

Finding work in the New Zealand film industry.

**The creative industries volunteer ten years on:
emancipated or exploited?**

**A thesis submitted to Auckland University of Technology
in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Philosophy.**

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13 August 2012**

Attestation of Authorship

“I hereby declare that this submission is my own work and that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, it contains no material previously published or written by another person (except where explicitly defined in the acknowledgements), nor material which to a substantial extent has been submitted for the award of any other degree or diploma of a university or other institute of higher learning”.

Lewis Tennant

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Abstract

This thesis examines whether the use of volunteer labour in the New Zealand screen production industry exploits those who gift their time to the sector. Those who volunteer their labour do so in the hope of establishing themselves in the industry, and there is an oversupply of aspirant workers. The thesis suggests that this profusion of workers is due to a rise in the public profile of the local industry, as well as a proliferation of tertiary trained ‘film school’ graduates. Three case studies of workers from the New Zealand screen production sector are presented, and grounded theory method is used to analyse their reflections on the use of volunteer labour within the industry, as well as reflections on their workplace in general. It is found workers must compete with one another for ongoing project-based work, that graduates are considered ‘unskilled’ within the industry, and that ‘know who’ or social capital is as important to long term success in the industry as ‘know how’ or the technical abilities to perform specialist roles. Those who volunteer their labour must prove their willingness in an industry where pay rates are inconsistent, hours are long, transactional contracts are malleable, and ‘being liked’ is essential to securing ongoing project work, as is networking. Analysis of case study participants’ responses indicates that volunteering can be exploitative in certain circumstances, though there is a wider issue to address regarding workers’ being conditioned to accept an under-regulated workplace where the rights of workers are concerned. Film workers do not speak out about such issues as it is counter-productive to ‘being liked’ and gaining further project-based work.

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CHAPTER ONE

Introduction and Overview

1.1 'Background to the research project': Situating the researcher in the study

Some of the least enjoyable employment I have undertaken has offered the most financial stability. Some of the most enjoyable employment I have undertaken I have volunteered my time and effort to. Occupying a utopian middle ground are the times I have engaged in endeavours I truly enjoy and been satisfactorily remunerated for my efforts.

The focus of this study emerged from my involvement in what may be broadly termed 'the arts' in New Zealand and abroad. A childhood interest in music, theatre, film, broadcasting and writing spurred an engagement with what is now termed the creative industries, and for nearly twenty years I have been employed in both long-term and sporadic roles across a sector where competition for work is competitive, hours are often irregular, employment terms and conditions can be vague, and payment fluctuates wildly from project to project.

When I returned to tertiary education in 2010, nearly two decades of observing and reflecting upon the industry I work in was contextualised during studying for a Postgraduate Diploma in Communication Studies. Specialising in the creative industries pathway of the diploma, I became interested in academic discussion concerning the sector's workplace model, specifically the motivation, experience, and treatment of creative industries workers. Around this time a friend worked a fulltime job in hospitality in conjunction with volunteering his time for two hours every weekday to presenting a television show. Public opinion tended toward the idea he was a very talented presenter, and he maintained a professional demeanour throughout his time in the role. When the company who owned the television channel went into liquidation, this individual had worked two years in the hosting role with little or no recognition from management, and very little in the way of non-financial rewards such as event tickets or the like. Though he had willingly engaged in the process, following the experience he sank into depression, losing self-confidence and direction. His experience, coupled with the themes I explored while completing my diploma, as well as my own observations and

experiences in the creative sector, prompted an interest in studying the apparent high incidence of volunteer labour in the creative industries; specifically examining what motivates individuals to volunteer, and at what point willing engagement as a volunteer worker may become exploitative.

1.2 'On studying the New Zealand film industry': The purpose and scope of this research

Just over ten years ago New Zealand's Fifth Labour Government 'rebranded' the arts and culture sector as the creative industries, in line with similar policy change across the globe. Instigated with the intention of better utilising the economic potential of human knowledge and creativity, creative industries policy tends to promote the sector's workers as vibrant members of the 'new' economy; flexible and freed up from the restraints of traditional employment structures.

The New Zealand film industry is a subsector of the creative industries. The industry is seen as contributing to the economy through tax and revenue garnered when large scale internationally-financed films are made using New Zealand personnel, locations and technical infrastructure, and indirectly through tourism. This perception has allowed successive New Zealand governments to circumvent issues concerning work conditions within the industry, and to enact labour laws that solidify the marginal employment status of freelance film workers as self-employed contractors (Rowlands & Handy, 2012).

This thesis explores the use of volunteer labour in the New Zealand film industry. Set against the backdrop of government policy and labour laws that do little to formally protect the rights of workers, aspirant film industry workers volunteer their time in the hope of securing on-going paid employment in the sector. These individuals volunteer their time to an industry that is project-based, where teams of workers are assembled for limited periods of time then disbanded, and employees must then compete with one and other for work on further projects. Similarly, volunteer workers compete in an industry over supplied with aspirant workers.

In examining the use of volunteer workers in the New Zealand film industry, this thesis questions whether these workers are ultimately exploited in the gifting of their time, and what significance a project-based work environment where informal contracts often hold more precedence than formal ones has on the mind-set of the industry's workers. This study also questions the role tertiary providers play in the oversupply of aspirant film industry workers. Further questions are raised as to whether workers possessing a creative temperament are more prone to exploitation than their co-workers, or whether it is in fact ultimately the workplace model of the New Zealand film sector that may place workers in a vulnerable position.

Before deciding on the research questions, the general idea was to investigate whether those who volunteer their labour to the creative industries are prone to exploitation. This topic proved far too broad for the confines of one year of research. A decision was made to concentrate on the use of volunteers in the New Zealand screen production industry as a result of deciding on the following delimitations.

The first delimitation was established when considering those who may broadly be termed 'hobbyists' in their creative pursuits as separate to individuals actively seeking to engage in employment or pursue a career in the creative industries. Admittedly there are variables to consider in making such a distinction, such as the hobbyist who eventually achieves greater success in their craft than their main place of employment (a hypothetical example being an individual who works in a bank but plays in a garage band who go on to enjoy great success). Nevertheless, deciding to concentrate on individuals attempting to forge a career primarily in the creative industries confined the study to workers with a more defined set of motives where gifting labour is concerned.

The second delimitation was established when considering the organisations to which creative industries workers volunteer their time. Organisations staffed by a large number of 'hobbyists' and turning over little or no profit, for example community theatre groups, were omitted. Again, there are exceptions to the rule in making such a distinction, such as Auckland radio station George FM, started in a shed by enthusiastic amateurs and still employing

volunteer show hosts today despite being commercially successful. Still, eliminating organisations run primarily for the enjoyment of those involved before profit concerns allowed a focus on organisations with a visible commercial imperative.

The next stage in establishing a research question involved reflecting upon the different themes that had emanated from research on the use of volunteers across the creative industries, and deciding which subsector these were most relevant to. New Zealand's film industry emerged as a significant subsector to study when considering the significance of government policy, as the sub-sector was particularly prominent in the Fifth Labour Government's promotion of creative industries policy (Volkerling, 2010). The growing use of interns in the cultural sector (Gardner, 2010; Try & Rickett, 2009), as well as across all sectors of the economy (Perlin, 2011), highlighted a link between an increase in tertiary training providers and the number of volunteer workers in the industry. In recent years there has been a rise in the number of tertiary institutions specifically training for creative industries subsectors, causing a rise in the number of aspirant workers. This is particularly prominent in the film sector (Blair, Caulkin, & Randle, 2003; de Bruin & Hanrahan, 2003; Hesmondhalgh & Baker, 2010a; Randle & Culkin, 2009). The final theme considered was the significance of the project-based nature of many creative industries workplaces (McRobbie, 2002), whereby work is contract based and insecure, and volunteers are recruited to lessen the labour purchase risk when recruiting for short term projects (Smith & McKinlay, 2009). The film industry in New Zealand has always been project based, and there have been a number of international studies on the temporary nature of film work (Baumann, 2002; Blair, 2001; Blair, Grey, & Randle, 2001; Christopherson, 2009; Defillippi & Arthur, 1998; Ebbers & Wijnberg, 2009; Jones, 1996; Randle & Culkin, 2009; Rowlands, 2009).

The New Zealand screen production industry became the backdrop for my investigation of the use of volunteers in the creative industries, specifically seeking to ascertain whether those who volunteer their labour are ultimately exploited. The study is a significant contribution to existing academic literature concerning labour processes in the creative industries, as there have to date been few if any international studies published focussing specifically on the use of

volunteers in the sector, while in New Zealand there has been little published academic research into the labour processes of the local film industry. The study is significant to the industry itself, as the exact rights of volunteers in New Zealand's screen industry are currently unclear, and this body of work may serve to start a dialogue about the rights of workers within the sector.

1.3 'Contextualising the research project': Introducing the literature and the focus of study

This thesis examines the use of volunteers in the New Zealand screen production industry. Volunteer labour is a common occurrence in the creative industries (Ashton, 2011; Blair et al., 2003; Gardner, 2010; Gibson, 2003; Gill & Pratt, 2008; Gollmitzer & Murray, 2008; Grugulis & Stoyanova, 2009; Hesmondhalgh & Baker, 2010a; McGregor & Gibson, 2009; Randle & Culkin, 2009; Rossiter, 2006). Reasons for this include the intrinsic rather than extrinsic motivation of the creative worker (Amabile, 1997; Csikszentmihalyi, 1996; Gibson, 2003), the not-for-profit status of smaller creative organisations – for example community radio stations, low/no budget independent film productions or little theatre groups (Gabriella, 2011; Gatfield, 2006; Kramer, 2002) – as well as the increasing use of interns across many employment sectors worldwide (Gardner, 2010; Perlin, 2011; Try & Rickett, 2009).

The legal status of the volunteer is often unclear, as are the obligations and motives of the organisations which they serve. The only New Zealand laws addressing volunteer labour are the Health and Safety in Employment Act (1992), a piece of legislation created to minimise accidents and harm in the workplace, and the Volunteers Employment Protection Act (1973), drafted for those volunteering in times of war or emergency, or service in the national interest. In the latter the term 'volunteer' (though not defined in the act) is used to mean a person who chooses to forfeit regular paid work for the good of the community or some public benefit, rather than people doing on-the-job training (Keeping it Legal, 2011). Similarly, government policy on volunteer workers frames voluntary work as 'community based' work for not-for-profit groups (Ministry of Social Development, 2002), acknowledging only those volunteers who, for example, offer their time to school and church groups, omitting to recognise

individuals gifting their time to commercial organisations in the hope they may gain further employment in their preferred vocation. Triumphant accounts of a ‘new creative class’ have portrayed the creative worker as freed up from traditional employment models, echoed in government policy in New Zealand and abroad (Conor, 2010; Hesmondhalgh & Baker, 2010a; McRobbie, 2002; Ross, 2006); policy which does not address industry-specific, formal worker rights (Hesmondhalgh, 2009). Similarly, academic research on cultural and creative economies has seldom been concerned with labour process, in particular the potentially exploitative aspects of the creative industries employment model, often depicting a project-based, hyper-networked entrepreneur; emancipated from the restraints of traditional employment structure (Flores & Gray, 2000; Florida, 2002; Jones, 1996; Reich, 2001).

The New Zealand screen production industry is a pertinent microcosm in which to investigate both the use of volunteers in the creative industries, and the broader interrelated issues surrounding its labour force. The first of these interrelated issues is the relatively recent proliferation of tertiary courses ‘training’ people to work in the creative industries, with varying levels of success (if success is measured in the number of students gainfully employed in the vocation relevant to their qualification). In the creative industries subsector of screen production, studies in New Zealand, the United Kingdom and United States have identified that employers value on-the-job training before tertiary education (Blair et al., 2003; de Bruin & Hanrahan, 2003; Hesmondhalgh & Baker, 2010a), with graduates considered to be unskilled. de Bruin and Hanrahan’s (2003) report on the screen production industry in the Auckland region identified, nearly a decade ago, a rapid increase in the number of tertiary courses related to the screen production industry, and recommended better links between industry and training providers as well as more on-the-job components being added to courses. An increase in training courses leads to an increase in graduates, and if those graduates are considered unskilled until trained on-the-job, many will work for free in the hope of gaining remuneration and more long-term employment (Blair et al., 2003; Hesmondhalgh & Baker, 2010a; Randle & Culkin, 2009).

The second labour force issue concerns the subsector-specific ways in which individuals gain work within the film industry, in that production companies are more often than not bereft of a Human Resources department, and an individual's social and networking skills are of as much importance as the ability to perform the specific labour task required. McRobbie's seminal 'Clubs to Companies' article (2002) contextualises Wittel's (2001) writing on 'network sociality' – where community increasingly gives way to looser social networks – in a creative industries context. McRobbie asserts that the United Kingdom creative industries workplace has experienced a decline in workplace democracy, replaced by social networks and an independent work model. International scholars examining the screen industry subsector describe the same phenomenon, where networking and social ties are necessary to gain continued contract employment (Baumann, 2002; Blair et al., 2001; Ebbers & Wijnberg, 2009). Locally, though there has been little published academic research into labour process in the screen production industry, Rowlands' (2009) unpublished thesis provides transcripts from interviews with screen production workers who highlight the importance of networking in gaining and maintaining project-based employment. de Bruin and Hanrahan's (2003) report also acknowledges the importance of networks in gaining and maintaining employment in the local industry; entitling a section of their findings 'Know Who – Social Capital'.

The final labour force issue is that, if workers do 'gain' they must 'maintain', that is, in a sector that is predominantly project based there are a multitude of issues surrounding job (in)security, organisational structure, career trajectory and employment status. Abroad, the demise of the studio system in the United States has also meant the demise of permanent facilities, with technical equipment now sourced from project to project - and the United States screen production labour force now operates similarly (Blair, 2001). New Zealand's industry has always been project based; an industry characterised by demand uncertainties and peaks and troughs (de Bruin & Hanrahan, 2003).

Chapter Two contextualises the use of volunteer labour in the New Zealand screen production industry, presenting literature ordered around six key themes. The first theme discusses the structure of the film industry in the United States, United Kingdom and New

Zealand, the second provides a history of New Zealand cinema, the third discusses creative industries policy, while the fourth looks at how individuals secure work in the film industry. The fifth theme discusses creative temperament, and the chapter concludes with a summary of the literature.

Chapter Three introduces the methods by which the research was conducted. Because the research focused on understanding human behaviour, specifically why people volunteer their labour, and the repercussions of doing so, a qualitative research methodology was chosen. Three screen production workers from Auckland, New Zealand engaged in semi-structured interviews, with questions organised thematically. The question themes sought reflections on starting out in the film industry, the significance of tertiary studies both to the interviewees and within the industry, voluntarism in the context of the industry as a whole, and the significance or otherwise of workers possessing a creative temperament. Data was analysed using grounded theory method.

Chapter Four presents, discusses, and analyses findings from the data collected, reflecting on the literature presented in Chapter Two. The chapter seeks primarily to ascertain whether those who volunteer their labour to the film industry are ultimately exploited, although it also questions the parity of the industry's employment model, the significance a creative temperament plays in negotiating fair employment terms, the role industry-specific tertiary study plays in being recruited to the industry and the lack of formal contracts for those who volunteer. The final chapter of this thesis concludes the body of work, identifying the limitations of the study, as well as providing suggestions for further research.

CHAPTER TWO

Literature Review

In order to contextualise the study of volunteer labour in the New Zealand film industry, this chapter provides an overview of current literature, which starts by explaining the structure of the British and American film production industries (section 2.1). Notwithstanding the cultural relevance of both to New Zealand film audiences, or the recent economic relevance of America's 'runaway' (off-shore) production presence in Aotearoa, this overview is relevant given that the United Kingdom and United States have produced the majority of Western academic literature focusing on the screen industry's labour force. Similarly, before addressing labour-specific aspects of the New Zealand film industry, a brief history of New Zealand cinema follows (section 2.2), so that the context of this research rests in an identifiable 'real world' framework. The third section of the chapter discusses the current focus of creative industries policy in New Zealand (section 2.3), before section 2.4 discusses the structure of the screen production workplace, examining how individuals successfully establish themselves in a highly competitive project-based work environment. Section 2.5 considers the role that possessing a creative temperament plays in negotiating fair employment conditions. A discussion of the role tertiary providers play in training prospective workers for the film industry follows (section 2.6), before the chapter concludes with a summary (section 2.7) of previous studies of creative labour and the New Zealand screen industry.

2.1 'From the Studio System to the projects': Film production models in the US, UK, and NZ

Film production in New Zealand, the United States, and the United Kingdom is characterised by short-term, project-based employment (Baumann, 2002; Blair, 2001; Blair et al., 2001; Christopherson, 2009; Defillippi & Arthur, 1998; Ebbers & Wijnberg, 2009; Jones, 1996; Randle & Culkin, 2009; Rowlands, 2009). But unlike in New Zealand, in the United States and United Kingdom this has not always been the case.

The most well-known of early film production models is the Hollywood studio system. Developed in the 1920s and operational until the early 1960s, Hollywood film production was controlled by eight major companies who employed actors and production crews as permanent workers to produce films on company owned filmmaking lots, rather than on a project by project basis (Florida, 2002). By the 1940s, however, the system was experiencing difficulties. Three main factors would eventually lead to its demise. The first factor was the Hollywood Anti-Trust Case of 1948, a United States Supreme Court case mounted against Paramount Pictures that effectively spelled the end of the eight-company oligopoly (Christopherson & Storper, 1989). Up until this case the major film studios owned the movie theatres where their films were shown, as well as having produced the film using staff under exclusive contract to them. This ended the system of vertical integration, ending a handful of companies' control of resources at all stages of the production and consumption process (Christopherson & Storper, 1989). The second factor concerned the high rate of personal income tax at the time, which saw many film workers establish their own production companies to avoid excessive tax payments (Rowlands, 2009). Lastly, by the 1950s, many Americans had welcomed the moving image into their living rooms, courtesy of the television. In United States film production today the same film studios still market, finance, and distribute films, though production is now independent and project-based (Lukinbeal, 2002).

Though the histories of the United States and United Kingdom film industries have differed considerably, in both countries large companies previously directly oversaw and coordinated the development, production, financing and distribution of films, effectively controlling film production until their demise (Blair, 2001). The United Kingdom has had a significant independent sector for a longer period of time than the United States, though major studios did once provide stable employment, either producing their own films or letting their studios to independent filmmakers (Street, 1997).

Where the United Kingdom experienced a change in labour and production patterns analogous to the breakdown of the Hollywood studio system was not in cinema, but the screen production subsector of television. Unlike the United States this did not involve the unfair

business practices of large private companies, rather the restructuring of British terrestrial broadcasters the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) and Independent Television (ITV). In the 1980s both ITV and the BBC, aware of the prospect of losing audience to new competitors such as home video, had already begun restructuring when, in 1990, the Conservative party initiated Broadcasting Act sped up the process considerably (Ursell, 2000). Thatcher's Government significantly reshaped the United Kingdom's broadcasting institutions; in the ten years from 1986 ITV dismissed 44% of their staff, the BBC 33% (Ursell, 2000), leading to a proliferation of screen production on a project-by-project basis, and by proxy a project-based workforce. This is of relevance both in the United Kingdom and beyond, as freelance workers in the film industry often work on both television and film projects ('screen production') in interchangeable work environments (Blair, 2001; Blair et al., 2003; Blair et al., 2001; Christopherson, 2009; Ebbers & Wijnberg, 2009; Rowlands, 2009), encountering within both subsectors labour and workplace themes explored throughout this study.

Owing to population size, and the relative 'youth' of the industry, New Zealand does not have a history of established production houses providing long-term permanent employment. Rather, New Zealand's film production industry has always operated under the model now observed in the United States and the United Kingdom. That is, film production work in New Zealand is project-based; "not an organisation, but an 'industry cluster' of small companies, temporary projects and interacting careers" (Inkson & Parker, 2005, p. 18). Akin to labour organisation around screen production abroad, the industry is decentralised, competitive, and network based.

2.2 'A brief un-illustrated history of New Zealand film': Cinema production in Aotearoa

The first films were shown in New Zealand at the end of the Nineteenth Century, though it was not until 1913 that New Zealand's first feature films appeared, *Loved by a Maori Chieftainess*, *Hinemoa* and *How Chief Te Ponga Won His Bride*. In total, 28 films were produced before 1941 when the National Film Unit (NFU) was established, government-funded and charged with producing content, specifically documentaries, on and about New Zealand.

Perhaps the unit's most significant contribution to the local filmic Zeitgeist was in technical training and the encouragement of experimentation. The unit significantly advanced technical aspects of New Zealand filmmaking (Churchman, 1997).

Established following the Depression of the 1930s, a period during which very little filmmaking occurred in New Zealand, the NFU was formed out of a need for wartime information and propaganda, as well as public service information films (Peters, 2011). It produced news reels entitled *Weekly Review* regularly until 1950 when the National Party was elected to govern; ceasing production based on *Weekly Review's* perceived political bias (Churchman, 1997). For the next twenty years a monthly programme emerged, *Pictorial Parade*, and several 10 to 40 minute shorts were also produced. In the period following the war many independent production houses were established; the most notable of these being Pacific Films. Although Pacific Films was a major independent film company at the time, the resources of the era restricted them to short films and commercial work (Churchman, 1997). In the period from 1940 to 1970 only three feature length films were produced in New Zealand (*Tracking shots. Close ups on NZ film history: Pacific Films*, n.d.).

What may be termed the 'mature' phase (or perhaps renaissance) of New Zealand filmmaking began in the 1970s, spearheaded by figures such as Roger Donaldson, Geoff Murphy and Bruno Lawrence – Baby Boomers as were others who would reshape popular culture worldwide throughout the 1960s and '70s (McDonald, 2011). The 1960s had seen the advent of television, and New Zealand images and sounds were now broadcast daily. Television also brought about more work and training opportunities for future film makers (Churchman, 1997) and a more steady stream of income for those in the industry. Notwithstanding Roger Donaldson's *Sleeping Dogs* (1977), the first New Zealand feature film to attract significant audiences locally as well as a United States theatrical release was Geoff Murphy's *Goodbye Pork Pie* (1981). *Pork Pie* is considered to represent the coming-of-age of New Zealand cinema; proving local film makers could produce distinctly 'New Zealand' content (Conrich & Murray, 2008). *Pork Pie* was the one of the first major projects for The New Zealand Film Commission, which formed in 1978 to assist with creating and promoting New Zealand cinema. In the 1990s,

films such as *Once Were Warriors* (1994) and *The Piano* (1993) saw distinctly New Zealand cinema gain greater international recognition (Horrocks, 2011).

The renaissance experienced in the 1970s brought with it initiatives to create a national infrastructure for film making. This began with a symposium entitled 'The Role of Film and Television in Establishing a Nation's Identity' presented at the Arts Conference of 1970, which recommended to the then Arts Council the establishment of a National screen organisation charged with administering finance for local film productions (McDonald, 2011). In the two-and-a-half years following, six feature films were released – including the aforementioned *Sleeping Dogs* (1977) – and the momentum created from these releases as well as the symposium led to the establishment of an Interim Film Commission in 1977 (McDonald, 2011). Formally established in 1978, the New Zealand Film Commission has maintained a significant role in encouraging and funding the New Zealand film production industry since, though there has been continuing critical dialogue regarding the tensions created between the Commission's dual mandates to grow a commercially viable industry as well as nurture a distinctly 'local' means of creative expression (Blomkamp, 2010; King, 2010; Waller, 1996).

The 1980s saw a marked increase in film production: in 1984, 13 films were produced compared to 19 in the period from 1978 to 1983 (Babington, 2011), mainly due to a tax shelter the government had inadvertently created. 'Special partnerships' allowed tax to be claimed by those who invested in film projects, with profits made on the deal rather than remuneration being dependent on the film's success (Churchman, 1997). Initially this system was utilised by the Film Commission as a way to stimulate private-sector investment, though by the mid-1980s this 'cinematic boom' was out of the Film Commission's control (Babington, 2011). Within the industry there were concerns the flood of offshore productions might harm local industry infrastructure (mainly by raising local technician wages to levels above local capacity), as well as fears the 'New Zealand-ness' characteristic of earlier films might be lost – not to mention the increasing interest the Inland Revenue was showing in the overseas partnership schemes (Babington, 2011). In late 1982 the National Government abolished the tax shelters, though projects already approved could, if finished by late September 1984, be completed under the

old system – creating yet another production rush although the scheme had already been put to an end (Babington, 2011).

