WORK IN THE 21ST CENTURY
Innovations in Research

FEBRUARY 26, 2018
7:00 – 9:00 PM

SFU Segal Graduate School of Business
500 Granville Street
PRESENTERS

WELLBEING AT WORK: PROMOTING HEALTH THROUGH INNOVATION AND PARTICIPATION
Addressing the growing burden of illness in the workplace, and the associated economic, social and health costs is a major concern across the globe. Current solutions help minimize and manage symptoms, but they do little to address the unhealthy environment itself. Creating sustainable, truly healthy workplaces requires looking at the big picture including the demographic shifts, employee engagement and workplace culture. In 2017, Bridge for Health co-operative piloted the Wellbeing @ Work Innovation Labs in Porto Alegre, Brazil with Stanford Energy System Innovations (SESI), a national occupational health and safety company that caters to the manufacturing sector. The Lab applies a participatory approach to support organizations design the social and physical environments that keep people healthy at work. This presentation will showcase our conceptual model and process used to understand the complex environments at work that lead to illness, as well as some examples of the prototypes that were developed by SESI.

PAOLA ARDILES is a practitioner scholar and an aspiring social entrepreneur. Paola is a Lecturer in the Faculty of Health Sciences at SFU and the Past President of the Public Health Association of BC; a provincial NGO that advocates for healthy public policy and public health workforce development. In 2016, Paola co-founded Bridge for Health Cooperative, a start up social enterprise focused on social innovation to promote health and wellbeing.

UNDERSTANDING LABOR IN STARTUP VENTURES: A DATA-DRIVEN ETHNOGRAPHIC APPROACH
The goal of this research is to unveil the potential, and anticipate possible drawbacks, of the flexible organization of labour in highly-specialized start-up companies. The project investigates how entrepreneurs and creative practitioners working in Metro Vancouver’s burgeoning digital start-up industry organize their work and develop their technical and managerial skills. In particular, this research looks at how technologies, work and organizational paradigms (TWO) interact with one another and shape the daily practices, and the long-term career trajectories, of aspiring entrepreneurs, digital workers and creative practitioners.

ALBERTO LUSOLI is a PhD candidate at SFU’s School of Communication. His interests focus on technology, work practices and organizations. His approach is inspired by technological constructivism and Actor-Network Theory. His on-field research aims at exploring how work is organized, by means of technologies and labour practices, within the Vancouver startup industry.

ACTION RESEARCH ON THE APPLICATION OF MEDITATION IN BUSINESS LEADER ETHICS EDUCATION
Neuroscientific research suggests that meditation and other contemplative practices result in noticeable improvement in awareness of one’s internal experience, self-reflection, emotional regulation, and caring for others, which are considered important components of virtue ethics and leadership. The paper reports on the qualitative research regarding students’ and instructors’ experiences with the application of meditation in an undergraduate course as a contribution to postsecondary business ethics education.

THOMAS CULHAM, an engineer, held a variety of senior business leadership roles in the resource sector. In 2007 he shifted his focus to practicing, researching and applying the contemplative aspects of ancient wisdom traditions in contemporary education. His Ph.D thesis (SFU 2012) Ethics Education of Business Leaders, was published as a book. Tom is dedicated to conceptual and action research focused on advancing holistic education of body, emotion, mind and spirit as a means of transforming the world to a sustainable place. Tom is currently the Program Director at the School of Management City University and a visiting lecturer at Simon Fraser University.

DR. NEHA SHIVHARE is an Assistant Professor in the Faculty of Education, Dayalbagh Educational Institute in Agra, and presently is visiting Simon Fraser University. Her research interests span over consciousness studies, values and ethics education, digitally augmented learning and systems approach.
OBSERVATIONAL STUDIES OF WORK: WATCHING PEOPLE WORK IN ORDER TO IMPROVE WORK FOR WORKERS

I watch people work and use insights from observational studies of people working to improve the design of technology and/or solve organizational issues at work. My team and I undertake observational studies of work (ethnographic as well as Francophone ergonomics as developed in France, practiced in Quebec), in order to improve work from the standpoint of workers. Technology is usually a focal point in my work. I focus on improving the design and implementation of workplace technologies, and often work with organizations to solve problems after new technology implementations which have fallen short. Experiences of front line staff at work are central to the work my team and I undertake.

ELLEN BALKA began studying work as an MA student in 1983. Her interest in social aspects of technological change — particularly as experienced by women — led her to study numerous and varied workplaces. In 1996, she had an “a-ha” moment when she realized that healthcare workplaces were full of women workers and full of technology. Once she realized this she began to focus her research work on the the computerization of healthcare work, which has been the focus of her research since the late 1990s.

THE CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES OF THE SHARING ECONOMY: EXAMPLES OF LEADING EDGE COMPANIES

The technological revolution from the development of the internet has led to different types of businesses and services, broadly labeled the sharing economy. These businesses have been noted for their disruption of traditional industries, as seen clearly in the retail and entertainment industries, but also hold great promise for workers to organize and become more active in management and potentially ownership of their work. We discuss the policy challenges required to ensure that workers have favourable outcomes.

