organizational commitment. *Human Communication Research, 10*, 179-201.
- Ellis, C. (2007). Telling secrets, revealing lives: Relational ethics in research with intimate others. *Qualitative Inquiry, 13*, 3-29.
- Emerson, R. M., Fretz, R. I., & Shaw, L. L. (1995). *Writing ethnographic fieldnotes*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.
- Epstein, M. (2008). *Going on being: Life at the crossroad of buddhism and psychotherapy*. Somerville, MA: Wisdom Publications.
- Evans, E., & Grant, C. (2008). *Mama Ph.d.: Women write about motherhood and academic Life*. Picataway, NJ: Rutgers University Press.
- Fairchild, B. H. (2003, June). *The motions of being: On the intersections of lyric and narrative (a work in progress)*. Paper presented at the West Chester University Poetry Conference on Form and Narrative, West Chester, PA
- Farrell, A., & Geist-Martin, P. (2005). Communication social health: Perceptions of wellness at work. *Management Communication Quarterly, 18*, 543-592.
- Faulkner, S. L. (2005). Method: 6 poems. *Qualitative Inquiry, 11*(6), 941- 949.
- Faulkner, S. (2007). Concern with craft: Using ars poetica as criteria for reading research poetry. *Qualitative Inquiry, 13*, 218-234.
- Faulkner, S. L. (2010). *Poetry as method: Reporting research through verse*. Walnut Creek, CA: Left Coast.
- Ferguson, K. E. (1984). *The feminist case against bureaucracy*. Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press.

- Forbes, D. A. (2002). Internalized masculinity and women's discourse: A critical analysis of the (re)production of masculinity in organizations. *Communication Quarterly*, 50, 269-291.
- Foss, S. K. (1996). *Rhetorical criticism: Exploration & practice*. Prospect Heights, IL: Waveland Press, Inc.
- Foucault, M. (1980). Two lectures. In C. Gordon (Ed.), *Power/knowledge: Selected interviews and other writings, 1972-1977* (pp. 78-108). NY: Pantheon.
- Fox, M. (1983). *Original blessing*. New York: Tarcher/Putnam.
- Fox, R. (2007). Skinny bones #126-774-835-29: Thin gay bodies signifying a modern plague. *Text & Performance Quarterly*, 27, 3-19.
- Frost, R. (1977). *The road not taken*. New York: Henry Holt and Company, LLC.
- Furman, R. (2003). Exploring step-fatherhood through poetry. *Journal of Poetry Therapy*, 16(2), 91-9.
- Geertz, C. (1973). *The interpretation of cultures*. New York: Basic Books.
- Giddens, A. (1984). *The constitution of society*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Giddens, A. (1991). *Modernity and self-identity: Self and society in the late modern age*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.
- Gingrich-Philbrook, C. (2005). Autoethnography's family values: Easy access to compulsory experiences. *Text and Performance Quarterly*, 25(4), 297-314.
- Glaser, B. G. & Strauss, A. L. (1967). *The discovery of grounded theory: Strategies for qualitative research*. Chicago, IL: Aldine.
- Glesne, C. (1997). That rare feeling: Re-presenting research through poetic transcription. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 3, 202-222.
- Goffman, E. (1971). *Relations in public*. London: Allen Lane.

- Goldberg, B. (2000). *Age works: What corporate America must do to survive the graying of the workforce*. NY: The Free Press.
- Golden, L. (2001). Flexible work schedules: What are we trading off to get them? *Monthly Labor Review*, 50-67.
- Golden, A. G., Kirby, E. L., & Jorgenson, J. (2006). Work-life research from both sides now: An integrative perspective for organizational and family communication. In C. S. Beck (Ed.), *Communication Yearbook 30* (pp. 143-195). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Gonzalez, M. C. (1997). Painting the white face red: intercultural contact presented through poetic ethnography. In J. Martin, T. Nakayama & L. Flores (Eds.), *Readings in cultural context*. Mountain View, CA: Mayfield.
- Gonzalez, M. C. (2000). The four seasons of ethnography: A creation-centered ontology for ethnography, *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 24, 623-650.
- Goodall, H. L. (2008). *Writing Qualitative Inquiry*. Walnut Creek, CA: Left Coast Press.
- Gordon, N. E. (2004). *The area of sound called the subtone*. Boise, ID: Ahsahta Press.
- Goss, J., & Lindquist, B. (1995). Conceptualizing international labor migration: A structuration perspective. *International Migration Review*, 29, 317-351.
- Gossett, L. M. (2006). Falling between the cracks: Control and communication challenges of a temporary workforce. *Management Communication Quarterly*, 19, 376-415.
- Gregson, N. (1989). On the (ir)relevance of structuration theory to empirical research. In D. Held & J. B. Thompson (Eds.), *Social Theory of Modern Societies: Anthony Giddens and His Critics* (chap 11). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Griffiths, J. (2006). *Wild: An elemental journey*. New York: Penguin Group.
- Guerrier, Y. & Adib, A. (2003). Work at leisure and leisure at work: A study of the emotional labour of tour reps. *Human Relations*, 56, 1399-1417.