There was a film-making recession following the end of the tax breaks, and by 1988 three of the most prolific film makers of the early 1980s (Roger Donaldson, Geoff Murphy and Vincent Ward) had left New Zealand permanently (Churchman, 1997). However, Finance Minister Roger Douglas' 1985 Budget included \$3.4 million for the New Zealand Film Commission to invest in production at a time where private financing was collapsing, and by the 1990s the industry had stabilised (Stark, 2011a). Successful films such as *Came a Hot Friday* (1985), *The Quiet Earth* (1985), *Ngati* (1987), and *Footrot Flats: The Dog's Tail Tale* (1986) ensured that by the end of the 1980s New Zealand had a diverse feature film industry, reflective of a pedigree of generations of earlier local filmmakers (Horrocks, 2011).

The New Zealand film industry in the 1980s had begun to explore a diversity of cultural perspectives, which by the 1990s were gaining in strength and in depth, particularly in the case of Maori and women film makers (Hardy, 2011). Gaylene Preston's *Ruby and Rata* (1990), *Bread and Roses* (1993), and *War Stories Our Mothers Never Told Us* (1995) featured female-driven storylines, as did Jane Campion's *An Angel at My Table* (1990) and *The Piano* (1993). Niki Caro produced her first feature, *Memory and Desire* in 1998. 1994 saw the release of *Once Were Warriors*, a Maori film fundamentally different to that of its predecessors (Hardy, 2011). With a screenplay based on Alan Duff's novel of the same name, the Lee Tamahori directed film starring Temuera Morrison dealt with a detribalised urban Maori underclass, and it enjoyed critical and audience acclaim. International viewers were fascinated to see New Zealand presented in a troubled urban context, where typically it had been presented to them as a clean rural landscape. Local audiences debated the extent to which *Once Were Warriors* was a true reflection of modern Maori society and domestic violence (Hardy, 2011).

The 1990s also saw greater reflection on the concept of 'New Zealand cinema', expressed in books, journals, magazines, university courses, and the documentary *Cinema of Unease* (1995). Similar considerations arose in relation to tensions between culture and commerce where New Zealand screen production was concerned. In light of increased political pressure on film

production to become more commercially viable, questions were raised as to whether the film industry's prime objective (and by proxy New Zealand Film Commission funding) ought to be contributing to New Zealand's cultural life or creating a viable financial enterprise (Hardy, 2011), a debate that continues today (Blomkamp, 2010; Jackson & Court, 2010; King, 2010; Skilling, 2005). The mid-1990s saw a boost in the production sector due to television projects in the *Hercules* series being filmed in New Zealand (Hardy, 2011).

A history of the New Zealand film industry must emphasise the significance of Peter Jackson. One of the least proclaimed releases of the late 1980s perhaps had the greatest long-term significance; Jackson's first full-length theatrical release, the splatter film *Bad Taste* (1988) (Stark, 2011a). Jackson's early films were unconventional, and he followed *Bad Taste* with the puppet-starring *Meet the Feebles* (1989). During filming Jackson ran out of money, and the film had to be finished by a loyal, yet unpaid crew (Inkson & Parker, 2005). Another splatter movie followed, *Braindead* (1992), before *Heavenly Creatures* (1994), a recreation of a famous local murder case, gained Jackson his first mainstream critical acclaim (Inkson & Parker, 2005). Jackson's next film, *The Frighteners* (1996) was his only critical failure (Inkson & Parker, 2005), though arguably he had something far greater on his mind by then. In August 1998 the official announcement came that United States company New Line Cinema was to make three films based around JRR Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings* books; and that Peter Jackson was to direct (Lealand, 2011).

Produced with an estimated \$320 million budget, and released in 2001, 2002 and 2003, the three films had a major impact on the New Zealand screen production industry over the five years from 1998 to 2003 (Lealand, 2011). The effect of this trilogy on the local industry, economy and collective consciousness should not be underestimated; the scale of these productions was significantly larger than anything seen before in New Zealand. Thousands of jobs were created. Experienced international professionals worked alongside locals, with massive pedagogical implications for the local industry (Inkson & Parker, 2005). Tourism to New Zealand increased off the back of the trilogy, as 'Middle Earth' ran location tours (Inkson &

Parker, 2005). Jackson's Wellington-based Weta Workshop quickly became a centre for global film making and he rose to the ranks of Hollywood's most powerful figures (Lealand, 2011).

Peter Jackson's success has directly affected the New Zealand film industry – including the cultivation of New Zealand as an investment hub for global film production, the development of a New Zealand-based production infrastructure to service international film making requirements, and greater job creation and work stability in the industry than prior. Put simply, the trilogy created a film infrastructure that simply did not exist here before (Lealand, 2011). Jackson purchased the Wellington-based, state-owned National Film Unit in 1999, turning it into world-class post-production facilities Park Road Post. These facilities were employed for making the later stages of *The Lord of the Rings* trilogy, *King Kong* (2005), *District 9* (2009), and the majority of the visual effects for *Avatar* (2009). Weta Workshop - specialising in computer simulations, modelling and set design – has also played a central role in Jackson's productions (Lealand, 2011).

Following the turn of the new Millennium, and in tandem with New Zealand's involvement in blockbuster productions such as *The Lord of the Rings* trilogy and *The Chronicles of Narnia: The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* (2005), Stark (2011b) describes the following distinct strands within New Zealand's feature film production in the period to 2010. The production of films with moderate budgets dependent on Film Commission funding continued, joined by greater activity at the top and bottom of the budget range. Digital technology saw an increase in low-budget feature film making, such as the series of 'Aro Valley films' produced in Wellington, while this new technology as well as the possibility of NZ On Air funding saw documentary production flourish (Gascoigne, 2009; Stark, 2011b).

The Fifth Labour Government, as part of its Arts Recovery Package, introduced Film Fund 1 in 2000. Instigated to enable experienced film makers to make bigger stories with bigger budgets, the fund consisted of \$22 million to produce films that would be competitive in the marketplace as well as valuable additions to New Zealand's cultural heritage (Gascoigne, 2009). The Film Fund scheme had been expected to repatriate some of the big names in New Zealand cinema back from overseas (Stark, 2011b), however *Whale Rider* (2003) directed by Niki Caro

was the most successful of earlier Film Fund projects (Stark, 2011b). More recent Film Fund supported productions have included *The World's Fastest Indian* (2005), *River Queen* (2005), and the less commercially successful films *Perfect Creature* (2005) and *The Ferryman* (2007). By 2009 the Fund was exhausted, and announced that no new proposals were to be considered (Stark, 2011b).

Feature films made post-2000 have been diverse in their choice of technology, the size of their budgets, and the choice of their subjects (Stark, 2011b). The most successful film of the period, culturally and economically, was Taika Cohen's *Boy* (2010), which sold the second highest amount of box-office tickets ever in New Zealand after Lee Tamahori's *Once Were Warriors* (1993) (Stark, 2011b). *Boy* achieved that level of success in a local film-making climate very different from previous decades. The first decade of the second century of New Zealand cinema has seen a growth in short film production, music video production, and feature length film production (Stark, 2011b). In the latter, this has been brought about by increased public financing, better liaison with international markets, improved local infrastructure, rapid technological advancement, and the greater recognition of New Zealand as a location for runaway (off-shore) productions. In the period from 2000 to 2010, New Zealand averaged twelve local feature length productions a year – which by per capita equivalent would equal 60 Australian or 180 British films (Stark, 2011b).

2.3 'The ideal workplace?': Creative Industries policy and the creative worker

Originating in Australia in the early 1990s (Hartley, 2005; Ross, 2006), the concept of creative industries gained wider exposure as a policy discourse embraced by Britain's Labour government in the latter part of the 20th Century (Ross, 2006). Signalling a shift in political emphasis from traditional economic sectors, such as manufacturing, to realising the potential of the knowledge economy, the concept of creative industries has since been developed by governments across the globe (Banks & O'Connor, 2009; Cunningham, 2009; Ross, 2006).

The emergence late last century of the creative industries concept in New Zealand forms part of a shift in government economic policy that began in 1984. From 1984 New Zealand's economy was radically reformed, with successive Labour and National-led governments introducing and promoting neoliberal economic policies, including those of economic rationalism - a market-led restructuring of the economy designed to reduce the role of the state in economic affairs (Wilkes, 1991). In line with similar policy direction at the time under Margaret Thatcher in Britain, and Ronald Reagan in the United States, economic rationalist policy favoured privatization, deregulation, a free market economy, and a reduction in the size of the welfare state (Volkerling, 2010). Subsidies for many industries were removed or significantly reduced, most notably in the farming sector (Wilkes, 1991). State-owned enterprises were sold, including the government owned airline, as well as the post office-owned bank and the state's telecommunication network (Goldfinch, 1998). Control over the economy was minimised; foreign exchange control was removed, personal tax rates lowered, and the banking system freed up from state control (Wilkes, 1991). In line with this trend in policy change, the involvement of the state in the arts began to shift from the traditionally held role of arts patron to advocate of creative output as a viable and thriving contributor to the economy. Most notably this occurred with the election of the Helen Clark-led Fifth Labour Government and its introduction of creative industries policy to New Zealand (Volkerling, 2010).

Questions of circular cause and consequence are apparent when considering the New Zealand film industry as it relates to government policy. Helen Clark's Fifth Labour Government was quick to embrace the New Zealand film industry as a 'poster boy' for the creative industries concept (Clark, 2000; Volkerling, 2010). However, it could be argued that the relatively recent success of the industry is due to the hard work and determination of a handful of visionaries within the industry. There are the pioneers, and those involved in the renaissance period of the mid-1970s (the movies of Geoff Murphy and Bruno Lawrence in particular), as well as the second renaissance of the early 1990s (the films of Peter Jackson, Lee Tamahori, and Jane Campion), and more recent work by Chris Graham, Taika Waititi, Robert Sarkies et al (Conrich & Murray, 2008). Whatever the case, New Zealand creative industries policy, in line with similar

policy embraced worldwide, expounds the virtue of the knowledge economy and a modern workplace, though omits to address in policy a minimum set of conditions for those working in creative industry subsectors.

Government rhetoric regarding the creative industries (both in New Zealand and worldwide) has tended to focus on promoting its labour model as emancipating workers, promoting it as a desirable shift from more traditional workplace arrangements, offering personal fulfilment and self-actualisation (Banks & O'Connor, 2009) as well as the flexibility and freedom as expounded by Florida (2002). Ross (2006) suggests otherwise, declaring the 'feel good' and 'free' aspects of government rhetoric omit the cost of longer hours, prestige earned in place of financial remuneration, and supposed mobility in fact being disposability. Statistics concerning the growth and productivity of the creative sector have taken precedence over any investigation of the quality of work life individuals experience employed in the various subsectors (Ross, 2006).

In his global study of creative labour and new institutions, Rossiter (2006) suggests international discussions about the creative industries have consisted of the following components. Firstly, policies which favour industry placement and affiliation over the core values traditionally taught within arts and humanities; secondly Third Way ideology, a centrist political position combining right-wing economic policy with left-wing social policy that celebrates culture, but only if it can translate to financial remuneration. Thirdly, a populist strand in media and cultural studies that places the consumer ahead of the producer, ultimately downplaying investigation into aspects of the production process and omitting any examination of the labour force.

Where governmental press releases have tended to provide statistics that emphasise the growth and economic success of the creative industries (Ross, 2006), New Zealand government policy to promote work-life balance has not extended to these industries, particularly problematic in the case of film production, where long hours on-the-job are normalised and anxiety between contracts is typical (Rowlands, 2009). The strenuous nature of work in the film industry and the stress of finding further work in downtime is the norm in the United States, Australia, and New Zealand – though workers in Australia and the United States receive fringe

benefits such as holiday, super, sometimes even sick leave. New Zealand film contractors receive no such fringe benefits, also having to operate as sole traders, which is a comparatively less straightforward employment arrangement than any arrangement that those deployed in the industry overseas face (Rowlands, 2009).

2.4 'Getting in, getting on, and staying on': Working in the screen production industry

In the film industry, most of the voluntary work undertaken is done so by 'new entrants'; individuals aspiring to gain more meaningful long-term employment in the sector (Ashton, 2011; Blair et al., 2003; Defillippi & Arthur, 1998; Grugulis & Stoyanova, 2009; Randle & Culkin, 2009). New workers engage with an industry that consists of project-based enterprises offering project-based employment (Defillippi & Arthur, 1998). Flexibility and 'network sociality' are thus crucial, the latter significant as regards establishing and maintaining employment from project to project. Defillippi & Arthur (1998) assert that in this regard, human and social capital are interdependent. That is, regardless of how skilled you are at your particular industry specialisation, maintaining employment is difficult if you are not a skilled networker. Those whose labour and social skills are suited to the industry often form part of a 'latent organisation' (Ebberts & Wijnberg, 2009) entering into relational contracts; often working as individual contractors with the same crew across a number of projects (Blair et al., 2001). Though transactional 'pen on paper' contracts are explicit and relational contracts implicit, relational contracts in the film industry more often than not carry more weight (Ebberts & Wijnberg, 2009). When engaged in a project the hours worked are typically long, often in excess of transactional agreements (Gill & Pratt, 2008). When projects will end (or indeed when another project will start if out of work) is often unclear, making financial and other lifestyle planning difficult. New Zealand film crew often go on the 'dole' (unemployment benefit) between projects (Rowlands, 2009).

The project-based employment structure in the film industry is often referred to in creative industries literature as 'the boundaryless career' (Arthur & Rousseau, 1996), where 'knowing how, knowing why, and knowing whom' is all that is required to escape traditional employment

structure, 'free from the grind of nine to five'; the very same rhetoric employed by successive governments worldwide that have taken up creative industries policy. McRobbie (2002) questions the idealism of this description of the creative industries labour model, raising questions as to whether the creative industries worker self-actualises or in fact self-exploits. Antcliff, Saundry, & Stuart's examination of the United Kingdom television industry (2007) describes an environment where work is becoming increasingly individualised and insecure, and where competition for employment is increasingly aggressive. Job (in)security aside, self-exploitation also takes the form of long hours for often low (or no) payment. Here the motivations and temperament particular to the creative industries worker are salient. *Self*-actualisation or *self*-exploitation is decided by the individual. The observer, academic or otherwise, may provide arguments either way, though it is ultimately the individual workers engaged in the industry who decide for themselves whether they are exploited or not. Film workers interviewed for a New Zealand study focusing on labour issues described a love/hate relationship that is incredibly rewarding, yet stressful and exhausting, where long hours for little or no reward were compensated for with excitement and a perception of glamour (Rowlands, 2009).

In an industry where relational contracts take precedence over transactional ones, socialisation is as important as learning actual job skills. Organisational structure and operation are learned hands-on, with no support from a human resources department or similar formal arrangement. Freelancers are thus socialised into an environment where inconsistent pay, long hours, and comparatively poor working conditions are factors of employment they must accept, even embrace (Rowlands, 2009). Those that do are not deceived by management, but freely and eagerly engage with the production process, intensely bonded to the integrity of the production (McRobbie, 2002; Ursell, 2000). There is a commitment to, and pleasure derived from, working extremely long working days coupled with little or no pay and uncertain career prospects.

Those who attempt to engage in the film making labour model but do not ultimately benefit from it are easily replaced, as the film industry labour force is 'triangular' (Christopherson,

2009; de Bruin & Hanrahan, 2003; Smith & McKinlay, 2009). To explain the triangular shaped film industry labour model, a recall of high school mathematics is necessary in combination with an understanding of the three categories of labour in the industry. In the first, the triangle is equilateral. In the second, at the apex of the film industry triangle are the Principals, who are the initial strategists responsible for realising each film making project. In the middle of the triangle are the Professionals, who apply particular artistic and commercial competence and are generally long-standing in the industry. At the bottom, or perhaps more hopefully titled 'base', are the Apprentices: interns, runners and the like. Below the base of the triangle are those seeking to gain entry, the Aspirant Workers.

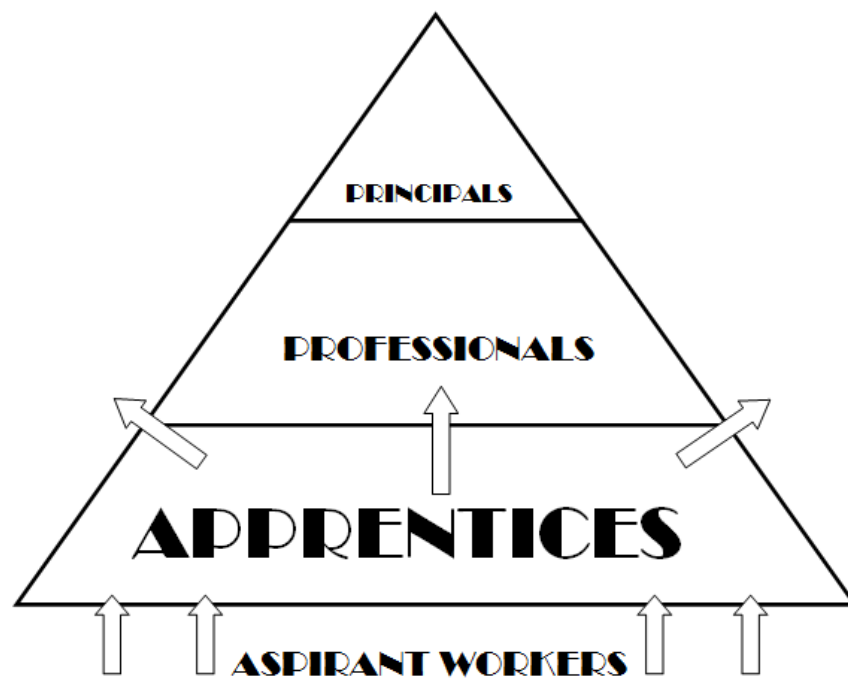


Figure 1. Tennant, L. (c. 2012). *Author's representation of trianqular labour model.*

Indebted to an amalgamation of governmental creative industries rhetoric, the rise in prominence of the New Zealand film industry in recent years, the perceived glamour associated with the industry, as well as a proliferation of industry-specific tertiary training courses, there are quite simply more individuals either waiting to get into - or engaged at the entry point to the industry than there are established workers. In particular, the proliferation of tertiary film courses in an industry that favours on-the-job training has created a situation where labour reserves vastly exceed industry needs, both in New Zealand and abroad (de Bruin & Hanrahan,

2003; Rossiter, 2006). In a project-based industry where freelance contractors already contend for work (Christopherson, 2009), competition from graduates exerts further pressure on both those seeking to gain entry to, and those already engaged in the industry.

This model has serious implications not only for those surrounding the entry point to the industry, inside or out, but longer term, more established workers as well. The proliferation of aspirant film workers has created a labour market where pressure created by those wishing to enter the industry directly affects those, professional or otherwise, already in it. Excessive labour supply and a project-based 'loose' organisational structure put bargaining power in the hands of employers, meaning they can extend hours or intensify work very easily (McKinlay & Smith, 2009), not to mention negotiate pay rates reflective of competition created by the significant numbers seeking entry to the industry. So many workers means future projects are seldom 'pencilled in' anymore, and workers feel in constant competition with colleagues as well as those seeking initial employment (Rowlands, 2009). Smith & McKinlay (2009) describe the indeterminacy of labour, whereby a business, whatever sector of the economy it is engaged in, can gauge the performance of all purchases ('plant', machinery) in advance, though labour is distinct in that its future performance cannot be measured before acquisition. In the film industry the labour purchase risk is lessened, as pressure from those wanting to enter the industry leads to a strong (survivalist) work ethic by those already engaged in it. The temperament of the creative worker also lessens the speculative aspects of purchasing labour, due to the intrinsic motivation of those performing in the industry tending to result in a fervent work ethic (Smith & McKinlay, 2009).

2.5 'Raising chickens': The creative temperament

Perhaps the most succinct debunking of the notion of a 'creative temperament' is a quotation from American folk artist Anna Mary 'Grandma' Moses. Reflecting on her success as an artist, she suggested 'if I hadn't of [sic] started painting I would have raised chickens' (*"Grandma Moses" Anna Mary Robertson Moses 1860 - 1961 (101 Years)*, n.d.). An examination of what motivates creative individuals is necessary before placing them in the context of the

workplace, as a volunteer or otherwise. Studies of the creative mindset have concluded that intrinsic rather than extrinsic motivation often features first in decisions to work (Amabile, 1983). That is, there is evidence that creative people will be most motivated when producing ‘for the love of it’ rather than “extrinsically motivated by expected evaluation, surveillance, competition with peers, dictates from superiors, or the promise of rewards” (Gardner, 2010, p. 39). Being defined as creative, by one self or otherwise, can thus be a disadvantageous proposition in the marketplace. When one deems oneself an artist or creative, “exploitative tendencies are masked by a ‘charismatic ideology’” (Gibson, 2003, p. 207).

This can be a counter-productive mindset for the creative individual negotiating employment terms and conditions. Though passion, drive and determination make for an excellent work ethic, Ashton (2011) believes the challenge for creative workers is to seek work that suitably fulfils their creative desires, but also to situate and negotiate themselves into a position that closes the possibility of self-exploitation. In the case of entering the film industry, which will be explored in the following section of this chapter, if an individual is paid a bare minimum or volunteers his or her time, that individual needs to be both self-reflexive enough, as well as resolute enough with his or her superiors, to negotiate increasingly fairer conditions for himself or herself. In his study of organised networks and creative labour, Rossiter highlights the fact that the opposite is often true of creative workers. People are often prepared to do a lot of work for little or no payment, “as economic advantage is individualistically refracted and even assigned an opposite value” (2006, p. 128). There is a fear of being seen to value the dollar before the creative endeavour, effectively ‘selling out’. The creative attitude has more value in terms of self-fulfilment and reflexivity, and this makes up for low (or no) income. It must also be noted that the creative industries are unique in that, unlike most other industries, this sector often ‘recruits’ from a pool of already practicing enthusiastic amateurs. That is, there is creative industries labour, but there is also creativity for the sake of it, whereby many people spend years honing their craft before entering the industry, many quite happy never to pursue their creative output professionally at all. For those that do they develop their repertoire and skills, initially at least, for the love of it (Hesmondhalgh & Baker, 2010a).

It is evident that this temperament, coupled with a prevailing attitude passed on from creative industry 'generation to generation', breeds an *expectation* of less than ideal conditions. Ashton's field study of third year students at Artsworks Media in the United Kingdom found an expectation of minimum wage upon graduation; a 'sustainable living' income, with most not expecting to make any 'real' money (2011). This early-adopted acceptance of employment conditions as less than ideal, coupled with McRobbie's argument that questioning such conditions is seen as 'uncool' and 'old economy' (2002), puts new entrants into the industry in a self-perpetuating vulnerable position. In regard to finishing training then working for free in their vocational industry, Ashton argues that students should challenge these perceived norms en masse and seek appropriate payment; the constant supply of free labour being the reason paid jobs remain in shortage (2011).

Rowland's (2009) investigation of freelance film production workers in New Zealand found a workforce that found its work challenging, interesting and involving, compensating for low pay and job insecurity. Having said that, money was an emotionally charged topic for many workers interviewed, workers citing constant struggles with production companies to negotiate fair rates as well as issues with depression and low self-esteem during periods not commissioned to a production. Respondents also noted the perception of themselves by their non-industry peers as a motivating factor in downplaying the negative aspects of their workplace – their work being perceived as 'cool' or 'glamorous'. Perhaps most telling was many respondents analogising their involvement in the industry with drug addiction (Rowlands, 2009; Rowlands & Handy, 2012), surely a perception of vocational self that is ripe for exploitation.

Not wanting to appear 'uncool' or 'old economy' in an industry workers perceive as 'cool' and 'glamorous' is perhaps symptomatic of how capitalism has reinvented itself. At a time where the power of capitalism globally has never been so great, its hegemony is little challenged. Where many are now sceptical of mass consumerism and mass conformity, corporate capitalism has rebranded itself to harness this scepticism, and appeal to 'rebellious individuals' (Frank, 1998). Radicalism has market share in the form of 'cool', something also

promised by the proponents of creative industries rhetoric. The majority of today's aspirant film workers have grown up in a world where internships are not only seen as a means of potential career progression, they possess social cache as well, the 'cooler' the work or organisation is perceived to be, the more appeal it has to the worker (Perlin, 2011).