ANDY HIRA is a Professor of Political Science at Simon Fraser University. He is a specialist in energy and technology policies, and more broadly in the political economy of development, with a focus on the South.

THE ECOSYSTEM OF FAKE: BOTS, INFORMATION AND DISTORTED REALITIES

Today’s online information crisis is more than a narrative of Trump and the Russians. We have over a year of researching the complexity of today’s information battlefield; its history and events that have led us to the era of Post-Truth (2016 word of the year), closing out 2017 as the year of Post-Fact, and what we see as the ushering in of an era of Post-Trust. We argue that the weaponization of information is proving to be an issue that requires much more attention and discussion. As the internet is arguably the backbone of an information driven, knowledge based society the issue of fake social profiles and the proliferation of misinformation presents a grave risk. We see the problem, and we believe in promoting a conversation intended to make cyberspace a more human place.

JOHN GRAY is the CEO and co-founder of Mentionmapp Analytics Inc. and a freelance writer. He’s a social media researcher and reporter focused on the interactions between real people, Bots, sockpuppets and trolls. John’s main consideration is how misinformation is impacting our socio-political discourse, and how cyberspace is becoming a less human place. He’s co-authored The Ecosystem of Fake: Bots, Information and Distorted Realities. John has a Bachelor of Applied Science (Communications) and a B.A. (English) both from Simon Fraser University.

COWORKING SPACES

Coworking spaces provide flexible workspaces for independent workers who seek office accommodations for business purposes, and wish to operate within a social, community based environment. Through this method, entrepreneurs have started to build day to day relationships while they individually achieve their business goals. Our research considers the evolving coworking model within a changing urban economic and social context. As coworking spaces become further entrenched into the landscape of work, we recognize the need for supports from within and beyond the coworking movement in terms of valuing the affective labour of community building, employment rights for independent workers and support for spaces that operate outside of the commercial model. We wish to ground the possibilities of coworking as part of a broader shift in thinking about how we support independent workers.

KRISTEN ELKOW AND QARA CLEMENTE both have jobs and occasionally find themselves with laptops in coffee shops wondering, “wouldn’t it be nice if there was somewhere friendlier to work?” They are both graduate students in Simon Fraser University’s Urban Studies program.
THE FUTURE ISN’T WHAT IT USED TO BE
Predictions in the 1950s envisioned a four-day work week in “the near future” and further reductions by the end of the century. Those predictions were disappointed by events. My research investigates the erroneous assumptions and the political resistance that prevented the anticipated future from happening. Forecasters assumed the continuation of historical trends and the individual choice of hours, two assumptions that were actually at odds with each other. Meanwhile policy makers pursued policies that subordinated all other considerations to the primacy of economic growth. Current thinking about the future needs to incorporate the lessons from past miscalculations or else the prospects are likely to oscillate incoherently between resignation and wishful thinking.

TOM WALKER has taught collective bargaining and labour and the environment in the Labour Studies program since 2012 and is currently developing a selected topics course on the politics of working time, to be presented in the Summer of 2018. He has published several peer-reviewed articles on the economics, politics and history of working time.

SOCIAL HIRING AND COMMUNITY BENEFITS AGREEMENT
The Local Economic Development Lab (LEDlab) has been working with Buy Social Canada on developing a value proposition framework and scoring card for community benefits agreements (CBAs) for development projects. CBAs are agreements between the city, land owners, and developers that aim to ensure that development projects provide social and economic benefits to the local communities that they impact. In an ever globalized world, there has been an recognition of the need to strengthen local economies such that they are more inclusive and create benefits for all community members. By researching and communicating the benefits of CBA models, we can support local governments in ensuring that they can provide work opportunities for marginalized local community members.

ARA BEITTOEI is a Project Manager with the Local Economic Development Lab (LEDlab). He has a diverse education background drawing on both the Natural and Social Sciences. His interest lies in leveraging social innovation models and frameworks to address complex social problems.

NICOLE HANBURY is currently completing her Master’s degree at the School of Public Policy at SFU. She is a Project Coordinator with LEDlab, working with Buy Social Canada on demonstrating the value proposition of social procurement.

CIVIC INNOVATION CHANGE LAB: MAYA SCHOFIELD, QUEENIE TRAN, ADAM ROSSI, TAWANDA MUSAWI
GigCity: An online community growing real-world connections
GigCity seeks to connect freelancers through a centralized online system. Our goal is three-tiered: first, to apply the traditional apprenticeship structure to the modern gig-worker by connecting experienced and emerging freelancers in order to share skills and work together on a common goal. Second, to create a slack-style chat stream to connect with people working in the same room. Third, to provide links to legal help ranging from taxes to labour rights. Our goal is to build a web-app and smartphone app that connects freelancers, from a range of experience with other workers, and to take the connotation of 'tenuous' out of freelance through aiding the creation of community, and focussing on people as their own resource.

GIGCITY is a group of four undergraduate students who have all worked or are working in the gig economy. We are passionate about social innovation as a means of institutional change, and we also believe that the future of work demands attention at all levels of government, and all levels of the education system. We hope to be a part of this shift in the belief of what work is, as our generation will be affected by the platforms and policies about the future of work that are being created today.