- Gutkind, L. (2005). *In fact: The best of creative nonfiction*. New York: W. W. Norton & Company.
- Gutting, B. (2012, March 20). Leap and the net will appear. Retrieved from http://www.betsygutting.com/section_articles/article_3.htm
- Hagan, P. (2006). *Seasonal disorder: Ranger tales from Glacier National Park*. Johnson Books.
- Hansen, K. V. (2005). *Not-so-nuclear families: Class, gender, and networks of care*. Picataway, NJ: Rutgers University Press.
- Hartnett, S. J. (2003). *Incarceration nation: Investigative prison poems of hope and terror*. Walnut Creek, CA: Alta Mira Press.
- Heaphy, E. D., & Dutton, J. E. (2008). Positive social interactions and the human body at work: Linking organizations and physiology. *Academy of Management Review*, 33, 137-162.
- Helmer, J., Martin, K., & Poole, M. S. (1985, October). *A new view of organizational climate and communication: A qualitative study of organizational climates*. Paper presented at the meeting of the Speech Communication Association, Chicago, IL.
- Hennessy, J. (2009). Choosing work and family: Poor and low-income mothers' work-family commitments. *Journal of Poverty*, 13, 152-172.
- Hewlett, S. A. (2007). *Off-ramps and on-ramps: Keeping talented women on the road to success*. Boston: Harvard Business School Press.
- Hochschild, A. (1997). *The time bind: When work becomes home and home becomes work*. New York: Metropolitan Books.
- Hodgson, D. (2003). "Taking it like a man": Masculinity, subjection and resistance in the selling of life assurance. *Gender, Work and Organization*, 10, 1-21.
- Holmer-Nadesan, M. (1996). Organizational identity and space of action. *Organization Studies*, 17, 49-81.
- Hugo, R. (1979). *The triggering town: Lectures and essays on poetry and writing*. New York: W. W. Norton & Company.

- Jacobs, J. A. & Gerson, K. (2004). *The time divide*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Jensen, D. (2011). *Truths among us: Conversations on building a new culture*. Oakland, CA: PM Press.
- Jorgensen, J. (2006). Seeing work-life from children's standpoints. *Electronic Journal of Communication* 16, 3-4. Available at http://www.cios.org.ezproxy1.lib.asu.edu/getfile/01638_EJC.
- Kinman, G., & Jones, F. (2008). A life beyond work?: Job demands, work-life balance, and wellbeing in UK academics. *Journal of Human Behavior in the Social Environment*, 17, 41-58.
- Kirby, E. L., Golden, A. G., Medved, C. E., Jorgenson, J., & Buzzanell, P. M. (2003). An organizational communication challenge to the discourse of work and family research: From problematics to empowerment. *Communication Yearbook*, 27, 1-43.
- Kirby, E.L., & Krone, K.J. (2002). "The policy exists, but you can't use it": Negotiating tensions in work-family policy. *Journal of Applied Communication Research*, 30, 50-77.
- Kirby, E. L., Wieland, S., McBride, M. C. (2006). Work-life communication. In J. Oetzel and S. Ting-Toomey (Eds.) *Handbook of conflict communication* (pp. 327-357). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Koene, B. and van Riemsdijk, M. (2005). Managing temporary workers: Work identity, diversity and operational HR choices. *Human Resource Management Journal*, 15, 76-92.
- Kondo, D. K. (1990). *Crafting selves: Power, gender, and discourses of identity in a Japanese workplace*. Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press.
- Langer, E. (2009). *Counterclockwise: Mindful health and the power of possibility*. NY: Ballantine.
- Langer, C. L., & Furman, R. (2004, March). Exploring identity and assimilation: Research and interpretive poems [19 paragraphs]. *Forum Qualitative Sozialforschung*, 5(2), Article 5. Retrieved January 4, 2012, from www.qualitativeresearch.net/fqs-texte/2-04/2-04langerfurman-e.htm.