There are many different vocations in the screen production industries. The simplest demarcation of roles in the industry is between 'above the line' roles - actors, directors, writers, musicians and so on - and below the line positions such as craft and technical workers, including camera operators, film editors, and sound engineers. This imaginary line separates those responsible for the creative direction of the film from those responsible for the film's actual physical production (Hesmondhalgh & Baker, 2010a). In order to ascertain the degree to which workers in different roles in the film production industry identify as having a creative temperament, the interviews conducted for the latter part of this thesis ask participants to reflect on workers engaged in both above and below the line roles. There is significance in ascertaining whether the film worker who identifies with a creative temperament is more or less prone to feeling exploited - and indeed whether being 'above or below the line' affects an individual's ideological outlook toward their role. There are wider issues to explore with regard to whether intrinsically motivated creative industries workers negotiate fair terms and conditions for themselves with their employers.

2.6 'On the job or in the classroom?': Entering the film industry

The film industry has an excess of new-entrant apprentice workers, with an even larger pool of aspiring workers below them (McKinlay & Smith, 2009; Randle & Culkin, 2009; Rowlands, 2009). The industry operates on a project-by-project basis, and though the same or similar workers may work together on a series of individual projects – members of a latent organisation – these organisations form on the job. That is, the film industry doesn't use standard human resources methods, and résumés are rarely used (Rowlands, 2009). Social capital is advantageous, with personal contacts and networking the prevailing methods with which to secure ongoing work (Blair, 2001). There has been a proliferation of tertiary courses

teaching screen production in recent years, both internationally (Blair et al., 2003; Hesmondhalgh & Baker, 2010a; Randle & Culkin, 2009), and in New Zealand (de Bruin & Hanrahan, 2003) leading to (still) greater numbers seeking entry to the industry. Locally, media and governmental hype surrounding New Zealand's recent successes in cinema, namely Peter Jackson, 'Wellywood', and Weta Productions, has also increased local interest in film production. In this environment competition for work is fierce, and labour is often offered for free (Blair et al., 2003; Hesmondhalgh & Baker, 2010a) with the hope of securing long-term engagement with the industry.

Where tertiary courses teach 'human capital', or the skills required to perform set labour tasks on a film set, 'social capital' is not taught, yet is crucial to maintaining work and ultimately succeeding in the film industry – academic accounts suggesting this is not uncommon across the creative industries sector (Gibson, 2003; Gill & Pratt, 2008; Jones, 1996; McRobbie, 2002). de Bruin & Hanrahan's (2003) report on the Auckland screen industry, prepared for the Auckland Regional Economic Development Strategy, interviewed industry stakeholders and found individuals who are tertiary trained in film production are viewed by those in the industry as 'unskilled', and that it is an industry where on-the-job training is favoured. Respondents observed that no training course could 'teach' possessing the right kind of personality traits needed to succeed in the industry, notably creativity, flair, initiative, openness, the ability to communicate well, drive, ambition, self-management, flexibility, and the ability to think laterally. It was also noted that aspirant junior workers should be prepared to 'start at the bottom', and perform menial tasks before progressing up the labour chain; something respondents felt many tertiary graduates were uncomfortable with, having unreal expectations of what their first jobs should entail (de Bruin & Hanrahan, 2003). Rossiter's (2006) United States-based study asserts that many university communications and media studies departments make steadfast assertions on market demand based on very little research into the labour demands of the industries they train for. A suggestion is made that more resources need to be allocated towards analysing the market based on the needs of students and the economy of markets. Success in gaining and maintaining employment in the screen production industry is thus not about possessing a tertiary qualification as much as learning on the job,

being prepared to perform above and beyond what is required, taking initiative, staying late, and asking a lot of questions— as well as being prepared to start at the bottom and work your way up (Grugulis & Stoyanova, 2009).

Though in any industry formal training is no guarantee of work, the likelihood of one successfully gaining entry to and maintaining ongoing work in the film industry following tertiary training is particularly uncertain. In an industry bereft of traditional recruitment processes, where the tertiary trained are still viewed as ‘unskilled’, there are common entry methods identified by different studies into the industry. ‘Know who’ is often as, if not more important than ‘know how’, with either social or family contacts often identified as a means of commencing film work (Blair, 2001; Blair et al., 2003; de Bruin & Hanrahan, 2003; Grugulis & Stoyanova, 2009). Tellingly, often no amount of skill or training guarantees a placement, though ‘luck’ is often how workers move forward in the industry (Grugulis & Stoyanova, 2009; Randle & Culkin, 2009). In having said that, none of the respondents interviewed in regard to freelance careers in Hollywood (Randle & Culkin, 2009) had simply fallen into the business; luck when referring to entering or progressing in the screen production industry refers to ‘being in the right place at the right time’ as an already keen committed and aspirant worker, rather than randomly gaining employment in the industry with otherwise little or no passion for film making. Rather than tertiary training, do-it-yourself apprenticeships often establish an individual’s presence in the industry (Grugulis & Stoyanova, 2009); the most famous New Zealand example being the career trajectory of Peter Jackson, from keen amateur film maker to industry leader. Finally, in combination with either or all of the above factors, a willingness to work for very little or no payment may provide an opportunity to establish oneself in the industry (Blair et al., 2003; Hesmondhalgh & Baker, 2010a).

Thus in the film industry, though competition to gain entry is fierce, there are multiple entry points by which to gain entry; and formal training is often not necessary in order to practise. In the case of a screen actor, most will have some ‘drama school’ background, though it is not essential as, for example, aviation school training to be a pilot (Rossiter, 2006). If you do not have the ‘know whom’ in order to enter the industry and gain the skills to ‘know how’, you

must take the film school route. A route which, although now trained in the 'know how', still does not guarantee access to the contacts required to enter the industry, nor the temperament required to get on in it (Blair et al., 2003). Consequently there are now large numbers of graduates wishing to enter the industry in possession of a certificate saying they can perform the task at hand and, desperate for a break, often willing to work for free or 'copy and credit' (Blair et al., 2003; Randle & Culkin, 2009).

de Bruin & Hanrahan's (2003) report on the screen production industry in Auckland saw industry respondents list creativity, flair, initiative, an open personality, the ability to communicate well, drive, ambition, self-management, flexibility, and the ability to think laterally as the most desirable traits for film industry workers to possess. Research internationally (Christopherson, 2009; Smith & McKinlay, 2009) as well as in New Zealand (de Bruin & Hanrahan, 2003; Rowlands, 2009) highlights the abundance of aspirant workers wishing to gain entry to the industry, as well as competition between those already engaged for project-based roles. Considering the above, it could be argued that it is simply common sense on behalf of film producers or those hiring for projects to employ volunteer labour; a 'try before you buy' approach to ensure only the most suited for the job receive further (paid) work. However the findings of studies into labour in the industry suggest a more exploitative model, with those in control using aspirant industry juniors as an abundant and easily dispensable labour force. Industry contributors to Bruin & Hanrahan's (2003) evaluation of the Auckland film industry describe a situation where interns from tertiary institutions are 'a good source of low-skilled cheap labour'. Tellingly, one respondent noted that new entrants do upskill while on a project, though more often than not rather than being rehired in a more formal (paid) position on a future project, they are simply replaced by the next group of low or no cost aspirant workers. Interviewees in Randle & Culkin's (2009) study of freelance careers in Hollywood conceded that the large numbers of graduates coming through formal training will work for free in the hope of more permanent placement, but unscrupulous producers take advantage of this situation, more interested again in a source of free dispensable labour rather than aiding career and skill advancement. Whether this system does or does not ultimately benefit entry-level workers in the film industry seems entirely dependent upon the integrity of

the organisations hiring for projects. Industry contributors to Blair et al's (2003) investigation of film markets in the United States and United Kingdom noted the importance of unofficial systems being in place such that new workers, volunteer or otherwise, are mentored by more senior crew members. Defillippi & Arthur (1998) observed a similar arrangement in film projects where interns begin effectively as 'gofers', but senior crew explicitly provide opportunities for juniors to closely observe their craft.

An industry where large numbers of people are willing to work for free has implications for those already established in the industry. As more and more people are willing to work for longer hours and less pay, more senior crew often feel they have less job security and bargaining power (Hesmondhalgh & Baker, 2010a). Older respondents interviewed during the course of Grugulis & Stoyanova's (2009) research into the United Kingdom's screen production industry described a very different method of gaining entry to the industry than younger interviewees. Where the older respondents described starting off as a paid runner or similar, then moving up the ladder of a permanent organisation, the younger ones spoke of gifting labour to short-term projects, uncertain of if the outcome would be advantageous or not. Production company representatives interviewed said they would only ever use people as volunteers that they may be interested in hiring, describing the placement as an extended job interview and opportunity to gain experience. Less philanthropic accounts of internships cited young workers employed for six months without pay, often followed by moving on to a new producer and crew and the next unpaid project (Grugulis & Stoyanova, 2009).

Irrespective of assessing the success or otherwise of gifting free labour to the film industry, not all those who desire to enter the sector can afford to position themselves in such a situation. As McRobbie (2002) observed in a wider creative industries context, the film industry often discriminates against those who are older, attached, or have major life commitments other than work. The ability to work for long periods of time in unpaid placements, or the privilege of having had access to the resources necessary to undertake amateur film making prior to seeking professional work, or even having the family connections required to commence an engagement with the industry, mean that establishing oneself in the industry is

often a preserve of the middle class (Grugulis & Stoyanova, 2009; Hesmondhalgh & Baker, 2010a). Those with families that can afford support them have an unfair advantage (McRobbie, 2002), again more often than not those from more privileged backgrounds. Gill and Pratt's (2008) study of creative industries labour declared that long hours, often to the detriment of relationships outside of work with family and friends, exert heavy costs on (or prohibit) relationships out of work with family and friends – a phenomenon which potentially discriminates against those with other major life commitments.

2.7 'Ignorance is not bliss': What is missing from previous studies on creative labour

There has been a tendency in creative industries research to celebrate a 'new creative class' (Florida, 2002; Leadbeater & Oakley, 1999). These accounts have argued that workers in the creative industries are afforded a freedom unknown in more traditional workplace structures; a workforce in a post-industrial society who are networked, flexible and free (Conor, 2010). Ross (2006) observes that though work has apparently become more free and enjoyable, the reality for many creative workers is long hours, low wages, and the threat of disposability rather than mobility - and there is no mention of these downsides in the reports of creative industries policy makers. Smith & McKinlay (2009) suggest more labour process approaches to creative industries study are necessary, in order to balance out the celebratory accounts of working in the sector.

Reimer's (2008) research into the fashion industry notes the extent and nature of the 'creative class' have been heavily debated, although there has been relatively little investigation into the experiences and conditions faced by creative industries workers. That is, subsequent academic understandings of cultural and creative economies are less concerned with labour process than they are with the presence or otherwise of a creative class. There is little research into the production side of the creative industries, and taking a labour process approach allows insight into the resistance and consent elements in the workplace (Smith & McKinlay, 2009), pertinent to an investigation of the use of volunteers in any creative subsector.

Traditionally within cultural studies research there has tended to be a bias toward the consumption rather than the production of cultural good and services, neglecting insight into cultural work and the cultural worker's experiences (Hesmondhalgh & Baker, 2010a; McKinlay & Smith, 2009). Until recently there has been very little study of cultural production focused on labour. From a Marxist perspective, this could be attributed to his assertion that society is concerned primarily with the exchange of money for goods and services, hiding the human emotions that lie behind the production of commodities (Hesmondhalgh & Baker, 2010a). For cultural materialists this would be explained as owing to the consumer obsession with the point of exchange, though Hesmondhalgh & Baker (2010a) suggest a 'glamorous enchantment' with cultural products encourages us not to consider the workplace in which it was produced. In communication and cultural research there has been a lack of attention to production, labour, subjectivity and experience – though recently these issues have been taken up by creative industries researchers (Hesmondhalgh & Baker, 2010a). Ursell's (2000) research on television production in the United Kingdom is one such early study that paid specific attention to the intrinsic motivation and high workload of creative workers, while McRobbie's (2002) account of creative industries networks pointed out the problematic aspects of celebratory accounts of work in this sector.

In New Zealand there has been little published academic research into the labour processes of the local film industry. Notwithstanding Rowlands' studies observing the lives of freelance production workers in the New Zealand film industry (Rowlands, 2009; 2012), academic writing on film and the film industry in New Zealand generally falls into one of three categories: government policy (Blomkamp, 2010; King, 2010; Waller, 1996), aesthetics and art form (Attwood, 1998; Columpar, 2007; Conrich, 2003), or nation and identity (Brady, 2010; Molloy, 1999; Thornley, 2009). There is a gap in current research in regard to specifically addressing the experiences of volunteer film workers in the creative sector. Investigating whether volunteer workers in New Zealand's screen production industry are exploited contributes to a growing pool of international literature concerning cultural workers and their experiences, an area of investigation where currently very little research has been conducted in New Zealand.

This chapter has introduced the New Zealand screen production volunteer in the context of the project-based work model utilised by film production companies in the United States, United Kingdom, and New Zealand. New Zealand screen production volunteers attempt to establish themselves in a sub-sector of the creative industries that has gained greater prominence in recent years, due principally to opportunities created by the work of Peter Jackson, though indebted to a history of industry pioneers. Volunteers in the industry gift their time to a subsector of the creative industries, a sector of the economy touted to reap the economic potential of creativity and knowledge, though under resourced where it comes to laws specifically addressing the rights of workers. A creative temperament plays a role in explaining why many workers volunteer their time, and tertiary providers offering industry specific training contributes to the large number of workers aspiring to enter the industry. Chapter Four presents three case studies of New Zealand screen production workers who have volunteered their time to the industry, asking them to reflect on their experiences, as well as the themes introduced in this literature review. The following chapter outlines the methodological basis by which participants in the study were studied, as well as the methods by which their responses, the data, was analysed and presented.

CHAPTER THREE

Methodology

Having identified a lack of previous studies specifically addressing the use of volunteers in the creative industries, this research sought the opinions and reflections of three individuals who have volunteered their labour to the New Zealand screen production industry.

Because this study focused on exploring the reasons why people volunteer their labour to the screen production industry, and whether this volunteering is ultimately perceived by a sample of film industry workers as exploitative or otherwise, a qualitative methodology was deemed appropriate. Data was gathered in the form three New Zealand based case studies (Yin, 2009) of workers in the New Zealand screen production industry, and participants engaged in interviews conducted from a localist standpoint (Alvesson, 2003). Data was analysed using Glaser & Strauss' (1967) grounded theory methodology. The research design took the form of an interpretive ethnographic approach, whereby the researcher participated in eliciting not only research participants relaying of the literal aspects of working in the film industry, but their individual understandings and interpretations of their experiences in that workplace (Nash, 2009).

In interviewing individuals for the purpose of case studies, my data collection method sought not only facts, but participants' subjective perceptions of their world, as well as their own personal narratives. A more fixed or quantitative design such as surveying or deploying questionnaires may have been effective in collecting basic information, though due to the problems of securing a high level of involvement from those completing surveys or questionnaires (Robson, 2002), much less effective in recording participants' true feelings or views of the world they inhabit. Similarly other forms of flexible qualitative designs, for example participant observation which involves watching and listening, would not have gained insight into participants' perceptions and narratives; elements crucial to seeking to discover how screen production workers make sense of their industry and their workplace, and how they perceive the role of themselves and others within both.

3.1 'Data gathering': Case studies

Empirical case study-based research was necessary in order to gain in-depth insights and understanding of New Zealand based screen production workers, both in regards to their reflections on the use of volunteers in the sector, as well as their reflections on their workplace in general. The data from the interviews conducted as the basis of these case studies was analysed using grounded theory (Glaser & Strauss, 1967) in order to generate a set of explanations following discussing key themes with each case study participant; namely their reflections on gaining employment within the film industry, the importance or otherwise of industry-specific tertiary training, their own or observed experiences of voluntarism in the sector, and their thoughts on the significance of an individual's creative temperament when exploring themes of exploitation.

Case study research has been criticised owing to the supposition that the findings from this style of investigation are not easily generalised, especially when compared to those of survey research (Gomm, Hammersly, & Foster, 2000). But case study design, in particular multiple case study design, is not concerned with statistical generalisation as is often sought with other qualitative methods, but rather with analytic generalisation (Robson, 2002). As my research was concerned with understanding and explaining the issues surrounding the use of volunteers in the New Zealand screen industry, it did not warrant or require the selection of a representative sample of industry workers that would have allowed the kind of statistical generalisation typical of surveying. Rather, a case study design allowed theoretical generalisation whereby a theory could be developed across individual cases (Robson, 2002). Yin (2009) likens conducting multiple case studies as being similar to doing multiple experiments. These may attempt at replicating the original experiment, or they may build on it, or they may seek to add to it by focusing on an area not originally covered. My first case study provided evidence that allowed the partial construction of a theoretical viewpoint, with findings from the following case studies creating patterns of data forming the basis for analytic generalisations (Robson, 2002).

Yin (2009) explains case studies as a research method that allows an exploration or investigation of real-life phenomena through in-depth contextual analysis of a limited number of circumstances or examples, observing data at a micro level. Following Yin, I chose three subjects to interview for three individual case studies, and I selected participants engaged in different roles in the industry and at different stages of their careers, to ensure a range of insights into a complex situation. Traditionally, social scientists have observed the world in a similar way to the one that physical scientists before Einstein viewed the world, a place to discover generalisations about regularities between cause and effect (Gomm et al., 2000). The social world – in this instance the world of the New Zealand screen production workplace – is in fact far more intricate than that. Cronbach, in his 1957 speech to the American Psychological Foundation, suggested the science of psychology would benefit if inquirers ceased looking at the effects of actions generally, and instead began to study the effects of interactions between actions and people with different aptitudes (Cronbach, 1957). Cultures change and human action is constructed not caused, and selecting individuals engaged in different roles and at different stages of their careers offered differing perspectives on the screen production workplace.

Regarding Participant A having been employed in the industry much earlier than Participants B and C, I sought reflections on whether the recruitment process had changed over time, and indeed whether the use of volunteers in the local screen production industry was consistent or otherwise over the past decade. As regards seeking individuals employed in a variety of roles, I was interested in participants' identification or otherwise with a 'creative temperament'; and whether the worker who identifies as a creative individual is more prone to self-exploitation than one who does not, owing to being intrinsically before extrinsically motivated.

The case study participants were:

- 1) Participant A: Male, 30, Technical Coordinator. 12 years in the industry,
- 2) Participant B, Female, 24, Production Assistant. 1 ½ years in the industry,
- 3) Participant C, Female, 32, Assistant Director. 1 ½ years in the industry.

Robson (2002) suggests ensuring a degree of flexibility in designing case studies; from a highly flexible approach should the main purpose be highly exploratory, to a selective approach where previous investigation has suggested some rationalisation of the topic or subject beforehand. A crucial design consideration for my data gathering was that case study participants not be presented or coerced with pre-determined opinions or suggestions of my own. That is, this research asks an open-ended question (Geer, 1988) in seeking to find out whether the creative industries worker ten years on is emancipated or exploited - it does not state or seek to suggest either is the state of affairs at the outset. For this reason I chose a case study design somewhere between exploratory and selective, such that participants were able to reflect on their workplace in a wider context, before discussing more specific issues via semi-structured interview questions that were topic specific, yet purposely open-ended and unbiased toward a preferred or specific outcome. Yin's (2009) work on case study designs and methods suggests case study investigators are particularly prone to a preconceived position due to a prior understanding of the issues; the researcher out in the field rather than an unbiased research assistant. Thus a heightened awareness of the need for an unbiased approach was critical to my case study data collection, as was a willingness to accept potentially contrary findings.

A case study design was chosen over other qualitative methods as it allowed me to conduct investigations with three unique individuals, permitting in-depth exploration of individual perceptions, reflections, justifications and rationales of social practices (Haunschild & Eikhof, 2009) within the New Zealand screen production industry. The aim was to use first-hand accounts to shed light on the use of volunteers in the sector, though framed through interviewee's attitudes, background, and actions - explained in their own terms. That is, to "listen to people as they describe how they understand the worlds in which they live and work" (Rubin & Rubin, 2005, p. 17). Though the participants cannot represent the voices of all film workers, they are indicative voices in a hitherto unexplored field of academic enquiry in Aotearoa.

3.2 'Data gathering': Interviews

Kvale (1996) describes the qualitative interview as a construction site of knowledge which should be understood in terms of five elements of post-modern knowledge: as narrative, as conversation, as language, as inter-relational, and as context. As a theory was to be reverse engineered using the grounded theory method - that is data collection and analysis *preceded* theory generation – a 'construction site' of participant knowledge, language and experience was the ideal setting for grounded theory-based examination.

Robson (2002) dictates circumstances where a qualitative research interview is most appropriate as firstly those where the study focuses on a particular meaning of a particular phenomenon to participants, and secondly where individual accounts are required of how a particular phenomenon has developed. Where quantitative data concerning the use of volunteers in the New Zealand screen industry (such as the number of unpaid versus paid workers across a sample of production companies) would have provided hard data on the incidence of volunteering across the sector, whether or not the phenomenon is deemed exploitative could not have been measured using such a method. Beliefs and attitudes are complex and multidimensional, as are first-hand accounts of dynamics in the workplace. What do people do? What do people know? What do people think and feel?

As the grounded theory method was to be used to analyse data, I sought to build assumptions faithful to, and following on from, evidence gathered (Neuman, 1997). Thus I was mindful of not eliciting a particular response from interviewees, stating at the beginning of each interview there were no 'right' or 'wrong' answers, and that I sought responses based on participants' own perceptions of their worlds. The key themes that formed the framework of my initial interview 'script' echoed similar key themes explored in my literature review. I was principally concerned with participants' thoughts, feelings and experiences in regard to the following five subjects:

- 1) Starting out in the screen production industry,
- 2) Screen production industry-specific tertiary training,
- 3) Voluntarism in the screen production industry,

- 4) Participants' personal experience of voluntarism in the screen production industry,
- 5) The creative temperament in relation to the screen production industry.

Based on my own anecdotal evidence as a long-term practitioner within the creative industries, as well as empirical evidence gathered in the course of research, the majority of volunteer labour that occurs in the creative industries - in this case the screen production sector - is at 'entry-level' (Ashton, 2011; Blair et al., 2003; Defillippi & Arthur, 1998; Grugulis & Stoyanova, 2009; Randle & Culkin, 2009). There has also been a recent (in particular the past decade) proliferation of screen industry-specific tertiary training courses, leading to larger numbers of apparently qualified workers seeking long-term work and industry experience than ever before (Blair et al., 2003; de Bruin & Hanrahan, 2003; Hesmondhalgh & Baker, 2010a; Randle & Culkin, 2009). Hence, these were the first two themes I sought participants' reflections on.

These first two themes also provided an important design purpose for my interviews. Hannabuss (1996) highlights the importance of establishing rapport with interviewees, as well as the importance of maintaining this rapport and keeping the discussion going. The intention is to institute trust, as well as maintain it throughout the interview in order to keep the subject talking freely. Robson (2002) describes facts as easy to get at, beliefs and attitudes not so. Outside of initial general conversation and my introducing myself and the purpose of my research, the first two themes discussed in my interviews - though also very much intended for use in later analysis - were planned as part of the same 'warm up' process; designed to elicit comfortable responses to the more contemplative and probing questions in the sections that followed.

Hannabus (1996) suggests there are four key interviewing skills. Firstly establishing rapport with interviewees. Secondly the interviewer must keep the discussion going and avoid questions that diminish participant responses. I avoided questions that would elicit one-word answers (in particular 'yes' or 'no') in order to maintain conversational flow, as well as avoiding loaded questions, double negatives, and anything that would confuse or irritate participants. Thirdly, the interviewer needs to know how to pace the interview and maintain focus, as well as

knowing when to interrupt. Fortuitously I have a background in radio broadcasting, and I thus engineered the interviews in a similar manner to those I have conducted on-air; knowing when to let participants pause for thought and interjecting at points where garnering supplementary information was appropriate. Lastly, Hannabus (1996) suggests the interviewer should employ a non-judgmental attitude. This was particularly relevant where the data was to be analysed later using grounded theory, and I thus endeavoured to maintain impartiality throughout the interview process.

Hannabus' (1996) four key interviewing skills aim to create an equal relationship between interviewer and interviewee, both being engaged in the production of sited accounts through interpersonal interaction (Qu & Dumay, 2011). This is what Alvesson (2003) terms a 'localist' perspective on interviewing. An ethnographic investigation of the potentially exploitative aspects of voluntarism as a social phenomenon in the New Zealand screen production industry requires industry workers' understandings and reflections on their experiences in the workplace, and from a localist perspective the means by which these responses were acquired also warranted attention. Interviews are collaboratively produced and interviewers are active participants (Miller & Glassner, 2011).

Alvesson (2003) dictates three theoretical standpoints on the research interview as a method. The first two are more established perspectives: neopositivism, studying facts, and romanticism (also referred to as emotionalism), studying meaning (Alvesson, 2003; Miller & Glassner, 2011; Qu & Dumay, 2011; Silverman, 2008). Both of these approaches to interviewing treat respondents as epistemologically passive; mere vessels of answers (Qu & Dumay, 2011). Conversely, the third standpoint, localism, breaks with these conventional views on interviews. The localist sees the interview process as a chance for the respondent to explore the meaning of the research topic, and this process is inherently bound by the social context in which it takes place (Mishler, 1986).

The neopositivist researcher sees the interview process as a device to be used to create a context-free truth about objective reality producing responses with minimal bias, such that it comes as close as possible to providing a mirror of the reality that exists in the respondents'

world (Miller & Glassner, 2011). The interview process is conducted as a procedure in which the interviewer ignores the context, as it does not affect the meaning of answers (Qu & Dumay, 2011). The romantic approach to interviewing rebuffs the neopositivist position that researchers should maintain a neutral stance during an interview. They argue that researchers should connect with interviewees on a personal level, such that an atmosphere of rapport is established allowing interviewees to produce genuine responses (Welch & Piekkari, 2006). Though the localist approach is similar to the romantic in that the interview is interactive and social by nature, it goes further by acknowledging interviews as bound by the social context in which it takes place (Welch & Piekkari, 2006). The information produced from interviews is inter-relational (Kvale, 1996), and the narratives produced situated accounts of the phenomenon (Qu & Dumay, 2011). Localists view the interview as an empirical setting (Qu & Dumay, 2011), a social encounter in which interviewer and respondent selectively “draw upon their shared knowledge of the social world to make sense of each other” (Welch & Piekkari, 2006, p. 420).

In adopting a localist approach to interviewing, I approached the interview as a conversation, focussing on questioning and listening (Denzin & Lincoln, 1998). The research interview as conversation investigates participants’ everyday life by developing a methodological awareness of forms of questioning, focusing on what is expressed during the dyadic exchange between investigator and interviewee (Qu & Dumay, 2011). To best utilise key elements of everyday conversation in order to enquire or gain knowledge, I chose a semi-structured interview format over a structured or unstructured model. The semi-structured interview involves prepared questioning framed within identified themes, though because it has its basis in human conversation the skilful interviewer may deviate from set questions, or modify the style and pace in order to evoke the best response from the interviewee. Crucially, it also allows the interviewees to respond on their own terms using their own language (Qu & Dumay, 2011), which in the case of participants I interviewed was especially valuable in gaining an understanding as to how they perceive the industry in which they work.

Having interviewees respond on their own terms using their own language was made easier as I was studying a group and culture of which I am a 'member'. Various analyses of the interview process discuss the need to establish trust with interviewees (Goulding, 2002; Miller & Glassner, 2011; Qu & Dumay, 2011; Robson, 2002); this process made easier by studying groups with which we share membership (Miller & Glassner, 2011). As a fellow creative industries worker I could relate and respond to the experiences relayed to me, as well as the language in which they were presented; people in specific cultures use words, explanations and narratives differently according to their shared understandings (Goulding, 2002). I was familiar enough to ask the right questions, and presented as a fellow creative industries worker of a similar generation, as well as an academic with a critical approach to collecting then analysing data.

The interview process can be understood as conversation because conversation is the foremost method of knowledge transfer in the post-modern/post-structuralist world (Qu & Dumay, 2011); how social actors interpret their experiences of the lived world constructs knowledge. Rather than knowledge being a direct mirror of reality it is a social construction of reality (Berger & Luckmann, 1966). Kavale (1996) describes the qualitative research interview as consisting of five features of post-modern knowledge: knowledge as narrative, as conversation, as language, as inter-relational, and as context, exposing the relationship people have with the world around them. I sought to comprehend central themes in the work life of the participants in qualitative open accounts of specific experiences within the subject's perceived world, open to new and unpredicted phenomenon, rather than imposing pre-determined assumptions. This approach was appropriate to the method by which I then analysed my interview data; grounded theory analysis.

3.3 'Data analysis': Grounded theory

Grounded theory originates from the empirical world and describes a method by which theory is developed from the collection and analysis of data (Charmaz & Bryant, 2011). In contrast to experimental design, grounded theory does not begin with a pre-determined

hypothesis because a theory is generated from the data rather than tested by it. The originators of this method, Glaser and Strauss (1967), created a method whereby conceptual categories are devised from the data and relationships are formed between these categories, leading to the development and generation of overall research findings (Robson, 2002). Categories are formed by first open coding the data, or reviewing it and organising it into themes; a word or a sentence or a paragraph may be a unit of data that relates to another, such that they link to form conceptual categories (Robson, 2002). Categories are then linked together by axial coding, whereby the original data has been disassembled and rearranged into thematic parts, and these parts are then reassembled to lead to an understanding of the central phenomena in the data (Robson, 2002). Discovering the central phenomena happens in the third stage, selective coding, where the categories and their relationships begin to explain the overall picture (Robson, 2002).

Initially I had some reservations regarding employing grounded theory method, owing to traditional grounded theorists tending to treat enquiry as separate from its social conditions (Charmaz & Bryant, 2011). In adopting a localist approach to interviewing case study participants, remaining a neutral observer ('separate from social conditions') would have been impossible. However there have been advancements in methodological enquiry over the past fifty years, resulting in the emergence of constructivist grounded theory. Constructivist grounded theorists locate themselves within the inquiry to get as close to the studied phenomenon as possible (Charmaz & Bryant, 2011) and view data as constructed rather than out there in the world waiting to be discovered and gathered. Having adopted a localist approach to semi-structured interviews, constructivist grounded theoretical approach allowed me to reflect upon themes pre-constructed in the development of my prepared question sheet, developing new themes in response to the data gathered. I was able to acknowledge my influence on the research process, though ultimately participants' responses illuminated the central phenomena, or theory to emerge from the study.

The question sheet I prepared before interviewing participants was divided into five themes: 'starting out in the industry', 'tertiary/formal qualifications', 'voluntarism', 'personal experience

of voluntarism', and 'creative temperament'. These themes were devised as a bridging point between the literature I had reviewed and the data I was to gather. As the interviews were semi-structured, each participant was asked a majority of the pre-prepared questions, though my line of questioning was flexible according to participants' individual responses. I then began to open code the data gathered, allowing a new set of themes to develop that would form the basis of my discussion and analysis of findings.

In the first stage of open coding I used data analysis software NVivo 10 to generate a list of word repetitions, a technique common when analysing qualitative data (Ryan & Bernard, 2003). NVivo 10 ranked the number of times every word spoken by participants was used, generating both separate lists for each participant, as well as a master document showing which words were most commonly used by all participants. Words of interest common to all participants (that is, discounting obvious repetitions to be expected such as 'volunteer' or 'film') included 'like', 'experience', 'initiative', and 'know'. These formed the basis for beginning to open code the data into conceptual categories, such as 'being liked' and 'showing initiative', allowing me to categorise participants' responses into thematic categories common to all three interviewees and their responses.

The next stage of data analysis, axial coding, involved creating sections for the research chapter based not only on the themes that emerged from the data, but the 'conceptual baggage' (Robson, 2002) I was carrying based on both the literature presented in Chapter Two and the central research question. The chapter sections and subsections that emerged were based on considering both the coded categories of the data and the original categories I had devised for the interview question sheet. The main sections of the research findings chapter were primarily influenced by the thematic categories presented in the literature review and included in the subsequent semi-structured interview plan: firstly, gaining work in the New Zealand film industry, secondly, maintaining work in the New Zealand film industry, thirdly, gifting labour to the New Zealand film industry, fourthly, participants' reflections on creativity in their workplace. The subsections of the interviews were influenced by the open coding of participants' responses. I used particular pieces of data - 'quotes' - to title each subsection,

these quotes indicative of the coded theme of each. Categories included 'anything to get on set', 'it seemed so glamorous', 'word of mouth', 'how you get in, it's still the same', 'you are your brand', 'it's expected of you', and 'a day is enough'. The idea was to order and present the data such that it 'spoke for itself' wherever possible, allowing a pattern to form, such that a core category emerged in the data.

In the final stage of data analysis, selective coding, I identified my core category based on what had arisen from axial coding, which had provided me with a picture of running themes and relationships between each of the coded data categories. Had I have employed a more experimental approach to analysing my data, seeking to test or effectively outright answer my original research question, participants' responses did effectively provide an answer as to whether or not volunteers in the New Zealand screen production industry are exploited. But in adopting the grounded theory method to code and analyse my data, a strong central theme emerged. This theme, though related to the original research question, did not necessarily provide an answer as to whether volunteers in the screen production industry are exploited; instead it raised a whole new set of questions. Essentially, participants identified a wider issue that contributes to the current set of situations volunteers face in the industry, an issue that if not addressed will see the terms and conditions of volunteering labour to the screen industry remain unchanged.

In the following section, three individuals describe their experiences and reflections on the use of volunteer labour in the New Zealand screen production industry. Participants came to be involved in the research by way of the researcher contacting personal friends within the industry, though none of the people involved in the study were previously known to him. Their experiences are discussed and analysed, and the central theme that emerges is that film industry workers face a predicament based on the employment environment they are conditioned to accept.

CHAPTER FOUR

Findings and Analysis

The purpose of this chapter is to present, discuss and analyse findings from the data collected, reflecting on the literature presented in Chapter Two. As stated in the previous chapter, data took the form of three semi-structured interviews with individuals currently engaged in, or wishing to engage in, long-term employment in the New Zealand screen production industry. The chapter is divided into six sections.

The first section introduces the participants, focusing on how they initially became involved with the screen production industry. The second identifies participants' reflections on maintaining employment in their project-based industry, examining the personal attributes and skills required for success, acceptance, and extended employment opportunities in the sector. The third introduces the topic of volunteering, exploring the positive and negative aspects of gifting labour, as well as seeking participants' reflections on the need for formal systems to regulate the use of volunteer labour. The fourth section seeks participants' reflections on creativity in their role and more generally creativity within the screen production workplace. The fifth section asks participants to reflect on exploitation in the context of volunteering in the screen production industry, before the sixth and final section offers a summary of the chapter's findings. All sections of the chapter both present the data as well as reflecting on it in relation to the themes and research presented in the literature review chapter.

4.1 'Newbies': Gaining employment in the New Zealand screen production industry

4.1.1 'And then there were three': Introducing those who participated in the study

Three individuals currently engaged in the screen production industry in Auckland, New Zealand, were interviewed for the purpose of this research study. As discussed in the methodology chapter, I sought diversity in my interviewees, particularly in regard to the roles they performed in the industry. Participant A described himself as 'an all-rounder', though this

description pertained to ‘below the line’ technical roles, in particular editing, camera operating and audio post-production. Though still engaged in independent screen production projects, Participant A has a fulltime job as Technical Coordinator at a local film and television training school. Participant B is a recently employed fulltime production assistant for a small production house. Participant C, though actively seeking long-engagement within the industry as an assistant director, described herself as ‘freelance slash self-employed slash unemployed’.

I sought participants who had initially engaged with the industry at different times. Participant A graduated from **** Polytechnic in late 2002 with a Diploma in Film and Television, before travelling for two years and returning to New Zealand to seek work in the industry in 2004. Participant B graduated from **** School in late 2010 with a Diploma in Film and Television specialising in production management, seeking work in the industry from that point onwards. Participant C also graduated from **** School in 2010 with a Diploma in Film and Television, specialising in directing and script writing, seeking work in the industry from that point onwards. Though initially I thought it best the three participants be from different ‘eras’, having two participants chronologically the same, though on very different trajectories in regards to securing long-term meaningful employment provided suitable variety in my data.

Participant A is a 30 year old male with 12 years’ experience outside out of formal training. Participant B is a 25 year old female with eighteen months experience outside of formal training. Participant C is a 32 year old female with eighteen months experience outside of formal training. Similar to the rich data produced due to Participant B and C being on different career trajectories, the fact that these two participants are different ages provided further diversity in my data.

4.1.2 ‘Running and more running’: Roles performed in the industry

None of the participants interviewed began in the industry in their ideal role. All described at some point engaging in subservient labour-intensive roles, primarily in the form of ‘running’ - a term coined in the film industry, and recognised as a key, entry-level position. The exact role

of a runner varies from project to project and employer to employer, though the role is generally recognised as that of a general assistant, required to undertake whatever basic tasks are required to ensure the smooth running of the production process.

So I started doing 3D animation for a couple of films using 3D Studio Max, then just worked my arse off helping lots of, you know doing free jobs running around the place...(Participant A)

Um, more running on set 'cause they did lots of one off jobs themselves, so I knew that they weren't going to be able to offer me fulltime, but I was just trying to get my experience up, and then a list of running jobs...(Participant B)

Um, running, um, costume running, um a lot...(Participant C)

Participants' experiences were consistent with previous studies conducted in the United Kingdom, US, and New Zealand, in that individuals very seldom enter the film industry in their desired role, employers in the industry value on-the-job training before education, and film school graduates are considered to be 'unskilled' (Blair et al., 2003; de Bruin & Hanrahan, 2003; Hesmondhalgh & Baker, 2010a). Participants did not question initially engaging in the industry at this level, perhaps surprising considering the training they had undertaken prior. The prevailing understanding was that low-skilled entry-level roles were part of gaining experience, exposure and contacts in the screen production industry. Not questioning entering the industry effectively as labourers despite having trained and graduated for specific skilled roles in the industry exposed a theme that was to continue throughout participants' responses to other topics, whereby apparent disparities (even when acknowledged by them) were simply accepted as 'normal' within the industry.

...trying to make a name for myself. (Participant A)

...but I was trying to get my experience up. (Participant B)

...if you're lucky you meet someone who likes you who might get you a job. (Participant C)

Participant A described himself as an all-rounder in the technical aspects of filmmaking, explaining his recruitment as Technical Coordinator for a screen production training school. Participant A referred throughout the interview to successful examples of film workers as 'problem solvers' or 'having solved problems', arguably an unintentional reflection of himself. Still engaged in projects independent of his full time role, Participant A works sporadically as an editor, cameraman, audio post-producer and director.

The thing about me is I'm an all-rounder. So I always thought I didn't know enough... so I trained myself in camera, editing, sound post, um, you name it, I've probably done it. (Participant A)

Participant B began applying for jobs immediately after graduating from film school, missing out on 'a really good job' owing to not having a full drivers licence. In the six months after leaving film school Participant B did a mixture of paid and voluntary work as both a runner and a production assistant - 'the names were interchangeable' – before engaging in her current role as Production Assistant for a local production house.

It fluctuates between very basic, like dishes and rubbish and stationery, as well as managing projects myself, to a degree. We've got a producer who's a director camera guy editor and he's one of the partners in the business too. I work alongside him quite a

bit as his little production manager, and I assist on the bigger jobs to the main production manager. (Participant B)

Participant C expressed a desire to secure long-term work as an assistant director, arguably a more difficult role to establish oneself in than Participant B's vocational choice. Participant C described having been engaged in a variety of roles, including production manager, runner, production assistant, costume runner, unit (catering), first assistant director, and additional assistant director. Participant C is still engaged in a variety of roles in the industry, pursuing assistant directing as a long-term career.

So those are kinda the roles that I would... directing not really interested, camera not really interested, writing is interesting to me, but assistant directing I feel that I'm in that, kind of, assisting the creative side of it instead of the film production side of it. Personally... that's what I don't... I, I, feel like I'm kind of like a dog... like I want to be where all the action is. (Participant C)

4.1.3 'It seemed so glamorous': The initial appeal of the film industry

Not surprisingly, all participants identified with some kind of affinity with the film industry before deciding to become involved. Participant A cited family influence as the reason for becoming involved.

I grew up in a theatre family... mother's an actor, brother's a composer, step-mother's a dancer, aunt's an actor.... so at first wanted to be an actor, thought it was great. Then I thought 'actually I want to do something that differentiates me from the rest of the family', and I've always been quite sort of techy in the way I approach things, and I never

really thought about it at first, doing film, and film was probably just an excuse to get out of the country. And then I found I really loved it. (Participant A)

Participant B decided to become involved owing to an admiration of the industry, emphasising she was not creatively oriented, though compelled by the creative process.

...and so it always seemed kind of glamorous and like a really unobtainable industry to be in, and I was really into theatre as well, and so as I did really well in media studies and continued to study... I've always loved movies and creativity: even though I'm not keen to be in a completely creative role, I still like being a part of it, and helping making it happen. (Participant B)

Participant C identified a love of film in general as a motivation for becoming involved at a practical level, describing the process of becoming involved as providing further inspiration.

Well I've always liked film. I've always wanted to go into film. And then when I started being on set I was hooked, I loved it. (Participant C)

Interestingly, though each participant's attraction to the film industry was framed differently, all used the phrase 'love'; a powerful emotional response in terms of being quizzed on a choice of vocation. Framed in terms of the initial attraction providing vocational motivation, 'loving what you do' (Amabile, 1997, p. 39), this has positive implications. However Ashton (2011) emphasises that the passion many creative industries workers identify with shouldn't affect their ability to negotiate themselves into a position that closes the potential for exploitation, by the self or otherwise. As discussed in section 4.5, participants observed that

those creatively inclined in the industry tend to be ‘more idealistic than realistic’, which they perceived as potentially problematic.

When asked to reflect on their initial motivation for engaging with the film industry in comparison to how they view the industry currently, each participant responded differently. Participant A’s response was perhaps reflective of having been involved in the industry for a much longer period of time than that of B and C.

Yeah. (laughs) It has. As I’ve gone on... it’s horrible to say. As I’ve gone on I probably want less and less to do with theatre... and less and less to do with film. Because it’s so demanding... it just takes SO much out of you. (Participant A)

Participant B’s response was consistent with that of an individual new to the industry, excited by observing the nuances of different types of projects and the industry in general.

Yeah, um, it’s been really interesting to see the differences between TVCs and television... I haven’t worked on any features so I’m not sure about that yet... but there is a difference in... some of them are really number eight wire let’s make this happen, and others are the clients on set with their little tent and it has been... you hear about that, but it’s, it hasn’t changed the appeal... (Participant B)

Participant C’s response reflected her engagement with a number of different entry-level roles in the industry and still not having secured regular employment in her preferred role, though this had not deterred from her original motivation.

Um that specific feeling? No. Maybe refined it. I think film school gives you just enough to have a taste for it but you really need to go out and figure out whether you actually like it or not. You don't really get that opportunity for very long, you know? (Participant C)

4.1.4 'Anything to get on set': Gaining work in the film industry

When questioned on how they commenced employment in the screen production industry, participants stressed the importance of self-motivation and determination, rather than others acting on their behalf to secure them work. Key factors in successfully gaining work were identified as becoming known / getting to know people ('networking'), being eager to perform any task required - and performing these tasks with no discernible unease ('willingness'). Participants also stressed the importance of proving oneself on set, particularly the ability to work hard for extended periods of time ('stamina'), as well as being able to solve problems and find further tasks to complete without having to constantly seek guidance from others ('working autonomously').

On networking:

Found it hard to get work 'cause I was a newbie. Didn't know anybody. (Participant A)

I got to a point where I sat myself down and made myself call all the production managers on the list from Film Crews 'cause until then there was just that little bit of hope that someone would call you. You'd send an email and that would never get you anywhere, so I did it, and... (Participant B)

Um... well there's... if you're lucky you meet someone who likes you who might get you a job. Ah... you meet other people who are in the same situation as you, who possibly down the line could get you some work. (Participant C)

On willingness:

I think the trick is you just always say yes, no matter whether you can do it or not (laughs). (Participant A)

Um, crap is not having initiative or willingness to put your hand to anything, um, and complaining too much... (Participant B)

On stamina:

People do training, work in the industry, and then go 'I don't want to work seventeen hour days'. (Participant A)

It's about an attitude and a stamina sort of thing, and wanting to be there. You've got to be able to handle it. (Participant B)

On working autonomously:

You want to be able to go, 'take that car, go in get it painted black, install something in it, and bring it back...' (Participant A)

...and get me a receipt. (Interviewer)

Yeah. You don't care how it's done as long as it is done, do you know what I mean? (Participant A)

And then they'd give me something to do. I would try and use initiative all the time and do what... if someone needed a hand I'd jump in - if I knew I wasn't meant to be doing something somewhere else. (Participant B)

What attributes do you think film industry employers most favour in new workers? (Interviewer)

Um, I'd say hard work and common sense. (Participant C)

To summarise participants' responses, the prevailing message was that individuals seeking work in the film industry needed to prove their worth to those already engaged in order to secure further employment, rather than it being a given. Unlike regular employment, in which an individual may prove their worth after being recruited for a long-term role, the project-based nature of screen production work means initial opportunities to work are effectively prolonged recruitment exercises, with no guarantee of further employment at the end.

You don't get called back again if you are crap. (Participant B)

Participant B's eloquent summary of the reason some entry-level workers never secure further work warrants further investigation of what 'crap' might entail. Notwithstanding 'crap' being the inability to perform set tasks as a new worker on set, participants' responses identified a specific character disposition suited to gaining work in the film industry – individuals who do not question anything on set. Participant A emphasised the need to say 'yes' at all times, while Participant B described the need to 'put your hand to anything' while 'not complaining too much'. Discussing stamina Participant A described others saying 'I don't want to work seventeen hour days', and suggested being on set is 'an attitude and a stamina thing, and wanting to be there'. In these responses, 'not being crap' equated to not being disagreeable in regard to any and all workplace situations and conditions.

As with their reflections on starting out in the industry as runners, participants described what was expected in order to gain further work, though did not question or identify any aspects discussed as problematic – despite, for example, the wider implications waving right of refusal potentially presents. In a project-based environment where work is individualised and insecure, and where competition for employment is aggressive (Antcliff et al., 2007; Christopherson, 2009; de Bruin & Hanrahan, 2003; Smith & McKinlay, 2009)} the onus to secure further work appears to lie with the employee; working autonomously, saying yes, and 'being able to handle it'.

4.1.5 'How you get in, it's still the same': Tertiary training for the film industry

All three of the participants had completed Diplomas in Film and Television at reputable tertiary training institutions. Though none of the participants made reference to their qualifications having any significance in their gaining work in the industry - proving their ability to cope with the demands placed on them on set having more significance - all valued the role of tertiary education in training for the screen production sector.

Participant A, trained and engaged in more mechanical aspects of filmmaking than B and C, framed tertiary education as more necessary in the industry today than when he graduated,

owing to technology used in the industry now changing at a faster rate than in the era he graduated from film school.

I think, for me, personally, my course was a little bit of a waste of time, but NOW if I was to do the same course I'd say it would be really important. (Participant A)

Technology moves so fast now. You'll go in there and go 'yeah cool, now we're going to put up the new Kino Flow lights... the students are like.... what?' You know. 'OK... plug that in. Oh no, don't plug it in to the, to that because you'll blow it up. Oh you blew it up.' You know, that's the stuff. So, you get on set and you're given such a hard time if you don't know anything. And our students are constantly getting that. But I don't see how we can necessarily combat it, you know what I mean... because it just moves so quickly. (Participant A)

Participant B, though new to the industry, cited changes in the pace of the film making process as a reason for formal training, as well as the ability training gave her to perform her role competently from the outset. She also alluded to the importance of training for more technical roles.