- Leftridge, A. (2003). *Glacier day hikes*. Helena, MT: Faircountry Press.
- Leiter, M. P., & Maslach, C. (1988). The impact of interpersonal environment on burnout and organizational commitment. *Journal of Organizational Behaviour, 9*, 297-308.
- Lewis, S. (1997). "Family friendly" employment policies: A route to changing organizational culture or playing about at the margins. *Gender, Work and Organization, 4*, 13-23.
- Lincoln, Y. S. & Guba, E. G. (1985). *Naturalistic inquiry*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.
- Lindlof, T. R. & Taylor, B. C. (2002). *Qualitative Communication Research Methods*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.
- MacIntosh, N. B., & Scapens, R. W. (1990). Structuration theory in management and accounting. *Accounting, Organizations and Society, 15*, 455-477.
- Madison, D. S. (1991). "That was my occupation": Oral narrative, performance, and black feminist thought. *Text and Performance Quarterly, 13*, 213-232.
- Mandela, N. (1990). *The struggle is my life*. Tardeo, Bombay: IDAF Publications.
- Marechal, G. & Linstead, S. (2010). Metropoems: Poetic method and ethnographic experience. *Qualitative Inquiry, 16*, 66-77.
- Marx, K. (1844). *Economic and philosophical manuscripts*.
- Maslach, C., Schaufeli, W. B., & Leiter, M. P. (2001). Job burnout. *Annual Review of Psychology, 52*, 397-422.
- McNally, R., & Wheale, P. (1994). Environmental and medical bioethics in late modernity: Anthony Giddens, genetic engineering and the post-modern state. *Philosophy, 36*, 211-224.
- McPhee, R. D. (2004). Text, agency, and organization in the light of structuration theory. *Organization, 11*, 355-371.

- McPhee, R. D., & Canary, H. E. (2009). "Distanciation and Organizational Communication." Presented to the Organizational Communication Division, National Communication Association Convention. Chicago, Illinois.
- McPhee, R. D., & Iverson, J. (2009). Agents of constitution in the Comunidad: Constitutive processes of communication in organizations. In Putnam, L. L., Nicotera, A., (Eds.), *Building theories of organization: The constitutive role of communication* (pp. 49-87). NY: Routledge.
- McPhee, R. D., and Zaug, P. (2000). The communicative constitution of organizations: A framework for explanation. *Electronic Journal of Communication*, 10 (1-2), http://www.cios.org/getfile/McPhee_V10n1200.
- Miller, K. I., Ellis, B. H., Zook, E. G., & Lyles, J. S. (1990). An integrated model of communication, stress, and burnout in the workplace. *Communication Research*, 17, 300-326.
- Molvar, E. (1999). *Hiking Glacier and Waterton Lakes National Parks*. Helena, MT: Globe Pequot Press.
- Mueller, T. (2003). Empowering anarchy: Power, hegemony, and anarchist strategy. *Anarchist Studies*, 26-38.
- Mumby, D. K., & Putnam, L. L. (1992). The politics of emotion: A feminist reading of bounded rationality. *Academy of Management Review*, 17, 465-486.
- National Park Service (2012). Jobs. [Online]. Available: <http://www.nps.gov/glac/parkmgmt/jobs.htm>. [2012, 20 March].
- National Park Service (2011a). Frequently Asked Questions. [Online]. Available: <http://www.nps.gov/faqs.htm>. [2012, 1 January].
- National Park Service (2011b). About Us: Organization. [Online]. Available: <http://www.nps.gov/aboutus/organization.htm>. [2011, 1 January].
- National Park Service (2011c). Glacier: Management, Jobs. [Online]. Available: <http://www.nps.gov/glac/parkmgmt/jobs.htm>. [2011, 1 January].