Um, not just my role, but this industry I think training is important. I know there are older school people who just got in and did it and worked on the job, but I don't think... I think everything is too fast paced for that now. I think you need to have some knowledge already there, and I think I'd have the personal attributes to pick up production on the job, but, you know you don't get the job in the first place without some sort of knowledge, to a point I'd say. A lot of the stuff I learnt in production, I know a lot of it is common sense and things, but I'm still really grateful for the experience with it before getting in there. Because then I could just be left to get on with it and, fill in the

gaps, rather than someone teaching me from scratch. And, but I think with technical roles, again, yeah it's really good to have the training because you want to be useful as soon as you're there. (Participant B)

Participant C also cited the feeling of competence it gave her, though framed this in terms of 'understanding' and 'confidence'.

I think it gives you confidence, because you have a bit of understanding so you're not bullshitting from the beginning. And if you're paying attention it teaches you a lot of things that are between the lines. (Participant B)

Though all participants had undertaken tertiary training, this is not reflective of how many workers enter the film industry, with other studies identifying do-it-yourself apprenticeships or social and family contacts as other ways of engaging with the industry (Blair, 2001; Blair et al., 2003; de Bruin & Hanrahan, 2003; Grugulis & Stoyanova, 2009). Despite none of them describing their diplomas as particularly significant in their being recruited to the industry, tertiary study seemed to provide participants with personal confidence and a feeling of competence from the outset, despite being 'unskilled' upon graduation in an industry where on-the-job training is favoured over formal training (de Bruin & Hanrahan, 2003). Where tertiary training teaches 'human capital', or the skills required to perform specific tasks on set, 'social capital' (Defillippi & Arthur, 1998) – the ability to network, relate well with co-workers, and so on - is not (de Bruin & Hanrahan, 2003). Participants identified 'social capital' as crucial to gaining and maintaining work in the industry, as it is across much of the creative industries sector (Gibson, 2003; Gill & Pratt, 2008; Jones, 1996; McRobbie, 2002)

Participants A and B spoke of the high level of student attrition in regards to the number of graduates who go on to work in the industry long-term.

I would say half the students that come out of our course, go and do a different course at the end of it. (Participant A)

So how many people enrolled in your course? (Interviewer)

Oh probably 60 per year in film. (Participant A)

OK so one year intake 60? How many will end up working in the film industry long-term? (Interviewer)

Ten. (Participant A)

How many people did they let into your course a year? (Interviewer)

I think it was about 130. (Participant B)

Roughly how many do you reckon out of your 130 will work in the industry long-term? (Interviewer)

It's a hard one because I'm not in touch with a lot of them anymore. But... long-term... maybe 40. They say ten percent, so that would only be 13... but I think it might be a little more promising than that. (Participant B)

Even with the large drop in numbers that was identified, Participants B and C stated there was still an imbalance between the number of film school graduates actively seeking work in the industry, and the number of roles actually available.

...not everybody got jobs, or some there are some people still looking, still working for free a year and a half later. So... I don't know whether that's them not being in the right place or doing the right thing... but no, there's not enough roles. Especially at entry-level. (Participant B)

...there's more supply than there is demand. (Participant C)

Participants B and C also spoke of another disconnection between training providers and the industry.

It would be really great if there were more internships or work experience opportunities while you are studying. To go and see how a production company runs for a week at some point. I know that there's nothing in it for the production company unless they happen to get somebody with promise, so they're like 'oh we want you next year', but that on the job experience would be great. (Participant B)

Do you think there's anything missing from the formal training? (Interviewer)

Yeah definitely. Placements. (Participant C)

Participant A, despite having formally trained and currently teaching at a film school, suggested that irrespective of training an individual is most likely to get ongoing work if they get themselves onto a film set and prove they have the demeanour best suited to the work.

If I could contextualise my question about routes into the industry, do you notice there are more people trying to get into the industry as a result of more training courses?
(Interviewer)

Yeah. But how you get in, it's still the same thing. (Participant A)

So a foot in the door, say running, might ultimately better in the long run than formal training? Or is it somewhere in the middle? (Interviewer)

I think it depends on your personality. (Participant A)

When reflecting on the high number of film school graduates who do not go on to work in the industry long-term, as well as the shortage of jobs for those who do, participants drew attention to an apparent disconnection between tertiary providers and the industry that they train for. New Zealand's film industry has significantly grown in terms of infrastructure, output and visibility in the past two decades (Lealand, 2011; Stark, 2011b), and in line with a trend worldwide the number of tertiary training providers offering training in film has grown also (Blair et al., 2003; de Bruin & Hanrahan, 2003; Hesmondhalgh & Baker, 2010a; Randle & Culkin, 2009). However, the number of graduates film schools are producing outweighs the number of employment opportunities available. There is perhaps an argument to be made that tertiary providers, possibly profit driven, are creating false expectations in graduates that employment will come following time and money spent on industry-specific training. This is despite there being more graduates than available roles and these graduates attempting to enter an industry that values learning on the job before formal training, requires a particular temperament that cannot be taught, sees graduates as unskilled, and requires workers to start at the bottom and work their way up (Grugulis & Stoyanova, 2009).

4.2 'Word of mouth': Maintaining employment in the New Zealand screen production industry

4.2.1 'You are your brand': Maintaining work in the film industry

A recurring motif articulated by participants was that of being capable of performing a variety of tasks independently, though still very much a part of the project team. Independence in the context participants discussed equated to the ability to complete tasks (in some cases unfamiliar ones) with little or no guidance. This appeared to be a reflection on the pace of a film set, where maximum productivity with minimum direction is desirable in terms of overall efficiency. The ability to work autonomously was seen as a desirable trait in terms of returning to work on further projects.

I mean, I know if a volunteer is standing around, they're not coming back. You go 'I've got this person and they're just hanging around on set. Doing fuck all.' (Participant A)

Getting in the way. (Interviewer)

Getting in the way. 'They didn't know what they were doing'. 'I don't care. They need to work it out'. That's... (laughs) it's really harsh! Like I've got a couple of guys who were recommended to me - friends of a friend - one of them just gave me absolute attitude the whole time, the other guy was really good... the guy with attitude didn't come back the next day, you know? Because you don't have time... (Participant A)

You've gotta be really interested, you know. Our best students are problem solvers. I'll get students who come up and go 'the computer's not working'. 'Great. What did you try?' 'I don't know, I, it just doesn't work'. 'What is it SAYING?' You know. 'Oh it says the deck is not connected'. 'So maybe the deck is not connected? Maybe you should try plugging it in?' 'Oh it worked! Amazing!' But it's the students you never hear from who are like 'yeah I fixed that, I fixed this, I'll fix that'. And that's what people want in the

industry, you know? They... they... it's so busy, tight budgets, all that stuff. You want to be able to go, 'take that car, go in get it painted black, install something in it, and bring it back...' (Participant A)

So if someone has nouse and technical skill, they can kind of learn whatever they need to learn anywhere? (Interviewer)

They can work it out. (Participant A)

Um, crap is not having initiative or willingness to put your hand to anything, um, and complaining too much. It's about an attitude and a stamina sort of thing, and wanting to be there. You've got to be able to handle it. Like I said people don't get called back if they're not up to that standard. I'm sure there's people out there who will nurture and see potential in people and that's great, and that's what you need, but also it's kinda like 'well there's a standard that's got to be stuck to. (Participant B)

Participant C analogised maintaining long-term employment in the industry with being a 'brand', citing film school tutors' advice on how to conduct themselves in a project-based environment, where individuals must be aware of how they present themselves in order to maintain ongoing contract work.

...they were pretty much telling you 'don't be an idiot, be smart, be responsible. Watch what you say... everywhere you go you have to watch yourself because you are your brand.' So they may not have a class on that, but through the little things they mention once in a while you kind of get that after a while, you know. (Participant C)

Like any successful brand, participants were aware of the need to build and maintain integrity, merit, and desire.

Yeah, yeah... I can think of a guy, production student, really on to it guy... really good. Trained in production. He did well on a couple of films... people really liked him, people get on really well with him. Before he knows it he's director's assistant on [A MAJOR NZ PRODUCTION], they want him back every season. Now he's doing special effects supervising... he knew nothing about SFX supervising. Just turns up and goes 'yeah that looks good' you know. Getting paid mega bucks. And it's because he's easy to deal with, easy to work with, and he's clued up. And he's a problem solver. But he knows ENOUGH. He's got that understanding to start with. (Participant A)

...people will go... 'look we need someone to film, edit, make up projections, do this thing, do that thing, and do this other thing. Do you know anybody else who can do that?' And I say 'no, actually I don't know anybody else who could do it all and be dependable.' I know lots of people who could do it, but not many people who are dependable to do it. (Participant A)

No its still seems to be ringing around and doing jobs for free and getting experience so people will take you seriously. Because only, well my impression is, only the really good people do last. (Participant B)

Well, I think so, I definitely think so... they kept telling us things like 'make sure you change your email address so it's not, you know, stupid, and change your voice mail so it's professional. And if you say you're going to be somewhere, then be there....' (Participant C)

As when discussing gaining work in the film industry (4.1.4), participants' reflections on maintaining ongoing project work again seemed to place all responsibility on the worker and their conduct, and little on the employer and theirs. Again it was reiterated that workers must be independent though part of the team, 'not get in the way' when new on set, 'be able to handle it', and 'put their head down, not complain, and get on with it' - all the while maintaining professionalism and conduct analogous with being a successful brand.

In relation to engaging in long-term paid work in the industry, Participant C's situation differed greatly to that of A and B – in that she is yet to secure it. Her reaction to her current circumstance drew attention to an understandable frustration, as well as evidence of personal reflection on her situation before the interview process. In naming integrity as a new prerequisite for those she works for, voluntary or otherwise - and as the only of the three participants still seeking regular employment in the industry - Participant C began to shift some of the responsibility in the employment relationship on to the employer.

How do you get consistent work, you know and then where you feel like you're actually learning? And, you know a lot of the jobs I've gotten it's like 'fuck man I'm thirty two, give me something a bit more responsible'. I get the whole 'you have to work your way up' but... (Participant C)

*Well I... probably since about ***** I've been doing more of the bigger stuff. I'm actually over no-budgets. You know what? I just want to work with professionals. I want to learn from people you know? And I just feel like it's almost like I'm in a rush to get my career going and I feel like unless it's worth it because the person is super organised, and it's not frustrating to work with him, um, or they, or it's an awesome project. But, um, I'm finding less and less value in working for... I mean I'm not being... it's.... I wouldn't even do my short film. I'm not even interested in doing my scripts*

because I just want to learn as much as I possibly can from people who know what they are doing. So it's not like I think my ideas are better... it's like 'I'm in a rush'. (Participant C)

So, at one point last year I had to figure out, there has to be some kind of guiding principle in my career, like, what is it? If not I'm gonna be doing just doing everything for free for everybody... so that, so because everyone wants you to work for free, you know and everybody says it's going to help you and your going to meet people and I'm like 'cool thanks', but when I look at the crew list I'm like 'I know these people already' and like none of them are ever gonna be able to give me a job, so I don't want to work with these people, I want to work with people who [inaudible] employ me. (Participant C)

Can I ask what you decided your guiding principle is? (Interviewer)

Integrity. (Participant C)

When discussing how to secure long-term project based work in the screen production industry, participants referred to specific character traits seen as desirable to employees. Just like when initially engaging with the industry ('gaining'), being employed regularly from project to project ('maintaining') occurred as a result of being seen to show initiative and the ability to work independently when on set. Participant C also highlighted that, as independent contractors rather than permanent staff, film industry workers must be diligent in maintaining professionalism at all times in order to be rehired from project to project. She analogised this with being a brand, where workers must see themselves as a business - building and maintaining integrity, merit, and desirability. As in section 4.1, participants A and B placed all responsibility in the employment relationship on the employer rather than both employer and employee, though Participant C, yet to secure ongoing paid work, indicated she has begun to question this arrangement. At a point where she feels there is nothing more she will gain personally or professionally from volunteering, Participant C has begun to question the

professionalism and motives of those she gifts labour to, though she feels unable to speak out within the industry, owing to not wanting to tarnish her 'brand' in an industry where word of mouth and networking are crucial to securing ongoing work. This supports the findings of DDefillippi & Arthur (1998).

4.2.2 'It's not what you know': Networking in the film industry

Where the dominant theme emanating from participants' responses as to how to gain and maintain work in the screen production industry was to prove their worth on set - incorporating the ability to work independently for often long and labour-intensive period of times whilst retaining an obliging, positive demeanour - it was also apparent that nurturing interpersonal relationships during projects was necessary as part of the 'bigger picture'. That is, participants stressed the importance of networking in maintaining a portfolio of ongoing regular project-based work.

Yeah... well I mean jeez if you have a bad reputation you're never going to get work ever. Everybody knows everybody. So I think what they were trying to tell us was 'don't screw up'. You know, like if you screw up, I dunnoh, like a couple of times you're fucked. So you really have to watch yourself, and watch yourself in public too, because you never know who you're going to talk to, who you're going to run into. Don't talk bad about people. (Participant C)

No. No. Word of mouth man. It's so quick. If someone rings up and, you know, is like 'I need a runner' and you're like 'oh, Bob was good, give them a job', you know, and that happens within days. (Participant A)

*Quite often it is – one of the directors knows their Mum, or um, they've been recommended by someone we do work with regularly so it's sort of a little bit of who you know and, yeah, experience so we wouldn't... we wouldn't call **** and say 'who have you got'... because it's just... (Participant B)*

Participant A alluded to the difficulty this presented to certain individuals on set.

So it's about people skills and networking? (Interviewer)

It is. Totally. Which is very hard for technicians (laughs). (Participant A)

Though intended as a light hearted observation, Participant A's comment echoed a theme that emanated from all three participants. Proving their ability to work competently over long hours was not enough to guarantee success if they were not 'liked'. A component of networking was being accepted by co-workers on any given project.

I mean, half the battle with getting into the film industry, or even the theatre industry, is people have gotta like you. If they don't like you – you can be hopeless in what you do- but, unless you go in there and say 'I'm gonna give it a go, I'll do it'. (Participant A)

... but you don't actually know you're just sort of, you just want to kind of keep everyone happy. (Participant B)

Oh for sure, and then they tell you that if they don't like you then they won't call you back, um which makes you start to question yourself. (Participant C)

Speaking to Participant B, it became apparent that aspiring workers must learn to maintain a balance between the personality traits they had described as desirable within the industry. Participant B described attempting to establish rapport ('be liked') was not an effective overall strategy on its own, especially where there is a high turnover of new workers.

And it's funny because when you are that person running around, being all smiley and friendly to everyone, you can tell that they're like 'oh, here's another one'. Especially, you know, the older guy DOPs, or the directors, and they sort of, they don't want, they don't have time to entertain your friendliness, they sort of don't really care and they know that you could be gone tomorrow as well, so they're not interested in getting to know you all the time. (Participant B)

In regards to likeability, Participant C again suggested not all the responsibility should lie with the employee.

It just has to be people that I want to work for, who are nice. Nice people. I just want to work for nice people. I don't need to be [inaudible]. So, yeah at the end of the day I will work so f ing hard for anyone who is nice to me. You know I might have someone I don't really like and they ask me to do quite a lot of stuff and my feet go to the ground right away, and then I have people ask me to go what the others asked me, and I'm more than willing to do it. So... yeah. I have to... I'm always very surprised and happy when I'm on a set and people are nice... and that's when I'm like 'wow I'm really happy and

excited about that and surprised'. Which says something in itself. But then I'll continue wanting to working for them. (Participant C)

Though participants A and B are employed in full time roles, all participants work in and around an industry in which the majority of workers are employed on a project by project basis, and the majority of workers start out in low or no paid subservient roles before progressing to better roles. That is, in an industry bereft of traditional recruitment processes, film industry workers rely on social and networking skills to be promoted and secure ongoing job opportunities. McRobbie (2002) suggests that 'network sociality' in the project-based creative industries workplace has led to a decline in workplace democracy, replaced by an environment where the individual is predominantly responsible for their career progression - though crucial to their success are other workers who together form the social networks necessary to securing ongoing work. In discussing gaining and maintaining work in the New Zealand screen production industry, participants described an environment analogous to that of McRobbie's (2002) findings in the United Kingdom. That is, a workplace where networking and social ties are crucial to success (Baumann, 2002; Blair et al., 2001; Ebbers & Wijnberg, 2009) and workplace democracy is replaced by a fierce independence. Film industry workers are socialised into an environment where an unofficial yet very real set of rules exist, and new workers must adapt to these established systems in order to be successful in the long-term.

4.3 'Gifting labour': Volunteering in the New Zealand screen production industry

4.3.1 'It's expected of you': Reflections on volunteering in the film industry

As outlined in section 4.1.1, all interviewees had been employed in voluntary roles at some point in the New Zealand screen production industry. All three continue to work in the industry, though Participants A and B no longer volunteer their labour. Participant C alternates between paid and voluntary roles, though indicated she is increasingly questioning her situation as regards the latter.

Before reflecting more deeply on volunteering in the industry, participants were asked to relay what amount of work they had undertaken when starting out in the industry had been paid, and what amount had been voluntary.

When I first started, first couple of years, I'd say about 25% paid. And then as things went on and I made a bit of a name for myself I got offered more and more paid work.

(Participant A)

Probably fifteen twenty percent voluntary. (Participant B)

Probably about three quarters. Oh, maybe not, maybe a bit less than that. Ballpark sixty or seventy five. (Participant C)

Participants were then asked for their perception of how common volunteering is throughout the screen production industry.

Quite a lot. I would say every runner, every third assistant, you know, isn't getting paid. Depends on their budget. But I, you know, or they're getting paid \$15 an hour for something that would normally be getting them paid \$400 an hour. And they've gotta do that for three or four jobs before they get a name for themselves, or they're just not coming back. (Participant A)

Um, yeah pretty common from my experience and the experience of people I know who are still volunteering now. (Participant B)

It's everywhere. It's expected of you. I think it's a luxury to be able to say no, that's what it feels like. (Participant C)

How and when participants' made the transition from volunteering to being paid was then discussed, in particular whether they or their employee had initiated remuneration.

For me it happened when I said 'nah I can't do it', and they went 'we'll pay you!' And you go, OK cool. I mean, yeah, once they know about you and you've created a name and people know you are good, people are willing to pay. So, um, it just sorta happens. It's a weird... uh weird thing. And you don't know how much you are worth for ages. That's also the thing. You've got no idea. You go 'oh yeah I'll work for ten bucks, AWESOME!! I'm getting paid! Twenty hours a day? Yeah, no probs!' And then you get a bit older, a bit wiser, and smarter, and then you get paid \$25 for the next job and then \$50, and then you realise... (Participant A)

No it happened, yeah um, as my experience grew, it was sort of like 'oh well you're a bit more kind of like worth something now'. (Participant B)

I've had both. But then also, I guess I've just, I'm listening so I do know that when they - maybe two weekends I worked for free and then the third weekend they said 'you know what we'll pay you' and I was like 'oh that's really nice' but it's fifty dollars for the day and I know they were paying the person before me two hundred dollars a day. (Participant C)

All participants had at some point gifted their labour in the hope of establishing themselves in the film industry, desiring to eventually secure an income and ongoing project work as a result. In a workplace where labour reserve far outweighs the number of roles actually available in the industry (de Bruin & Hanrahan, 2003; Rossiter, 2006), participants viewed volunteering labour as necessary means of proving themselves in a competitive environment. Questioned on how and when they had made the transition from volunteering to being paid, all three participants' experiences were different. Participant A cited greater self-confidence as the turning point, Participant B the confidence of her employers in her ability, while Participant C has still not managed to make the transition. What all responses made evident was a lack of formal systems as regards the transition from volunteering into paid work in the industry. Participants went on to discuss aspects of volunteering they saw as positive, and those as negative, before being asked to suggest how volunteering in their industry might be better regulated.

4.3.2 'Proving your worth': Reflections on positive aspects of volunteering

Participants did not offer a wide range of responses as to the positive aspects of volunteering in the screen production industry. The dominant positive reason to volunteer cited was the opportunity it provided to prove oneself as able; allowing 'word of mouth' to take its course, ideally securing further work for those who volunteered. An interrelated aspect identified was the opportunity volunteering provided to network; word of mouth and networking vital interpersonal tools in regards to securing long-term project-based work in the industry.

No. No. Word of mouth man. It's so quick. If someone rings up and, you know, is like 'I need a runner' and you're like 'oh, Bob was good, give them a job', you know, and that happens within days. (Participant A)

Um, yeah... it goes kind of back to those, the attributes that work well in the industry, and that's just kind of mucking in and being able to lend a hand without the premise of money. And to prove your worth, yeah, um... experience, which you can't buy – you can only do for free or get paid for. Um, and what else... (Participant B)

So it's a good way to, if you do get that chance, to prove that you should be called again. (Participant B)

Um... well there's... if you're lucky you meet someone who likes you who might get you a job. Ah... you meet other people who are in the same situation as you, who possibly down the line could get you some work. Um... and then I guess you do get a little bit of experience, I mean, mainly the jobs they get you to volunteer for are the low jobs, they're not going to get you to volunteer to be a director. Um, so, and I think, the best thing I think is you get to figure out how it works on set. (Participant C)

'Figuring out how it works on set' was also recognised by Participant A, though in the context of giving volunteers the opportunity to ascertain whether ultimately the film industry was suited to them as a career.

Well you just get, you learn a lot, you get thrown in the deep end, and you have to get really clued up really quickly. You find out whether that is where you actually want to work – that's a big one. People do training, work in the industry, and then go 'I don't want to work seventeen hour days', which is, you know, maybe they should do a bit of volunteering before they do training so they know that's actually where they want to work. (Participant A)

Participants suggested two advantages for employers; low (no) cost labour and the opportunity to vet potential employees.

Cheap labour (laughs), and also a way to scope out who is good. (Participant B)

Try before you buy. Save a bit of money. (Participant A)

Free labour. (Participant C)

Participant B stated a potential benefit of her having volunteered might occur in the future.

And... it makes me more mindful of the days to come... in many years time when I will be in charge of a shoot and know what it's like, what it feels like, and what level might be appropriate, even it might have changed by then. (Participant B)

Participants portrayed volunteering, at least initially, as a privilege rather than in any way problematic. Participant B described 'experience, which you can't buy', despite many other industries paying their employees as part of a reciprocal arrangement where new workers are trained in order to perform their role to a level that ultimately benefits both worker and employer. Participant A described volunteering as an opportunity for new workers to decide whether 'seventeen hour days' ultimately suit them in the long-term, though arguably a more formal recruitment process could vet those not suited by way of informing them of what to

expect before they agree to volunteer their time. Participant C suggested that 'if you're lucky you might meet someone who likes you who might get you a job' and that 'you get to figure out how it works on set' - reasonable responses as all participants' answers were - though perhaps problematic when engaging as a volunteer in the long-term. That is, gaining work experience, deciding if you are suited to the industry, and potentially meeting someone prepared to offer you further work are all potential outcomes that could take place over a day or an afternoon of volunteering – though owing to the project-based and informal nature of the film industry recruitment process this is often not the case. Those in charge of projects are not bound by formal systems or obligations to those who 'audition' their labour, and those who are not called back must engage in the same process at the entry point to another project; the exact process Participant C continues to experience.

Though this study did not seek to ascertain the exact motives of those employing workers in the New Zealand screen production industry, participants' responses suggest employing volunteers is not simply about ensuring potential employees are suitable for ongoing work. All three participants stated that the use of volunteers was often a cost-cutting measure. In the film industry an over-supply of aspirant workers puts bargaining power in the hands of employers (McKinlay & Smith, 2009), exerting pressure not only not only those seeking to gain entry to the industry, but also on those already engaged. Workers are conditioned into a survivalist ethic, and employers hold most of the bargaining power.

4.3.3 'A day is enough': Reflections on negative aspects of volunteering

Other than Participant B speculating that volunteers might 'not care as much' or be unreliable, participants identified no disadvantages the use of volunteer labour presented to the employer. As regarded being employed as a volunteer, Participant A identified intentional cost-cutting on the part of employers as problematic.

I get approached ALL the time by major production companies saying 'hey look, we're doing this really exciting project, it's gonna be amazing, have you got some students you can give us for two months to work on this project? It'll be a really great learning experience for them.' And I'm like 'Ok... so, obviously you're going to pay for their gas and you're going to feed them?' 'Oh no.' Well – people need to live, you know?
(Participant A)

And is this sometimes projects with really good budgets? (Interviewer)

Yeah. It totally depends on the director and the producer half the time. (Participant A)

Participant B saw volunteering as unfavourable if and when employers repeatedly used the same personnel without eventually paying them.

So do you think there are any disadvantages to volunteering? For either the volunteer or the employer? (Interviewer)

The volunteer if they repeatedly get used by the same person without pay. Employer... potentially the volunteer not caring as much, you know there might be that unreliability aspect. But, yeah, um... (Participant B)

Participant B also suggested volunteering was problematic where an individual continued to volunteer for a long period of time, or did not secure a mixture of both paid and voluntary roles.

I think it's good for the first six or so months, maybe even a little bit longer. But not all of your work volunteering, but some here and there just to get those lines on your CV, to

get that on set experience and, um, every bit helps, you know, the more you have on there the better... (Participant B)

Participant C was suspicious as to whether employers recruited volunteers for the reasons often stated, such as quality control and ascertaining if new employees can cope with the pace on a film set.

But then do you think there is a counter-argument that employers do use volunteers to weed out the people who are rubbish? (Interviewer)

If they hired you after that, yeah. I think there's probably more people who volunteer that probably never end up getting a job through that same person than there is who do. And I don't necessarily think it's because they are crap. Maybe they were just never going to pay those people, you know, I mean not everybody is like that but there are some pretty shitty productions out there that would. (Participant C)

All three participants agreed that an aspiring worker's chance of forging a career in the industry could be unfairly influenced by their life outside of the industry. Participant B spoke of being grateful she was living with her grandparents during the period of time she was trying to establish herself in the industry, and acknowledged it was more difficult for those not in a similar situation. She identified not only greater financial pressure on these individuals, describing how in some cases people had been forced to compromise their artistic integrity.

*Absolutely, and, well my friend for example, the one who got me the other ***** TV job, she was less into the whole thing than myself, but she was flatting and didn't have someone to stay with, and she had to go for the retail jobs to survive, and ended up in*

insurance for a year. So, um yeah... that's... if you don't have that opportunity, you would really struggle. (Participant B)

Yeah, well while trying to do part time jobs as well. So I think that would compromise some of their availability, as well as, yeah... one girl I'm thinking of in particular, she's 36 and she's been doing a little bit of Second AD and things, but, yeah pretty minimal pay or none on some web TV... webisodes? Whatever the terminology is. People have resorted... well I say resorted because it's not my ideal, but to doing wedding videos and, you know for cash or whatever... (Participant B)

Participant C also spoke of this imbalance, though from the perspective of somebody who hadn't had family or similar support.

But I mean who can afford to be an intern? That's my question. Unless you live with your parents, how are you going to pay your bills? You know, it just doesn't make any sense. (Participant C)

Participant A offered a different perspective on the influence of people's backgrounds, suggesting that being too comfortable might not produce the drive and determination necessary to succeed in the industry.

Well I know a couple of people who spring to mind didn't end up working in film, from a comfy background, didn't end up working in film, they just gave up. Because they didn't actually have to work for anything, you see? (Participant A)

4.3.4 'Thanks so much, you were great': Reflections on formalising volunteering

Over the course of interviewing participants, it became apparent there are no formal systems in place across the industry as regards the employment of volunteer workers. Following discussing this, Participant A suggested that though he would brief volunteers on what tasks needed performing, ultimately the onus lay with the volunteer not the organisation they were recruited by. His responses again touched on the personal traits best suited to the industry – principally the ability to show initiative when on set.

Well, you're so down the ladder when you start you've got someone going 'do this, do this, do this' but it is up to you to go 'how do I do that?' You know, if some guy is saying 'go and move those C-Stands', and you go 'what, what's a C-Stand?' You know, or you just play dumb and you look randomly for something that could be a C-Stand. I've seen it happen; it's hysterical. But you know, um, when I use volunteers you've got to quite specific with everything you tell them to do, because they've never done it before. And you've got to tell them to get off their arse and ask to help people, 'cause otherwise they're just standing around looking lost. So, that's what I mean by getting dropped in it, you really are like 'do this and do this and do this' you know. (Participant A)

I mean, I know if a volunteer is standing around, they're not coming back. You go 'I've got this person and they're just hanging around on set. Doing fuck all.' (Participant A)

Asked if he saw the need for more formal systems for volunteers, Participant A again did not see this as the responsibility of employers – suggesting again it is up to the individual to show initiative once on set.

I think all about the training... all the tutors say like 'tell the students 'till your blue in the face, if you're working on a set, don't stand around, offer to help'. But - that doesn't mean anything to them until they're on a set... It's got no context until they're actually doing it. I don't know how you'd implement a formal system. (Participant A)

When presented with the scenario of how to formally or contractually protect the rights of an individual who volunteers for a long period of time without being offered any payment, Participant A did not think systems could be put in place owing to the way the industry is structured.

Our industry is so, I mean the way the industry is handled.... I don't think that's gonna change! You know, it's all word of mouth. (Participant A)

Following this statement Participant A suggested he had never seen a 'good' worker not eventually get offered payment and further employment opportunities.

Participant B reflected upon her time spent as a volunteer when considering the need for more formal systems to mentor volunteers. Though Participant B spoke of being able to liaise with a senior crew member as to what further work needed doing on set, again initiative and the ability to work autonomously were seen as more favourable.

I... the production manager was often my point of contact. And then they'd give me something to do. I would try and use initiative all the time and do what... if someone needed a hand I'd jump in - if I knew I wasn't meant to be doing something somewhere else. And so, yeah it was always keeping an ear out and I'd always ask as well, I was like you know 'anything else? Anything else?' Just to stay on top of it. So... (Participant B)

... but you know, they're busy they can't focus on you, so... you're aware of that, but, yeah, they're always willing to answer any questions or show you quickly. (Participant B)

Asked to suggest what kind of systems might be put in place to provide volunteer workers with contractual protection, Participant B suggested a system similar to minimum wage laws.

It would be nice if there was some sort of minimum sort of standard. Even if it was a \$50 petrol voucher. If it was just a known. Because, um, even I, um know very experienced freelancers can go weeks without work, and that's just part of it, but also volunteers are gonna be the, newbies are gonna be the worst off. They haven't had years of working and saving up thousands of dollars just to get through those few weeks, so it would be good if there was some system. If you're just starting out... we're humans still... we need some sort of thing to rely on even if it's small. A token that would just make your week a bit easier. (Participant B)

Following the unintentionally dystopian observation that volunteer workers are in fact still human beings, Participant B noted that simply being acknowledged might be enough.

Yeah there's always the 'thanks sooo much, you were great. We'll give you another call' (laughs). Sometimes too being on the call sheet is quite nice. (Participant B)

Sorry explain that? (Interviewer)

So a big production. If you've made it on to the call sheet that's at least your name noticed. (Participant B)

As a possibility if they need somebody? (Interviewer)

Yeah, even just, even if, um, you're the random runner and someone in the art department is like 'oh who was that girl that helped'. I don't know if they do that. I don't know even know if they care. (Participant B)

Participant C echoed this sentiment.

I've done a lot of volunteer work where I've got nothing out of it at all, like sometimes not even thank you. (Participant C)

Questioned on formal systems to protect volunteers, Participant C identified an imbalance in agreed pay rates, as well as a lack of agreed minimum wage rates across the industry.

*Well people will call and say 'can I have some Newbies?' Which a) means no work or no pay, or one hundred and fifty dollars a day, which is the lowest, well you can get lower than that, but anyway, I was working on ***** and I was getting very low pay to the point where like ***** and I were jokingly comparing our salaries. ***** was like 'I bet I'm earning less than you', and I was like 'I bet I'm earning less than you', and ***** said 'well what's the bet?' And then, ah 'cause you know ***** feels on a lower... ***** always feels like the lowest on production. Um, and I was like 'I'll bet your salary that I'm earning less than you'... and I was like earning ***** dollars less than ***** a day. And ***** was like 'oh my god'. And I started off thinking 'oh that's an alright salary', and then I started hearing what everyone else was earning, and I was like 'holy shit'. (Participant C)*

Though not directly suggesting the length of time an individual is employed as a volunteer should be regulated, Participant C stated people were often used as volunteers for a longer period of time than the purpose volunteering supposedly serves.

It's just, I think it should be really reduced... I mean you don't need... it's like you're dating somebody. You need maybe three dates, and then you know if you like them or you don't. So, why would you continue dating them knowing for three months? It's like, you either know or you don't. (Participant C)

Asked to suggest how the volunteering process might be formalised to protect volunteer workers better, participants again placed the majority of responsibility on the volunteer not the employer. Participant A's comment that he had never seen a 'good' worker not get further work offered a poignant reflection on the informal set of rules the film industry operates under, where if you are 'good' enough you will gain further employment and therefore do not need formal protection. Problematically there is no formal industry definition of what 'good' is, and no formal agreement for those who volunteer their labour, 'good' or otherwise. Working in an industry they 'love', where work is fast paced, project-based, and relational contracts take precedence over transactional ones (Ebbers & Wijnberg, 2009), questions of ethics or contracts are perhaps "uncool" and "old economy" (Ashton, 2011). Freelancers are socialised into an environment where inconsistent pay, long hours, and comparatively poor working conditions are factors of employment they must embrace (Rowlands, 2009). The two best suggestions participants offered as to how to formalise volunteering, thus better protecting volunteers, were a mandatory expression of gratitude on the part of employers, and a minimum shift payment of a petrol voucher. This suggests an industry driven drive to legislate the use of volunteers will not occur in the near future.

4.4 'What do you mean by creative?': Participants' reflections on creativity in their workplace

As one of the themes explored in the final section of this chapter is the role that a volunteer's personality plays in being exploited, participants were asked to reflect on creativity in their role and more generally creativity within the screen production workplace. The participants offered contrasting feedback on creativity and their work; perhaps not surprising seeing as an exact definition of creativity continues to be debated across a range of academic disciplines. Participant A equated creativity in his role with problem solving, as well as being able to lend his own style to collaborative projects

Well, it's technical but in that you collaborate with people, you give people options, you'll go 'OK here's my skills and I'm going to match up my skills of what I know with what you know and we're gonna come up with something, and yeah, I often get given content and they're like 'make it look good' (Laughs) So you just go for it, and you lend your style to that project... and that's why I love it you know, I'd go nuts if I was doing the same thing day in and day out. I thrive on learning stuff. (Participant A)

Oh, I would say, oh that's a hard one... um... I've got to come up with really crazy solutions to things on a daily basis that people never think of. And that's probably my specialty. But then, in terms of enjoying the creativity I would say I probably enjoy fifty percent of it. (Participant A)

In comparing his roles as a technical worker to writing and directing, Participant A described how understanding of the technical limitations of film making provided parameters for his own creativity.

It's that thing where I would just say in terms of being able to focus on one thing it's probably less creative than say a director or a writer or an editor... editor is probably closer to what I do. A writer or a director, or somebody who is not bound by technical limitations probably has more freedom to be creative because they don't necessarily understand their limitations. (Participant A)

Participant B echoed statements she had made earlier when asked what appealed to her about working in the film industry – that though she didn't consider herself creative she liked contributing to the creative process.

How do you perceive the level of creativity in your role compared to that of others in the industry? (Interviewer)

Compared to the technical ones, um, yeah far less. But... still a huge contribution to it. In that... well, I don't know, nothing can happen without it. Yeah, so to some extent it's always involved, but it's not the driving force behind the creativity. (Participant B)

Participant C had very exact views on which roles on the film set were creative and which were not.

Because I mean really, at the end of the day, there's only three roles that are creative. There's writing, directing, and camera. Everything else you're assisting the production... unless of course you're the costume designer, but that's not even... (Participant C)

Where Participant A had discussed creativity as part of a collaborative process, Participant C equated creativity with having some degree of control.

Yeah but you're not, um, you're assisting the production, you haven't created it, you know where the writer, the director and the cinematographer get together and decide what it's gonna look like. (Participant C)

Equating creativity with a feeling of control was perhaps not surprising, seeing as Participant C was the only of the three still attempting to secure regular paid work in her preferred role.

It depends what you mean by creative, it's very subjective. The roles I've mainly done thus far have not been very creative, um I've been assisting people in their roles. I consider creativity the ability to dream up and execute my own idea' like, writing and directing. So according to me, and this is just my opinion, I haven't been working in creative roles for the most part... at least not paid ones. (Participant C)

All three participants offered quite different opinions on creativity, both as it pertained to their roles and to their workplace in general. Participant A identified aspects of his work as creative, though did not consider himself in a creative role in the vocational sense and identified above the line roles such as writing and directing as such. Participant B saw herself as assisting the creative process, while Participant C offered the most radical response in suggesting only three roles in the production of a film are creative; directing, camerawork and writing. These general questions on creativity were asked in order to elicit deeper reflection on the role a creative temperament plays in individuals offering to volunteer time or secure fair working conditions for themselves in the film industry. As discussed in section 4.5, Participant C saw no correlation between the two points, though Participants A and B did see a distinction

between how those they identified as creative conducted themselves compared to others in the industry.

4.5 'Just part of the job': Reflections on exploitation in the context of volunteering

Over the course of the interviews participants discussed why people volunteer their labour to the film industry. As the industry is project-based, and being regularly employed relies upon establishing oneself in informal networks, volunteering was seen as crucial to becoming known in the industry. 'Becoming known' first involved proving oneself as a competent worker - able to cope with the stamina required for long days on set and able to work autonomously yet function as part of a team. 'Becoming known' also required the ability to network - being 'liked' was seen as essential, as was 'word of mouth' in gaining further (and paid) employment. But participants also noted a lack of formal agreements between volunteer and employer across the sector, leading to reflection on whether volunteers are always used by film crews for the above reasons.

Well... yeah. I mean, a lot of the time volunteers are just used as labourers. So they'll be doing really hard physical work for nothing... (Participant A)

I mean there are a lot of people in the industry. They probably only trying people out because the people they use aren't available. (Participant A)

I think it also gives certain people who would do tasks normally the permission to get volunteers to do the shit work that they don't want to do because they know the volunteers are not going to say no. They're not in a position to say no. (Participant C)

I think there's probably more people who volunteer that probably never end up getting a job through that same person than there is who do. And I don't necessarily think it's because they are crap. Maybe they were just never going to pay those people, you know, I mean not everybody is like that but there are some pretty shitty productions out there that would. (Participant C)

When directly questioned as to whether aspects of volunteering labour in the industry were exploitative, all participants agreed some were. Participants B and C equated exploitation with the length of time an individual was employed as a volunteer.

Not from my own experience, but I think from people that I do see who are still doing it a year and a half later, yes, because they, especially on short films and smaller projects that are quite independent... they have difficult directors or people who are like 'oh just a few more hours' and, you know, they've ended up being exploited. But they do it because they want the experience and a reference and, um, to say they worked on that project, um, so yeah... not my own experience, but I know that it happens. (Participant B)

I think when you've passed that stage of checking that person out, then you are exploiting them. If you make them feel like they have to, even if you say it with a smile and sweet words, like they're being stupid not to, then you are exploiting them. Um, you shouldn't have to manipulate people to work for free. They tell you 'oh well... if you want to get your foot in the door'... (Participant C)

Continuing to reflect on how she perceived the informal understanding between volunteer and employer could be manipulated by the latter, Participant C discussed meeting contacts.

I think it's abusive. If I think about it I've been trying to get work for a year and a half, and people are still expecting me to work for free – and not only are they expecting me to work for free, they tell you things overtly or not overtly: 'this is where you get to meet contacts'. You don't fucking get to meet contacts. That's how they get people to work for free... and... Because they make you feel like you have to, because this is how you get your foot in the door. (Participant C)

Despite her frustration, Participant C (owing to the importance of networking and 'being liked') has not made her thoughts on volunteering known in the industry. Participant B discussed the dilemma facing volunteers in terms of networking and the word of mouth recruitment process.

But that's also whether they, I think there's, because of the whole networking thing it's harder to stand up and say 'no, I don't want to do this anymore' because if you burn a bridge with that person when you're not even being paid, you know that could be... that could be negative for you in the long-term... but you don't actually know you're just sort of, you just want to kind of keep everyone happy. (Participant B)

Prompted to reflect on the role a creative temperament plays in offering to volunteer time, Participant C saw no correlation between the two points. Participants A and B, however, did believe those they perceived as 'creative people' were more likely to volunteer their time, linking this with a tendency to be less objective than themselves.

So do you think those in more creative roles are more likely to volunteer their labour?
(Interviewer)

Yes (laughs). I think they have slightly different ideals and notions of what volunteering will lead to for them. Um... (Participant B)

And what do you mean by that? (Interviewer)

Well in production you're quite realistic and you know that it's only, you know, if you're not getting a call back it's not happening, whatever, I don't know... I'm on the wrong train of thought there but... (Participant B)

No you are - you're making perfect sense. (Interviewer)

I think, just from the creative people I know that are struggling still, they're just, they're a bit more easier with their time. They're not seeing themselves as a little business. They're sort of like, 'oh that'll be great'... I don't know (laughs) that sounds really bad, like it's derogatory to them or something. They're just slightly more idealistic than realistic, and, so... yeah. (Participant B)

I think creative people are probably more likely to take less money for what they do. You look at actors or dancers or, 'yeah great, ah, I'll do it'... you know. Whereas technical people, because they are very aware of all the steps... so I'll go to a meeting and people will go 'OK yes, so we need to this this this and this and this'. I have quite a clear idea of how many hours that's going to take me, how hard it's going to be, and what the possibilities of it not working are. So I feel more justified going 'nah, I'm not going to... you're going to have to pay me more money to do that. It's not worth two grand, you know, whereas I think when you're sort of in that creative space and you're allowed to be in that creative space and you don't have to worry about the tricky bits, you're more willing to take less money. (Participant A)

Participant B observed those seeking creative roles tended to find it harder to find more permanent work.

Um, yeah pretty common from my experience and the experience of people I know who are still volunteering now. Most of them are the ones who did screenwriting and directing, the more creative ones. They're the ones who are struggling more to find even running jobs because... I don't know why. Maybe they're easier to push over; I'm not sure (laughs). Could be. I think that a lot of them say straight up they studied directing, and people are like 'oh, ok you want to be a director'... there's a little bit of instant judgement there, to an extent. (Participant B)

Participants were asked whether the exploitative aspects of volunteering they had identified were acknowledged within the industry. Again participants' responses were indicative of their current employment status – participants A and B currently employed in full time roles in the industry and Participant C still seeking longer term employment at market rates.

I wouldn't say it's normally acknowledged... except for the people getting shafted (laughs). You know, I think, it is what it is deal with it. It's harsh man. (Participant A)

... it kind of comes with the territory. You might not be getting paid shit all, but you earn your way there eventually, yeah. (Participant B)

I don't think there's that much. Everybody knows it happens. Nobody talks about it. You know, um... yeah it's kinda, I'm sure it's not directly said but it's kind of a feeling of 'well who do you think you are to ask for money?' You know at the end of the day what

*are we but our labour? So by subtly saying that, or the film industry subtly saying that or expecting that of you tells you something about the value of the human [inaudible]. So, no one's going to want to talk about it, especially if they're in the position of doing it, but, like I've been on film crews for **** months, I don't know, and I was on ***** last year, and I got some calls through them, and I was asking 'at what point am I not a Newbie?' (Participant C)*

Finally, Participant C offered an analogy regarding her experience as a volunteer.

I think it borders on forced labour. It's like slavery in a sense. If you think about the fact that you don't feel like you can say no, um, there's all these advantages to you saying yes to them and all these disadvantages to you saying no to them, it's almost like you are forced to do it. Unless you have the courage, the self confidence, or the stubbornness to be like 'oh no thank you I'm OK'. That's what slavery is. It's forced labour. (Participant C)

Participants readily identified that volunteers are used as no-cost labourers, or used when more suitable personnel are not available, even deployed 'to do the shit work' that others on set do not wish to engage in. Participant C suggested volunteers might be used where there was never the possibility of future employment prospects to begin with, a sentiment implied in other participants' statements. Expanding upon this, Participants B and C suggested that the longer an individual works as a volunteer, the more potential there is for them to be taken advantage of – be it due to working an extended number of hours for free on one project with no progression to payment or more permanent employment, or volunteering on many projects over time and not securing more meaningful roles. Participant C made a link between the project-based nature of the film industry and the decreasing opportunities continuing to volunteer presents, describing a situation whereby those recruiting for new projects insist

volunteering is essential to ‘getting a foot in the door’ and meeting contacts, seemingly unaware a number of volunteers already know many or all personnel on set, owing to the fact they have had their ‘foot in the door’ as a volunteer for weeks, months, or even years.

Previous investigations of the creative industries labour force have suggested that creative people are more prone to exploitation than their fellow workers (Ashton, 2011; Gibson, 2003). When beginning to explore this theme in section 4.4, all three offered different feedback on the role of creativity in their workplace. Participant A identified aspects of his role as creative, though did not see it his as an overtly creative role when compared to above the line personnel such as writers and directors. Participant B saw her role as contributing to the creative process, though not creative in itself. Participant C insisted that only three roles in the industry were creative; writing, cinematography, and directing. Asked if those seeking employment in more creative roles were more prone to exploitation, Participants A and B – who had identified their own roles as not overtly creative ones – suggested ‘creative people’ in the industry tended to be more idealistic, where those in technical and organisational roles tended to be more realistic, increasing the potential for those pursuing creative roles to be taken advantage of. Participant A framed this in terms of those in technical roles taking more time to evaluate whether potential projects were feasible or worth their time, while Participant B framed this in terms of creative people being ‘more free with their time’ and ‘easier to push over’. Though neither suggested it, there is also an argument that above the line roles are harder to become established and successful in than others. There are relatively few key above the line roles available in the industry, thus aspirant workers with their sights set firmly on such positions engage in a more lengthy process to becoming established, and not all will enjoy eventual success. Participant C saw no link between possessing a creative temperament and a higher likelihood of being exploited. Overall, participants’ thoughts on exploitation in the context of volunteering identified a more pressing theme than the role of a creative temperament in perceived levels of exploitation; that of the suppression of any public discussion of the unfair aspects of volunteering for the film industry.

Asked to directly reflect on the exploitative aspects of gifting labour to the screen production industry, participants' responses again drew attention to a key problem: the necessity to build 'social capital' within the industry. That is, when 'being liked' and networking are essential to securing further work in a project-based industry, participants readily suggested volunteering can be exploitative when in a private interview setting, though none had or would let these thoughts be known to fellow workers or employers. 'Network sociality' (McRobbie, 2002) dictates that it is in film industry workers best interests to not publically question aspects of their employment they view as inequitable; 'nobody talks about it', 'it's just part of the job', and 'they're not in a position to say no'.

In summarising participants' responses as to whether those who volunteer their labour in the New Zealand screen industry are exploited, a one-dimensional answer would be 'no' if volunteering occurs for a short period of time and the volunteer progresses to securing ongoing paid work on further projects, and 'yes' if the volunteer continues to gift his or her labour and does not progress in the industry as a result of doing so. But there are much wider themes to consider.

4.6 'Socialised into silence': Further reflection on participants' responses

Throughout the course of the interviews all three participants acknowledged informal 'rules' crucial to gaining and maintaining work in the industry. In an industry where workers must compete for ongoing project work rather than permanent contracts in 'traditional' organisations, it is acknowledged within the industry that stamina, the ability to work autonomously, networking skills, and being 'liked' are crucial to forging a long-term career. However, where participants were asked to discuss aspects of the film industry's employment model they perceived as unfair or unjust, all provided examples, though emphasised that within the industry these shortcomings are not negotiable - rather an unspoken about aspect of being employed in the industry.