- Nell, E., & O'Neill, O. (1972). Justice under socialism *Dissent* 18, 483-91.
- Newton, T. (1995). *'Managing' stress: Emotion and power at work*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Nhat Hanh, T. (1975). *The miracle of mindfulness*. Boston: Beacon Press.
- Nhat Hanh, T. (1993). *Love in action*. Berkeley: Parallax Press.
- Nhat Hanh, T. (2009). *You are here*. Boston: Shambhala Publications, Inc.
- Oleson, V. (2000) Feminisms and qualitative research at and into the millennium. In N. K. Denzin and Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *Handbook of Qualitative Research, 2nd edn*, (pp. 215–56). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Orlikowski, W. J. (1992). The duality of technology: Rethinking the concept of technology in organizations. *Organization Science*, 3, 398-427.
- Orlikowski, W. J., Yates, J., Okamura, K., & Fujimoto, M. (1995). Shaping electronic communication: The metastructuring of technology in the context of use. *Organization Science*, 6, 423-444.
- Pearson, A. R. (forthcoming). (Re)constructing stress in the academy. *Australian Journal of Communication*.
- Pelias, R. J. (1999). *Writing performance: Poeticizing the researcher's body*. Southern Illinois University Press: Carbondale, IL.
- Percer, L. H. (2002, June). Going beyond the demonstrable range in educational scholarship: Exploring the intersections of poetry and research. *Qualitative Report*, 7(2). Retrieved January 4, 2012, from www.nova.edu/ssss/QR/QR7-2/hayespercer.html
- Pincus, J. D., & Acharya, L. (1988). Employee communication strategies for organizational crises. *Employee Responsibilities and Rights Journal*, 1, 181-199.
- Pocock, B. (2003). *The work/life collision*. The Federation Press: Sydney.
- Poole, M. S. (1985). Communication and organizational climates: Review, critique, and a new perspective. In R. McPhee & P.

- Tompkins (Eds.), *Organizational communication: Traditional themes and new directions* (pp. 9-108). Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.
- Poole, M. S., & McPhee, R. D. (2005). Structuration theory. In S. May & D. K. Mumby (Eds.), *Engaging organizational communication theory & research* (pp. 171-195). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Poole, M.S., Seibold, D. R., & McPhee, R. D. (1996). The structuration of group decisions. In R. Y. Hirokawa & M. S. Poole (Eds.), *Communication and group decision-making* (2nd ed., pp. 114-146). Newbury Park, CA: Sage.
- Postman, N. (2005). *Amusing ourselves to death: Public discourse in the age of show business*. NY: Penguin Books.
- Putnam, R. (2000). *Bowling alone*. NY: Simon and Schuster.
- Pyne, S. J. (2010). *Voice & vision: A guide to writing history and other serious nonfiction*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Reich, R. B. (1992). *The work of nations: Preparing ourselves for 21-century capitalism*. NY: Vintage Books.
- Richardson, L. (1997). Skirting a pleated text: De-disciplining an academic life. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 3, 295-304
- Richardson, L. (2000). Writing: A method of inquiry. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *Handbook of qualitative research*, (2nd ed., pp. 923–948). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Richardson, L. (2002). Poetic representations of interviews. In J. F. Gubrium & J. A. Holstein (Eds.), *Handbook of interview research: Context and method* (pp. 877-891). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Roberts, J., & Scapens, R. (1985). Accounting systems and systems of accountability: Understanding accounting practices in their organizational contexts. *Accounting, Organizations and Society*, 21, 675-690.
- Ronai, C. (1992). The reflexive self through narrative: A night in the life of an exotic dancer/researcher. In Ellis, C. & Flaherty (Eds.). *Investigating subjectivity: Research on lived experience* (pp. 102- 124). London: Sage.
- Scher, A. (1999). Anarchism faces the '90s. *Dollars & Sense*, 222, 30-35.