Tellingly, Participant C (as the only participant still seeking regular paid employment in the industry) was the only participant who continually questioned what is ultimately expected of workers, specifically volunteers, throughout the interview process. Despite acknowledging that 'if you have a bad reputation you're never going to work again ever' and that 'you really have to watch yourself, and watch yourself in public too because you never know who you're going to talk to, who you're going to run into', when provided with the opportunity to participate in this study Participant C was able to articulate apparent power imbalances between employer and employee. Having volunteered for a significantly longer period of time than participants A and B, Participant C alluded to a lack of cohesion on some projects, stating a desire to work only with professionals - crucially those with 'integrity', implying she had encountered otherwise thus far. Past the point of 'running around, being all smiley and friendly', Participant C's situation highlights a problematic aspect of the screen production industry's informal recruitment systems - principally that if you do not progress from regularly volunteering, doing so for a longer period of time begins to present no further benefits other than the hope of being eventually offered paid work. Participant C has become more selective in selecting what projects she volunteers for, such that she might manoeuvre her into a better position, as well as minimising her feelings of being taken advantage of.

Freelance film industry workers are conditioned to accept an environment where inconsistent pay, long hours, a lack of formal regulations and a power imbalance favouring the employer are features of employment they must accept (Rowlands, 2009). Many perceive that their industry as possesses a particular social cache; as 'cool' or 'glamorous', arguably contributing to many workers' embrace of such conditions. The rhetoric employed by advocates of the creative industries, such as Banks and O'Connor (2009) and Florida (2002) - and embraced by government policy makers in New Zealand and worldwide - promotes the creative industries labour force as emancipated from traditional employment arrangements; flexible, exciting, free and self-fulfilled. This is despite the fact that the only attention paid to labour laws in the local film industry in the past decade has been to alter the Employment Relations Act (2000) (as part of the deal between the Government and Warner Brothers to keep *The Hobbit* production in New Zealand) such that all local film industry workers are classified as

independent contractors, removing benefits that would be afforded to those classified as employees such as overtime and holiday pay (Roberts, 2010).

In the past decade there has been a proliferation of industry-based tertiary training courses (Blair et al., 2003; Hesmondhalgh & Baker, 2010a; Randle & Culkin, 2009), though despite the growth of the New Zealand film industry there are still more people graduating from film schools than there are available roles in the industry. An excess of aspirant workers, trained or otherwise, exerts pressure across the whole industry. Excessive labour supply and a project-based employment structure place bargaining power firmly with the employers, meaning they negotiate pay rates and conditions reflective of competition created by the number of people seeking to enter the industry (McKinlay & Smith, 2009). Workers, whether established or otherwise, feel in constant competition with others, be it colleagues or those seeking initial employment (Rowlands, 2009).

Ashton (2011) asserts that a constant supply of free labour is a large part of the reason paid jobs stay in short supply. He suggests that the challenge for aspirant workers in the film industry is to challenge norms and assumptions on volunteer labour, and value their own work and seek appropriate remuneration. But in an industry that is project-based, relational contracts often take precedence over transactional ones, and participants' responses to interview questioning clearly identified a fear of speaking out about employment arrangements, particularly when attempting to forge a career as an aspiring volunteer worker. Though the individual motivations of those responsible for running different film production projects cannot be measured, there is a case to be made that employers in the industry do not set out to exploit their workers, rather they operate to their advantage in an under regulated industry over supplied with labour. New Zealand's screen production sector has always operated as a project-based industry, traditionally under resourced and reliant on loose networks of committed personnel. Despite a large growth in infrastructure, project output and revenue since 2000 (Lealand, 2011), workplace contracts and conditions are still largely reflective of the industry's 'cottage industry' beginnings.

Participant C's closing observation, that volunteering borders on forced labour, 'it's slavery in a sense', is not entirely accurate; slaves are held against their will, volunteer workers in the New Zealand film industry are not. Though understandably frustrated owing to not having yet secured regular paid work in the industry, and often feeling like she cannot turn down potential opportunities that involve gifting labour at the outset, Participant C is not necessarily outwardly deceived by management. Her situation, and similar situations faced by others who volunteer for an extended period of time in the film industry in the hope of advancement, are a result of those involved in the industry not publically questioning longstanding terms and conditions of employment.

In sharing their experiences, participants described an industry lacking in regulation where the rights of employees are concerned, and an environment where workers must compete with one and other in a market over supplied with aspirant workers. If lucky enough to secure employment, film industry workers willingly engage in a sector where pay rates are inconsistent, transactional contracts are malleable, and 'being liked' is essential to securing ongoing project work, as is networking. Describing a workplace where most if not all of the bargaining power lies with the employee, participants openly and frankly acknowledged aspects of the employment model they saw as unfair, even exploitative. Though willing to share such candid observations as anonymous contributors to an academic study, their responses indicated such issues are seldom, if ever, vocalised within the industry. Participants' unwillingness to speak out did not seem sinister, rather they offered a collective 'shoulder shrug' as to how the industry operates, suggesting the conditions that come with working in the industry ensure that only those most suited survive – 'you just deal with it' and 'get on with it'. In an industry lacking in regulation where the rights of employees are concerned, workers are conditioned into an environment over-supplied with aspirant workers where 'being liked' and networking are crucial to gaining and maintaining ongoing project work. Speaking out is counter-productive.

CHAPTER FIVE

Conclusion

5.1 Overview of research findings

This thesis set out to establish whether the large number of people who volunteer their labour to the creative industries economic sector can ultimately find themselves in a position that exploits the gifting of their labour. As an investigation of the use of volunteers across the entire creative industries sector was not possible within the confines of this research, the experiences of those who volunteer their labour to the New Zealand screen production industry became the focus of examination. A case study of three individuals currently engaged in the industry provided both their personal reflections on, and personal experiences of working in the New Zealand film industry. Though the study specifically sought reflections on the use of volunteers in the sub-sector, those who participated also offered their reflections on working in the industry in general, including discussing informal rules that govern the employment model, personal attributes that successful film workers must possess, and the day to day operation and structure of the workplace.

When questioned, participants readily identified aspects of volunteering labour to the New Zealand screen production industry as exploitative. However, they also described a workplace where 'social capital' is crucial to gaining and maintaining on-going (and paid) work. In an environment where 'being liked' and networking are crucial to vocational success, what emerged from the research that was of greater significance than ascertaining whether aspects of voluntarism are exploitative, is that this exploitation is not openly acknowledged within the industry. It is counter-productive for workers who compete for short-term project work in an industry over supplied with labour to question the conditions of their employment.

The competitive, project-based nature of film work in New Zealand is not dissimilar to the workplace structure of the sector in the United States and United Kingdom. However a recent change in labour law concerning film workers in New Zealand has entrenched the labour force as independent contractors (Roberts, 2010). This means they are not entitled to the same

fringe benefits as their off-shore counterparts, which include holiday pay, sick leave, and superannuation benefits (Rowlands, 2009), appearing at odds with the 'flexible and free' workplace espoused by creative industries policymakers and those such as Florida (2002) who promote it.

Though those who participated in the study acknowledged the significance possessing a creative temperament plays in how individuals approach and view their work, this factor did not emerge as of particular significance when participants discussed the exploitative aspects of voluntarism in the sector. The motivation of employers did however seem to play a significant role in determining whether volunteers felt mistreated. In an industry where there is little regulation concerning the use of volunteers, employers are not bound to a code dictating how and why they use free labour. Where many employers observe the informal understanding in the industry, offering gainful employment to those who volunteer and prove they are suitable for the work, participants identified that some employers use the volunteer labour force as a constant supply of no-cost labour. Though it could be argued that this is not unscrupulous on the part of those operating projects, but rather a logical capitalist response to a scenario that has arisen due to a lack of formal regulation within the industry, participants did identify the recruitment practices of some employers as problematic.

However, participants did not place all culpability for the exploitative aspects of volunteering on the employer. What also emerged was that there are character traits desirable to employers that cannot be taught. Desirable character traits include possessing a positive demeanour, being able to cope with long and often demanding work days, the ability to work autonomously, as well as being a skilled networker - entrepreneurial in securing on-going project work. Individuals not possessing these traits, who thus do not progress in the industry, may spend an extended period of time volunteering from project to project and not offered more meaningful work.

In attempting to ascertain whether the use of volunteers in the creative industries, specifically New Zealand's screen production sector, is exploitative, this thesis revealed other interrelated themes. Using grounded theory method to analyse the data gathered by way of

interviewing three screen production workers highlighted a broader problem facing workers in the sector. That is, in an industry where work is project-based and over supplied with labour, where workers need to maintain favour as well as possess networking skills, film industry crew are conditioned into an environment where vocalising any concern with the employment model is counter-productive, detrimental even, to securing further work.

The project-based employment structure of the screen production industry has been referred to in creative industries literature as the 'boundaryless career' (Arthur & Rousseau, 1996), where excited accounts of the 'new creative class' have portrayed those who work in the sector as freed up from traditional workplace models. This rhetoric has influenced creative industries policy makers, both in New Zealand and abroad (Banks & O'Connor, 2009). However the optimism of such rhetoric does nothing to redress a lack of labour laws designed to protect the New Zealand screen production worker. The reflections shared by participants in this study described an industry with little regulation where the rights of workers are concerned, both within the industry and under New Zealand law. Though those volunteering their labour to the screen production sector do so willingly in the hope of securing more permanent and paid work, trying to earn prestige before payment is problematic where it does not eventually have the desired outcome for the volunteer worker concerned.

Those who continue to volunteer their time without progressing in the industry currently have access to no formal systems where it comes to agreed terms and conditions, and it is difficult for them to manoeuvre themselves into a position to negotiate. The individual volunteering their labour to the New Zealand screen production sector is not enmeshing themselves in an employment model intentionally created to minimise their bargaining power. Rather, the situation has arisen due to a combination of a surplus of aspirant workers competing for limited roles, a disconnect between tertiary training institutions and the industry, a lack of regulation both from within the industry and 'above', and the often idealistic motivation of the creative worker. Finally, volunteers continue to have little or no bargaining power due to reluctance, both on the part of workers and employers in the New Zealand screen production sector, to address what is a widespread – often covert and complex in its motives –

practice within the industry. Incidences of volunteers finding themselves in a position that in due course is exploitative might be lessened if a dialogue were initiated within the industry as to the rights and responsibilities of both volunteer and employer during this temporary employment arrangement.

5.2 Limitations of research findings

The primary limitation in undertaking this thesis was time. This had an effect on the scope of the study, both in terms of the breadth of the topic and the collection of data. A larger number of case studies would have provided the potential to gain more perspectives, and potentially more diversity in the data. Limited time, and therefore a limit in the number of case studies undertaken, meant that a decision was made to only study the use of volunteers from the perspective of the employee, where there is salience in undertaking research from the perspective of the employer also. Another limitation imposed by time was the decision to concentrate on the creative industries sub-sector of screen production, where initially it was hoped there may be able to be some comparison and contrast between sectors as to the reasons people volunteer their labour to the creative industries. This study was also limited by not exploring the differences between independent not-for-profit film projects and organisations, and those primarily driven by a commercial imperative. The study instead chose to concentrate on those volunteering their time to the latter, where arguably a more thorough investigation of the role a creative temperament plays in the decision to volunteer would have occurred if not-for-profit projects were included.

Limited time also meant interviewing three individuals who had undertaken film industry-specific tertiary training; had there have been a longer grace period available to source study participants, gaining the perspective of film industry workers not tertiary trained would have provided further variety in the data. The fact that the Participant A, who has been in the industry for twelve years, had been involved in the industry the longest was also a limitation. Research for this project indicated that how individuals gain and maintain work in the screen production sector has changed over the course of time, in that the market used to be far less

competitive, and there was far less training available. The perspective of a longer-term film industry worker ('veteran') was missing from this study. Finally, this study was limited by the fact that two of the three participants are employed in 'traditional' full-time roles in the industry, contracted to a set amount of hours with fringe benefits. Where the literature and the focus of the study concentrates on the fact that most screen production workers are project-based contractors, two interview participants were not. However their contributions did offer relevant reflections on the project-based structure of their industry, and indeed their own experiences of attempting to gain work in such an environment.

5.2 Potential areas for further research

This thesis contributes to a growing international body of work concerning the experiences and workplace environments of the cultural sector's labour force. In New Zealand there has been little published work addressing the film sector's labour force, with New Zealand based studies of film tending to focus on aesthetics, nationhood or government policy. There is potential for further New Zealand based research on the experiences of creative industries workers and the nature of their workplace in a general sense, seeing as there is currently a lack of literature available in this field. As regards the volunteering of labour in New Zealand, there is potential for a less vocationally specific study of the current lack of government legislation protecting the rights of individuals who volunteer their time to commercially motivated organisations.

Globally there is scope for further investigation into the use of volunteers across all creative industries sub-sectors. At a grass roots level there has been a recent surge of activism regarding the problematic aspects of the increased use of interns across all economic sectors (Intern, 2011; Perlin, 2011), as well as specifically in the creative industries sector, predominantly in the sub-sectors of advertising and fashion (Gardner, 2010; Try & Rickett, 2009). This, coupled with the recent creative industries research into production, labour, subjectivity and experience in the sector (Hesmondhalgh & Baker, 2010b; McRobbie, 2002;

Ursell, 2000) has created an environment where further research into the use and experiences of volunteers is of relevance.

Lastly, there is a new kind of creative industries volunteer emerging. Online, companies have begun outsourcing tasks normally performed by an employee or contractor to an undefined group of people (the public). The working consumer contributes to production via performing self-service tasks, designing or customising products, participating in product development, competing to solve specific tasks or problems, permanent open calls for the submission of information, rating products, or providing customer to customer support (Kleemann, Gunter, & Rieder, 2008). As crowdsourcing grows as a legitimate cost cutting measure for commercial organisations, and an individual's free time becomes free labour for these organisations, there is potential for further research into the crowdsourced volunteer.

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APPENDIX A

Transcript of Interview with Participant A

Interview A:

Male, 30, full time Technical Coordinator @ tertiary film training provider.

INTERVIEWER: Tell me first about how you got started in the film industry, and how long you've been involved.

PARTICIPANT A: Right, well I was at school in Sixth Form, got bored with school, went... moved to Sydney. Went to TAFE Polytech over there and did a year-long Diploma in Film and Television production... no well, it was a year-long Certificate at first, and um, you know, really enjoyed that, and we're shooting on Beta cams and all that stuff. And, um, that was all exciting, and then they said 'look we're offering a diploma if you pass all your things... so passed... lots of politics as per usual...'

INTERVIEWER: What do you mean by politics?

PARTICIPANT A: Ah... they... I passed everything, then they said 'you're not accepted' then I said 'but you said if I passed I'd get in' and they went 'oh we've got too bigger numbers...' so I couldn't start until April the following year. But ended up finishing with a Diploma in Film and TV production majoring in Sound Design, and um, while I was doing it really got into 3D animation using 3D Studio Max, ah, the only problem being I trained on Fairlights which we don't have in NZ. Came back to NZ, there's no Fairlights... nobody is going to let a newbie near the few they do have. So I started doing 3D animation for a couple of films using 3D Studio Max, then just worked my arse off helping lots of, you know doing free jobs running around the place trying to make a name for myself, then got a job at *****.

INTERVIEWER: What's the timeframe on this?

PARTICIPANT A: Got there the beginning of 2000. Left end of 2004. Did a bit of an OE.

INTERVIEWER: So you did four years of study over there?

PARTICIPANT A: Well, no it was two spread over about three years. I got back to NZ in 2004.

INTERVIEWER: Right.

PARTICIPANT A: Found it hard to get work 'cause I was a newbie. Didn't know anybody. Then got a job at ***** as a film technician.

INTERVIEWER: Have you always performed the same role or task or job in the industry?

PARTICIPANT A: The thing about me is that I'm an all-rounder. So... I always thought I didn't know enough... so I trained myself in camera, editing, sound posts, um, you name it I've probably done it. When I got the job at *****, I thought 'I'm not going to know enough', and I got there and I knew far too much and everybody liked me 'cause I was telling them 'you shouldn't be doing it that way, you should be doing it this way.

INTERVIEWER: So what is your role at *****?

PARTICIPANT A: Well my latest role is Technical Coordinator, and basically we get gear ready for students, and I teach, I do tech stuff, I get all AVID systems and UNITY based systems running. I manage all the editing suites, all the computers, and then I help teach editing classes and then I've got more into theatre recently doing AV design. So I do shows that the whole show is basically AV playback where you really need to know all your editing stuff. Through that I've started teaching AV design at *****. Which is quite funny considering I never actually, ***** had nothing to do with it, it was just something I started doing off my own back.

INTERVIEWER: Outside of the ***** stuff, if you looked back at all the roles you've performed, what roles have you been employed in the industry?

PARTICIPANT A: Editor, cameraman, DVD authoring, sound post...

INTERVIEWER: So if you look back from when you studied to now, what sort or percentage of work since then, roughly, what sort of percentage of work would have been paid and how much would have been voluntary?

PARTICIPANT A: When I first started, first couple of years, I'd say about 25% paid. And then as things went on and I made a bit of a name for myself I got offered more and more paid work. And you know I often get asked to stay... people will go... 'look we need someone to film, edit, make up projections, do this thing, do that thing, and do this other thing. Do you know anybody else who can do that?' And I say 'no, actually I don't know anybody else who could do it all and be dependable.' I know lots of people who could do it, but not many people who are dependable to do it.

INTERVIEWER: When you were volunteering a lot more early on, what sort of roles? Was it anything to get on set?

PARTICIPANT A: At first anything to get on set... lugging gear around, um, trying to be as clued up as possible, um...

INTERVIEWER: What sort of projects?

PARTICIPANT A: Music videos, a couple of TV things... did some animation in Sydney as well. I think the trick is you just always say yes, no matter whether you can do it or not (laughs). And you work it out on the job.

INTERVIEWER: What appealed to you about working in the industry?

PARTICIPANT A: I grew up in a theatre family... mother's an actor, brother's a composer, step-mother's a dancer, aunt's an actor.... so at first wanted to be an actor, thought it was great. Then I thought 'actually I want to do something that differentiates me from the rest of the family', and I've always been quite sort of techy in the way I approach things, and I never really thought about it at first, doing film, and film was probably just an excuse to get out of the country. And then I found I really loved it.

INTERVIEWER: Has your feeling about this changed in anyway?

PARTICIPANT A: Yeah (laughs). It has. As I've gone on... it's horrible to say. As I've gone on I probably want less and less to do with theatre... and less and less to do with film. Because it's so demanding... it just takes SO much out of you. There's a thing that happens with technology and artists I reckon... so... if something doesn't work and they don't understand it. They just go 'oh my computer's blown up... and I'm going to die'.... you know I get this.... I get people ringing me at 1.30 in the morning going 'my laptop has just stopped working and I need to output a cut for RNZ' and you're constantly dealing with that. And once it's dealt with people are like 'yeah thanks. Cool', but you've had to rearrange your life to assist them.

INTERVIEWER: Based on your observations of over a decade, has the method by which people are attempting to get into the industry changed?

PARTICIPANT A: Not really. I mean, half the battle with getting into the film industry, or even the theatre industry, is people have gotta like you. If they don't like you – you can be hopeless in what you do- but, unless you go in there and say 'I'm gonna give it a go, I'll do it'. 'Do you know what you're doing?' 'No idea, but I'll do it'. You're not gonna get hired again.

INTERVIEWER: So it's about people skills and networking?

PARTICIPANT A: It is. Totally. Which is very hard for technicians (laughs).

INTERVIEWER: If I could contextualise my question about routes into the industry, do you notice there are more people trying to get into the industry as a result of more training courses?

PARTICIPANT A: Yeah. But how you get in, it's still the same thing.

INTERVIEWER: But still the same number of roles? Surely that has increased in NZ?

PARTICIPANT A: There's a few more digital editing roles.

(At this point the interview is interrupted by a friend of the participant walking by.)

INTERVIEWER: So how important do you think industry-specific training is?

PARTICIPANT A: I think ***** doesn't teach enough specific stuff... 'cause they're not really up with the play with what's current. Technology moves so fast now. You'll go in there and go 'yeah cool, now we're going to put up the new Kino Flow lights... the students are like.... what?' You know. 'OK... plug that in. Oh no, don't plug it in to the, to that because you'll blow it up. Oh you blew it up.' You know, that's the stuff. So, you get on set and you're given such a hard time if you don't know anything. And our students are constantly getting that. But I don't see how we can necessarily combat it; you know what I mean... because it just moves so quickly.

INTERVIEWER: So if someone has nous and technical skill, they can kind of learn whatever they need to learn anywhere?

PARTICIPANT A: They can work it out.

INTERVIEWER: So a foot in the door, say running, might ultimately better in the long run than formal training? Or is it somewhere in the middle?

PARTICIPANT A: I think it depends on your personality. I think, for me, personally, my course was a little bit of a waste of time, but NOW if I was to do the same course I'd say it would be really important.

INTERVIEWER: Why?

PARTICIPANT A: Because technology has changed so much. It was so much simpler then that is now.

INTERVIEWER: But you said the ***** course doesn't move fast enough with technology, but now you're saying you need it.

PARTICIPANT A: I think you still need to do it, even though it doesn't move fast enough. Because you get, look at editing software... I taught myself how to edit on Adobe Premiere 5.5, with a VHC camera, and all that way of editing didn't actually change for five or six years. Now, you're getting different formats every six months.

INTERVIEWER: So do the training, gain and maintain some work in the industry, and then move with the technology there?

PARTICIPANT A: You've gotta be really interested, you know. Our best students are problem solvers. I'll get students who come up and go 'the computer's not working'. 'Great. What did you try?' 'I don't know, I, it just doesn't work'. 'What is it SAYING?' You know. 'Oh it says the deck is not connected'. 'So maybe the deck is not connected? Maybe you should try plugging it in?' 'Oh it worked! Amazing!' But it's the students you never hear from who are like 'yeah I fixed that, I fixed this, I'll fix that'. And that's what people want in the industry, you know? They... they... it's so busy, tight budgets, all that stuff. You want to be able to go, 'take that car, go in get it painted black, install something in it, and bring it back...'

INTERVIEWER: ...and get me a receipt.

PARTICIPANT A: Yeah. You don't care how it's done as long as it is done, do you know what I mean?

INTERVIEWER: There are a lot more schools?

PARTICIPANT A: I would say half the students that come out of our course, go and do a different course at the end of it.

INTERVIEWER: Why?

PARTICIPANT A: They find out it's real hard slog working in the film industry... don't get any money necessarily unless you're really good. We had an editing student... finished... tried to get work for three months... couldn't get work... and came back and now is studying computer game animation. Which is, I mean you need editing skills, and the ability to understand story and all that for computer games sure, but, you know I see it again and again, students coming back.

INTERVIEWER: So what about people's backgrounds? Does someone, say, who lives at home and doesn't pay rent, have the ability to stick it out longer trying to find work?

PARTICIPANT A: Well I know a couple of people who spring to mind didn't end up working in film, from a comfy background, didn't end up working in film, they just gave up. Because they didn't actually have to work for anything, you see?

INTERVIEWER: So you just gotta have that drive? You gotta not let go of the fact that you're doing it because you want to succeed in it?

PARTICIPANT A: Yeah, yeah... I can think of a guy, production student, really on to it guy... really good. Trained in production. He did well on a couple of films... people really liked him; people get on really well with him. Before he knows it he's director's assistant on [A MAJOR NZ PRODUCTION], they want him back every season. Now he's doing special effects supervising... he knew nothing about SFX supervising. Just turns up and goes 'yeah that looks good' you know. Getting paid mega bucks. And it's because he's easy to deal with, easy to work with, and he's clued up. And he's a problem solver. But he knows ENOUGH. He's got that understanding to start with.

INTERVIEWER: How common do you perceive the gifting of labour or volunteering to be in the screen production industry? Not in running around doing Indy or leisure projects like the 48 Hour Film Festival, but stuff where there viable production company trying to run a profit.

PARTICIPANT A: Quite a lot. I would say every runner, every third assistant, you know, isn't getting paid. Depends on their budget. But I, you know, or they're getting paid \$15 an hour for something that would normally be getting them paid \$400 an hour. And they've gotta do that for three or four jobs before they get a name for themselves, or they're just not coming back. And it's just really simple stuff like being punctual, turning up. If you don't turn up for a job, you're getting fired on the spot.

INTERVIEWER: Are you meaning three or four jobs with the same production company or crew?