- Scott, C.W., & Trethewey, A. (2008). Organizational discourse and the appraisal of occupational hazards: Interpretive repertoires, heedful interrelating, and identity at work. *Journal of Applied Communication Research*, 36, 298-317.
- Silverman, D. (2007). *A very short, fairly interesting and reasonably cheap book about qualitative methods*. London: Sage.
- Spiggle, S. (1994). Analysis and interpretation of qualitative data in consumer research. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 21, 491-503.
- Stinchcombe, A. (1986). Milieu and structure updated: A critique of the theory of structuration. *Theory and Society*, 15, 901-914.
- Strauss, A., & Corbin, J. (1990). *Basics of qualitative research: Grounded theory procedures and techniques*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Strauss, A., & Corbin, J. (1997). *Grounded theory in practice*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Swales, S. (2002) Organizational commitment: A critique of the construct and measures. *International Journal of Management Reviews*, 4, 155-78.
- Sydow, J, van Well, B., & Windeler, A. (1998). Networked networks: Financial services networks in the context of their industry. *International Studies of Management and Organization*, 27, 47-75.
- Sydow, J., & Windeler, A. (1998). Organizing and evaluating interfirm networks: A structurationist perspective on network processes and effectiveness. *Organization Science*, 9, 265-284.
- Thane, P. (Accessed January, 2010). The work-life balance in an ageing society. *History and Policy*. Available: <http://www.historyandpolicy.org/papers/policy-paper-02.html>
- Thoreau, H. D. (1854). *Walden*.
- Thrift, N. (1985). Bear and mouse or bear and tree? Anthony Giddens' reconstruction of social theory. *Sociology*, 19, 609-623.
- Tillich, P. (1977). *The courage to be*. London: Collins.

- Tillman-Healy, L. M. (1996). A secret life in a culture of thinness. In C. Ellis & A. P. Bochner (Eds.), *Composing ethnography: Alternative forms of qualitative writing*, (pp. 76-108). Walnut Creek, CA: Altamira Press.
- Tracy, S. J. (2004). Dialectic, contradiction, or double bind? Analyzing and theorizing employee reactions to organizational tensions. *Journal of Applied Communication Research*, 32, 119-146.
- Tracy, S. J. (2008). Care as a Common Good. *Women Studies in Communication*, 31, 166-174.
- Tracy, S. J., & Rivera K. D. (In Press, February, 2010). Endorsing equity and applauding stay-at-home moms: How male voices on work-life reveal aversive sexism and flickers of transformation. *Management Communication Quarterly*.
- Tracy, S. J. (In final Revision; Forthcoming, 2013). *Qualitative methodology matters: Creating and communicating qualitative research with impact*. Hoboken, NJ: Wiley-Blackwell Publishing.
- Trethewey, A. (1997). Resistance, identity, and empowerment: A postmodern feminist analysis of clients in a human service organization. *Communication Monographs*, 64, 281-301.
- Trethewey, A. (1999). Disciplined bodies: Women's embodied identities at work. *Organization Studies*, 20, 423-450.
- Trethewey, A., Tracy, S., & Alberts, J. (2006). Crystallizing frames for work-life. *Electronic Journal of communication*, 16. Available at: <http://www.cios.org/www/ejc/v16n34.htm>.
- U.S. Department of the Interior (2011). About the Department of the Interior. [Online]. Available: <http://www.doi.gov/>. [2012, 1 January].
- Van Maanen, J. (2011). *Tales of the field: On writing ethnography*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.
- Warner, J. (2005). *Perfect madness: Motherhood in the age of anxiety*. New York, NY: Penguin Group.

- Watzlawick, P., Weakland, J. H., & Fisch, R. (1974). "More of the same" or, when the solution becomes the problem. In *Change: Principles of problem formation and problem resolution*. New York: W.W. Norton & Company, Inc.
- Webb, M. (2003). *A woman in the great outdoors*. Albuquerque, NM: University of New Mexico Press.
- Wendt, A. (1992). Anarchy is what states make of it: The social construction of power politics. *International Organization*, 46, 392-425.
- Wilber, K. (2007). *Integral spirituality*. Shambhala.
- Williams, L. (2007). Anarchism revived. *New Political Science*, 29, 297-312.
- Willis, P. (1977) *Learning to labor: How working class kids get working class jobs*. NY: Columbia University Press.
- Witmer, D. F. (1997). Communication and recovery: Structuration as an ontological approach to organizational culture. *Communication Monographs*, 64, 324-349.
- Young, I. M. (1990). *Justice and the politics of difference*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

APPENDIX A
INTERVIEW GUIDE

Job Specific

Please describe your job duties in the NPS.

How long have you worked for the NPS?

What is a typical day like in your job?

Early Work Experience & Motivation

How did you become interested in working for the NPS?

Why do you work for the NPS?

Tell me about the application process for your position? (How did you land this job?)

What is unique about working for the NPS? (especially in Glacier Park)

What was your impression of the NPS when you first started working for the organization?

How (or) has your perception of the NPS changed since you first started working in Glacier?

Evaluating the Job

Explain to me a horror story from work. A success story.

What is the best thing about what you do?

What is the worst thing about your job?

How does the NPS compare to other jobs you have had in terms of your overall job satisfaction?

If you could change something about your job, what would you change?

Give me an example of when you felt especially pleased with your job performance (or especially disappointed in your performance.)

Please describe for me the ideal work day.

Seasonal Questions

What does it mean to be a seasonal worker for the Park Service? (especially in your position) Tell me a story that illustrates what it means to be seasonal in the NPS.

What do you do when you're not working for GNP in the summer?

How did you get interested in seasonal work?

Do you have any family members who also work seasonally?

What are the benefits of seasonal work? The drawbacks?

APPENDIX B
INFORMED CONSENT FORM

Working by the Season for the National Park Service
Amira de la Garza, Principal Investigator
Amy Pearson, Co-Investigator

May 10, 2011

Please read the following material that explains this research study. Signing this form will indicate that you have been informed about the study and that you consent to participate. We want you to understand what you are being asked to do and what risks and benefits—if any—are associated with the study. This should help you decide whether or not you want to participate in the study.

You are being asked to take part in a research project conducted by Amy Pearson, a graduate student in the Hugh Downs School of Human Communication at Arizona State University, Stauffer Hall Building A, Room 412, Tempe, AZ 85287. This project is being directed by Dr. Amira de la Garza, Hugh Downs School of Human Communication at Arizona State University, Stauffer Hall Building A, Room 412, Tempe, AZ 85287.

Project Description:

This project will explore the nature of seasonal work in the National Park Service (NPS) as a matter of countercultural lifestyle choice in today's occupational world. The study will explore the meanings of seasonal work, the undergirding assumptions and values shaping seasonal workers' notions of "work", and the particular benefits and conflicts that seasonal workers encounter in the NPS. Your participation in this study is entirely voluntary. You may decline to participate at any time.

Procedures:

If you decide to participate in this research, you will be asked to participate in a one hour interview concerning your experiences as a seasonal worker for the National Park Service.

If you agree to take part in an interview, you will be asked questions such as the following:

- What does it mean to be a seasonal worker for the Park Service? (especially in your position)
- Tell me a story that illustrates what it means to be seasonal in the NPS.
- What do you do when you're not working for GNP in the summer?

Interviews will be audio-recorded with your consent.

Risks and Discomforts:

Risks for participating in this study are minimal. It is possible that you may feel uncomfortable talking with me about your experiences of seasonal work with another park employee. However, if you choose to participate in this study, please keep in mind that you are free to skip any question during an interview, and you may withdraw from this study completely at any time.

Benefits:

There are no direct benefits for participating in this study. However, you may find it interesting to talk about your experiences as a seasonal worker. Additionally, you may benefit in that you will be assisting in a project that aims to better understand the benefits and drawbacks of seasonal work in an effort to improve the organizational opportunities offered to you and to improve organizational retention.

Study Withdrawal:

You have the right to withdraw your consent or stop participating at any time. You have the right to refuse to answer any question(s).

Confidentiality:

Every effort will be taken to maintain your privacy. No personally identifying information will be used in this study. The results of this study may be used in reports, presentations, and publications, but your name will not be used. You will be assigned a pseudonym. No information that uses your real name will be kept. All audio files and transcripts will be kept in physically secured locations. All data will be destroyed ten years after the completion of this study.

Invitation for Questions:

If you have questions about participating in this study, you should ask the researcher before you sign this consent form. If you have any questions for the researcher following this study, please feel free to contact Amy Pearson at 406-289-0044 or amy.pearson@asu.edu or Dr. Amira de la Garza at 480-442-6472 or delagarza@asu.edu. If you have questions regarding your rights as a participant, any concerns regarding this project or any dissatisfaction with any aspect of this study, you may report them -- confidentially, if you wish -- to the Chair of Human

Subjects Institutional Review Board, through the ASU Office of Research Integrity and Assurance at 480-965-6788.

Authorization:

I have read this paper about the study, or it was read to me. I know the possible risks and benefits. I know that being in this study is voluntary. I choose to be in this study. I know that I can withdraw at any time. I have received, on the date signed, a copy of this document containing two pages. I realize my interview will be audiotaped.

Name of Participant (printed)

Signature of Participant _____ Date _____.

(Initial previous page of consent form.)