PARTICIPANT A: No. No. Word of mouth man. It's so quick. If someone rings up and, you know, is like 'I need a runner' and you're like 'oh, Bob was good, give them a job', you know, and that happens within days.

INTERVIEWER: But if Bob's bouncing around all these different production companies and he's obviously cheap labour, how and when does someone actually say 'yes'? Is that just a luck thing? You know, in terms of like 'you're hired'.

PARTICIPANT A: For me it happened when I said 'nah I can't do it', and they went 'we'll pay you!' And you go, OK cool. I mean, yeah, once they know about you and you've created a name and people know you are good, people are willing to pay. So, um, it just sorta happens. It's a weird... uh weird thing. And you don't know how much you are worth for ages. That's also the thing. You've got no idea. You go 'oh yeah I'll work for ten bucks, AWESOME!! I'm getting paid! Twenty hours a day? Yeah, no probs!' And then you get a bit older, a bit wiser, and smarter, and then you get paid \$25 for the next job and then \$50, and then you realise...

INTERVIEWER: Is that you approaching them for more? Or it just happens?

PARTICIPANT A: For me it was people approaching me, just because, um, you know...

INTERVIEWER: Yeah. Do you think there may be some companies it might be an easy way of saving a bit of money?

PARTICIPANT A: Oh totally. Totally. I get approached ALL the time by major production companies saying 'hey look, we're doing this *really* exciting project, it's gonna be *amazing*, have you got some students you can give us for two months to work on this project? It'll be a really great learning experience for them.' And I'm like 'Ok... so, obviously you're going to pay for their gas and you're going to feed them?' 'Oh no.' Well – people need to live, you know.

INTERVIEWER: And is this sometimes projects with really good budgets?

PARTICIPANT A: Yeah. It totally depends on the director and the producer half the time.

INTERVIEWER: But you did say there's some goodwill involved? After a while people do say 'this guy or girl is good, I'll take them on'.

PARTICIPANT A: Yeah, yeah.

INTERVIEWER: Aside of course from potentially gaining entry to the industry as well as learning on the job, what advantages do you think volunteering presents to those who volunteer?

PARTICIPANT A: Well you just get, you learn a lot, you get thrown in the deep end, and you have to get really clued up really quickly. You find out whether that is where you actually want to work – that's a big one. People do training, work in the industry, and then go 'I don't want to work seventeen hour days', which is, you know, maybe they should do a bit of volunteering before they do training so they know that's actually where they want to work. Oh and making connections. You really don't know what it is going to be like until you're working there.

INTERVIEWER: And what advantages do you think it presents to the employer? Try before you buy like you said.

PARTICIPANT A: Yeah. Try before you buy. Save a bit of money. Um,

Guy stops us to ask for a cigarette

PARTICIPANT A: Sure. There you go.

Guy: Thank you. Cheers.

PARTICIPANT A: Um... yeah I don't know, I mean ultimately for employers it's saving them money at the end of the day isn't it?

INTERVIEWER: Do you think it's more that than the trying out employees?

PARTICIPANT A: Yeah. I reckon. I mean there are a lot of people in the industry. They probably only trying people out because the people they use aren't available.

INTERVIEWER: So, are there systems in place to mentor or assist volunteers when they're on set?

PARTICIPANT A: Well, you're so down the ladder when you start you've got someone going 'do this, do this, do this' but it is up to you to go 'how do I do that?' You know, if some guy is saying 'go and move those C-Stands', and you go 'what, what's a C-Stand?' You know, or you just play

dumb and you look randomly for something that could be a C-Stand. I've seen it happen; it's hysterical. But you know, um, when I use volunteers you've got to quite specific with everything you tell them to do, because they've never done it before. And you've got to tell them to get off their arse and ask to help people, 'cause otherwise they're just standing around looking lost. So, that's what I mean by getting dropped in it, you really are like 'do this and do this and do this' you know.

INTERVIEWER: So is it down to the personality type of the person above you on the day maybe?

PARTICIPANT A: Totally.

INTERVIEWER: Do you think some companies actually consider some kind of informal volunteer policy, like, person x is turning up on Tuesday and they have the same systems in place as they did for the last person?

PARTICIPANT A: I don't know really, I mean every volunteer job I've done has been different. People have handled me differently.

INTERVIEWER: It feels like maybe the pace of a film set doesn't really lend itself to that sort of organisation.

PARTICIPANT A: Not really... no. I mean, I know if a volunteer is standing around, they're not coming back. You go 'I've got this person and they're just hanging around on set. Doing fuck all.'

INTERVIEWER: Getting in the way.

PARTICIPANT A: Getting in the way. 'They didn't know what they were doing'. 'I don't care. They need to work it out'. That's... (laughs) it's really harsh! Like I've got a couple of guys who were recommended to me -friends of a friend- one of them just gave me absolute attitude the whole time, the other guy was really good... the guy with attitude didn't come back the next day, you know? Because you don't have time to deal with attitude. Someone starts complaining that they need a cigarette after working for 45 minutes... you get a cigarette when

everybody else gets a cigarette (laughs). It's really hard you know, you really don't have time to wait on people.

INTERVIEWER: Do you think there's a need for more formal systems for volunteers?

PARTICIPANT A: I think all about the training... all the tutors say like 'tell the students 'till your blue in the face, if you're working on a set, don't stand around, offer to help'. But - that doesn't mean anything to them until they're on a set. It's got no context until they're actually doing it. I don't know how you'd implement a formal system. I mean, maybe at a venue or studio, where you're going 'OK, you're helping me manage the studio, this is how we pack away the lights, this is how we do this, this is how we...' something where gear monitoring and processing is really important and has a process or you lose stuff... yes. But then in saying that, say you've got a lighting assistant working for nothing, and he's working with a Gaffer, who has a Gaffer truck. He is told how to put all the gear back in the truck, how to take it out. That process, I mean where, I mean each department would probably have its own systems... but in terms of a production assistant role... that's just so out there and loose and...

INTERVIEWER: So what about more formally, more contractually? What if someone's done weeks and weeks of volunteer work, and no one picks them up; do you think there's a need for some formal system there?

PARTICIPANT A: Our industry is so, I mean the way the industry is handled.... I don't think that's gonna change! You know, it's all word of mouth.

INTERVIEWER: So the picture you've painted me, I'll put it bluntly, is 'if you're kind of shit, you're not going to make it'. Do you get a case of people who are actually quite good, who, for some reason volunteer and volunteer and volunteer, and for some reason don't actually get longer term paid work?

PARTICIPANT A: I've never seen it happen.

INTERVIEWER: Right then.

PARTICIPANT A: So, here's an example. I've got a guy who's been filming for me for my ***** project. I heard from another guy that he was good. Found out that he was good. Suggested him to another guy. He got a job on that. He suggested him to another guy. Now I can't even get him 'cause he's so busy. Now that's over a year and half. And you know, that's only from him going 'yeah I'll do it'... 'yeah I'll do it'. He's really good... it makes me go I made a good choice, and when I get him again I know he's gonna be good. Because you don't want to get someone on the day, you know, and especially with big budget things.

INTERVIEWER: So how many people enrolled in your course?

PARTICIPANT A: Oh probably 60 per year in film.

INTERVIEWER: OK so one year intake 60? How many will end up working in the film industry long-term?

PARTICIPANT A: Ten.

INTERVIEWER: That's actually good numbers! From everything you've said I thought you'd say less!

PARTICIPANT A: I would say ten. But again, our course is outputting huge amounts of camera students, low numbers of sound and editing students, you know... the numbers don't quite...

INTERVIEWER: So, in the context of your industry and your workplace, are there aspects of volunteering that you see as exploitative?

PARTICIPANT A: Well... yeah. I mean, a lot of the time volunteers are just used as labourers. So they'll be doing really hard physical work for nothing and unless they've got the mental stamina to cope with it they tend to walk, you know. That's the hardest thing about it... as you get paid and you move up the ladder, you sort of do less and less work in a way. Like, more the mental work rather than physical work. I mean, I know our students are used as labourers a lot of the time, but they've got to learn how to do it because that's what they're going to be doing when they get out into the industry anyway.

INTERVIEWER: Do you think this exploitation is widely seen or acknowledged? Or is it just a select few that hold this view?

PARTICIPANT A: A little bit. I wouldn't say it's normally acknowledged... except for the people getting shafted (laughs). You know, I think, it is what it is deal with it. It's harsh man.

INTERVIEWER: So when you said except for the people getting shafted, do you mean like, a bunch of volunteers labouring on a set and they go to have a break and they're like 'stuff this!'; do you mean on that kind of level, or something more....

PARTICIPANT A: Yeah I mean on that kind of level... I mean here's a perfect example. Before I started at ***** I got an interview at a staging company. Advertised as 50 hours a week, thirty thousand or something, ah well the money's not too bad, pack in sets, do lots of corporate things... OK do the interview... 'OK come in and we'll do a day's training with you'. And I'm like 'OK this should be interesting', so I'm sitting there sorting out lights, talking to a guy who's been working there, and I had a little bit of a funny feeling about it... he said 'so you're the new guy?' 'Yeah, how do you find working here?' He goes, 'oh I fucking hate it', it's like, oh great... 'yeah I'm going to leave in a couple of months; I'm saving up enough money to move overseas actually'. I'm like 'oh, OK yeah... well fifty hours it's big, but you know, it's, I can do fifty hours'. And he laughed, he went 'ha! Nah, eighty hours, eighty hours on-call, whenever they say jump you jump'. It's like 'that's not in the contract', he goes well 'loosely it is but that's what's expected of you, if you don't go and do that pack out for that show from one in the morning until eight in the morning, and you're not rostered on and they call you in, you're probably not going to have a job, and they reserve the right to fire you in the first three months of you working there if you don't do what they want you to do'. And I just went, this isn't in the contract. So I went 'OK, well I'm going to go and have lunch.' Walked off and never came back. Phoned up and said 'yeah, the job's not for me thanks'. And, um, I'm really glad I did because the next week I was offered this job, so... um... and so this job paid eight thousand dollars more and it was only thirty seven and a half hours a week. And I can do other work on top of it.

INTERVIEWER: So, do you perceive your role in the industry as a creative one?

PARTICIPANT A: Yes.

INTERVIEWER: In what ways?

PARTICIPANT A: Well, it's technical but in that you collaborate with people, you give people options, you'll go 'OK here's my skills and I'm going to match up my skills of what I know with what you know and we're gonna come up with something, and yeah, I often get given content and they're like 'make it look good' (Laughs) So you just go for it, and you lend your style to that project... and that's why I love it you know, I'd go nuts if I was doing the same thing day in and day out. I thrive on learning stuff.

INTERVIEWER: So creativity is kind of tied in with variance in your work and with learning stuff? I think that's really interesting.

PARTICIPANT A: Yeah it's technical, but just 'cause it's technical doesn't mean it's not creative. I think there are lots of things that could be called creative. Building a house could be creative.

INTERVIEWER: So, thinking about all the different roles in the film industry, how do you perceive the level of creativity in your roles compared to other roles in the industry?

PARTICIPANT A: Oh, I would say, oh that's a hard one... um... I've got to come up with really crazy solutions to things on a daily basis that people never think of. And that's probably my specialty. But then, in terms of enjoying the creativity I would say I probably enjoy fifty percent of it. It's that thing where I would just say in terms of being able to focus on one thing it's probably less creative than say a director or a writer or an editor... editor is probably closer to what I do. A writer or a director, or somebody who is not bound by technical limitations probably has more freedom to be creative because they don't necessarily understand their limitations.

INTERVIEWER: They're kind of waving their conductors rod aren't they?

PARTICIPANT A: Yeah, whereas I'm very aware of what you can and cannot do.

INTERVIEWER: Do you think people in more creative roles are more likely to volunteer their time?

PARTICIPANT A: Yeah.

INTERVIEWER: Why?

PARTICIPANT A: They probably thrive on it a little bit more? Projects really excite them. They get a, they go 'oh yeah that's going to be really exciting let's go for it'. I don't think they tend to be as persistent. So if it gets too hard they might go 'oh... I'm really busy', you know. Like I just see heaps of directors going 'yeah I'm going to help you out, yeah it's gonna be awesome!' Then shit hits the fan and they sort of just go 'yeah look, look I just can't make it tomorrow'. So they get excited by the ideas.

INTERVIEWER: So overall do you think creative people are more prone to exploitation?

PARTICIPANT A: I think creative people are probably more likely to take less money for what they do. You look at actors or dancers or, 'yeah great, ah, I'll do it'... you know. Whereas technical people, because they are very aware of all the steps... so I'll go to a meeting and people will go 'OK yes, so we need to this this this and this and this'. I have quite a clear idea of how many hours that's going to take me, how hard it's going to be, and what the possibilities of it not working are. So I feel more justified going 'nah, I'm not going to... you're going to have to pay me more money to do that. It's not worth two grand, you know, whereas I think when you're sort of in that creative space and you're allowed to be in

APPENDIX B

Transcript of Interview with Participant B

Interview B:

Female, 25, full time Production Assistant.

INTERVIEWER: Tell me first about how you got started in the film industry?

PARTICIPANT B: So, just going back a little bit, I first did a BA in Wellington in film which was kind of useless at the time, and I was quite young, and there was English and Media, and I even did NZ Sign Language papers, so it was good to see what Uni was about. While I was there I worked at Farmers, and also then ended up at Aro Video for a year.

INTERVIEWER: So how long ago was that?

PARTICIPANT B: Um, 2006 was my first year of Vic Uni and finished in 2008. That last year and into a little bit of the next year I did a year at Aro Video. So retail but still slightly related and I was still trying to figure out what I wanted to do. Had a gap year, moved back to Auckland, worked in clothing retail again, then was like 'fuck this I don't want to be stuck doing this the rest of my life'. Then I had looked at **** when I did turn 18, but at the time it seemed like too hard work, then with a bit of maturity...

INTERVIEWER: What do you mean too hard work?

PARTICIPANT B: Because it was so practical and fulltime I wasn't sure if it was me at that point, whereas Uni was a little bit cruisier in a way, you could do an essay the night before and still get a B+, which was terrible but that's how it went. So, yeah once I was sitting in a clothing store going 'fuck this' I realised I wanted to be active and motivated, and knew that I did want to pursue the industry more, and you know, talked to some of dad's friends – he just happens to have friends in the industry- and sort of asked around, and then went to, jumped into ****, did that for a year, majored in production because it was kind of naturally...

INTERVIEWER: So there are specific majors at **** *? *

PARTICIPANT B: The first term you do a bit of everything, so all the areas, production, art department, directing, CLA – camera lighting audio, editing and directing... I think I might have said that already, um but you do everything the first term and then you apply to specialise and only so many in each one so some people miss out, but production wasn't that popular so, (laughs) it's quite easy to get into that, and it was my – where I should have been which is good.

INTERVIEWER: So broadly define production?

PARTICIPANT B: Production management. We all got put into little crews. There was us, we'd run the crew dependent on the project and what was required, and we'd organise the meetings, call sheets, locations, and all the stuff production managers do. It was all timetables and things, so it was a bit different to real life. There were things that were skipped over like client interaction, that's something I've learnt about since I've gone into the industry.

INTERVIEWER: Though you'd know that from retail?

PARTICIPANT B: Yes there is that, but also I never knew about agency-client-production company... um... anyway, did **** *? *, finished that, did very well, which was probably due to age and knowing that it's really what I wanted to do, and so a lot more motivated. Then straight away was applying for jobs, my downfall was I didn't have my full licence, until middle of last year. I was on my restricted and I had my own car, but I missed out on a really good job at ***** because of it, even though they were like 'we really want you' but... um... so I applied for the odd fulltime job, sometimes a bit higher than I should of, but it was good experience for the interviews. I joined up with Film Crews Newbies which got me a few running jobs...

INTERVIEWER: Is that an agency?

PARTICIPANT B: Um, it's more like a booking, crew booking system. For the Newbies they just put your forward when people ask for them and leave it to you to book yourself. It was good, kind of good, alright... I did get some stuff through it so it helped to put on my CV, and um yeah... full time applications. I got to a point where I sat myself down and made myself call all

the production managers on the list from Film Crews 'cause until then there was just that little bit of hope that someone would call you. You'd send an email and that would never get you anywhere, so I did it, and...

INTERVIEWER: And what were you going for then? Production roles?

PARTICIPANT B: Um, more running on set 'cause they did lots of one off jobs themselves, so I knew that they weren't going to be able to offer me fulltime, but I was just trying to get my experience up, and then a list of running jobs, then I got my full licence and subsequently got the fulltime **** job.

INTERVIEWER: So out of **** **, you've done running work to start with...

PARTICIPANT B: Yeah, so that's mostly what I've done... the names were interchangeable. For ***** TV I did a few weekends as a Production Assistant, because we were in one spot with kids and I had to just file them through because they were singing in a (inaudible) for example. Um, but other jobs I would literally be running or doing pickups and things.

INTERVIEWER: So what's the name of your role now?

PARTICIPANT B: Production assistant.

INTERVIEWER: Is it a Production Assistant in terms of the way you understood the role when you were studying?

PARTICIPANT B: Yeah. Mostly. It fluctuates between very basic, like dishes and rubbish and stationery, as well as managing projects myself, to a degree, we've got a producer who's a director camera guy editor and he's one of the partners in the business too. I work alongside him quite a bit as his little production manager, and I assist on the bigger jobs to the main production manager.

INTERVIEWER: Did any of the running roles prior to fulltime work involve being voluntary?

PARTICIPANT B: Yes, to an extent, there were the odd ones where they were... it's been a bit of a tug and pull between them sounding like they're doing me a favour, you know giving me an

opportunity to see how it goes, but also being a pair of extra hands for them. So that would be, they would always offer petrol vouchers and food sometimes...

INTERVIEWER: So there was no pay check? Just petrol vouchers...

PARTICIPANT B: Petrol vouchers, um, I don't think there was ever cash. Maybe once...

INTERVIEWER: So in the six months prior to your fulltime role, what percentage of jobs were voluntary, roughly?

PARTICIPANT B: Probably fifteen twenty percent voluntary. As in petrol vouchers or that sort of thing.

INTERVIEWER: OK, so your experience is better than others I've heard...

PARTICIPANT B: Yeah, probably but that's also because, um, yeah, maybe it's just I fell into the right opportunities. Without sounding unmodest I have been told I am very good... so therefore I probably wouldn't get taken advantage of too much.

INTERVIEWER: So, did much of that involve, did much of getting paid involve you putting your foot down? Or did it just happen?

PARTICIPANT B: No it happened, yeah um, as my experience grew, it was sort of like 'oh well you're a bit more kind of like worth something now'. I was quite lucky too that I was living at my grandparents so I didn't have to pay rent, so I was in a much better position than a lot of people were. If I didn't get paid it wasn't a biggie.

INTERVIEWER: Do you think it disadvantages some people? Having that support versus, say living on a flat on K-Road and...

PARTICIPANT B: Absolutely, and, well my friend for example, the one who got me the other ***** TV job, she was less into the whole thing than myself, but she was flatting and didn't have someone to stay with, and she had to go for the retail jobs to survive, and ended up in insurance for a year. So, um yeah... that's... if you don't have that opportunity, you would really struggle.

INTERVIEWER: What appealed to you about working in the film industry initially?

PARTICIPANT B: Um... I didn't do media studies at school until Sixth Form, it wasn't available, and so it always seemed kind of glamorous and like a really unobtainable industry to be in, and I was really into theatre as well, and so as I did really well in media studies and continued to study... I've always loved movies and creativity: even though I'm not keen to be in a completely creative role, I still like being a part of it, and helping making it happen.

INTERVIEWER: What appealed to you about the particular role you chose?

PARTICIPANT B: I've always been an organising type, and I like to be in the know about what is going on and, and, having that responsibility of making things happen... and I think it's a personality thing. So production, yeah, it's really, reasonably defined goals. You know you've got to organise a location, get the permits and things, so I kind of like that stability even though there's still lots of variety. And there's so many different scales and things you can be working on, but it's still quite, yeah I like being that necessary. Whereas, you know, directors can be, not superfluous, but it's a bit more undefined and kind of...

(Waves her arms too much and spills hot chocolate)

INTERVIEWER: Have your feelings about either of those things changed in any way? Working in the industry and your role?

PARTICIPANT B: Yeah, um, it's been really interesting to see the differences between TVCs and television... I haven't worked on any features so I'm not sure about that yet... but there is a difference in... some of them are really number eight wire let's make this happen, and others are the clients on set with their little tent and it has been... you hear about that, but it's, it hasn't changed the appeal, it's just changed my view on it a little bit.

INTERVIEWER: It sounds like you're saying it's less romanticised than it was beforehand?

PARTICIPANT B: Um, I've always been really realistic that it isn't glamorous. I'm not too hung up on attending premieres or the boozy lunches with clients or anything; that's not a huge thing to me.

INTERVIEWER: This probably doesn't apply to you seeing as you haven't been in the industry a decade or whatever, but based on your observations, has the method by which new people are attempting to get into the industry changed over the period you've been in the industry?

PARTICIPANT B: No I don't think so. No it still seems to be ringing around and doing jobs for free and getting experience so people will take you seriously. Because only, well my impression is, only the really good people do last. You don't get called back again if you're crap.

INTERVIEWER: So define 'good' and 'crap' in the industry?

PARTICIPANT B: Um, crap is not having initiative or willingness to put your hand to anything, um, and complaining too much. It's about an attitude and a stamina sort of thing, and wanting to be there. You've got to be able to handle it. Like I said people don't get called back if they're not up to that standard. I'm sure there's people out there who will nurture and see potential in people and that's great, and that's what you need, but also it's kinda like 'well there's a standard that's got to be stuck to.

INTERVIEWER: How important or relevant do you think industry-specific training is to finding work in the industry? And that's in general not just in your role.

PARTICIPANT B: Um, not just my role, but this industry I think training is important. I know there are older school people who just got in and did it and worked on the job, but I don't think... I think everything is too fast paced for that now. I think you need to have some knowledge already there, and I think I'd have the personal attributes to pick up production on the job, but, you know you don't get the job in the first place without some sort of knowledge, to a point I'd say. A lot of the stuff I learnt in production, I know a lot of it is common sense and things, but I'm still really grateful for the experience with it before getting in there. Because then I could just be left to get on with it and, fill in the gaps, rather than someone teaching me from scratch. And, but I think with technical roles, again, yeah it's really good to have the training because you want to be useful as soon as you're there.

INTERVIEWER: How many people did they let into your course a year?

PARTICIPANT B: I think it was about 130.

INTERVIEWER: Roughly how many do you reckon out of your 130 will work in the industry long-term?

PARTICIPANT B: It's a hard one because I'm not in touch with a lot of them anymore. But... long-term... maybe 40. They say ten percent, so that would only be 13... but I think it might be a little more promising than that. I'm not sure.

INTERVIEWER: So what do you think is missing from the formal training that you had experience with or that you know about in general?

PARTICIPANT B: It would be really great if there were more internships or work experience opportunities *while* you are studying. To go and see how a production company runs for a week at some point. I know that there's nothing in it for the production company unless they happen to get somebody with promise, so they're like 'oh we want you next year', but that on the job experience would be great. We did do a simulation of a real location shoot. Without having done that I think my year at ***** would have been a little bit of a waste of time. I got to be one of the two main coordinators for the big shoot. It was fifty to a crew and it was rotating, we did it over six days and with actual professionals HODing each department... so that was really great experience. But yeah otherwise probably just more real experience. As much as training tries to be real, it's still missing that kind of, jeopardy...

INTERVIEWER: Do you think anything is unnecessarily taught?

PARTICIPANT B: I think it's just that we repeated a few things... where there were a few drama projects that were different in content, but the production it was the same. So it was a bit repetitive in that way. Um, I think the technical side they would have been fine, they would have been fine; they learnt heaps they had a lot more classes in technical training, but um, that's all about people being at different levels as well. I would have picked up production quite fast but I know there were other people in the class struggling, so it's just finding that middle point. Otherwise it's good.

INTERVIEWER: Do you think the number of people graduating from screen training courses in NZ is relative to the number of roles available in the industry?

PARTICIPANT B: No. Because out of the 130 in my year there'll be another 130 elsewhere, and not everybody got jobs, or some there are some people still looking, still working for free a year and a half later. So... I don't know whether that's them not being in the right place or doing the right thing... but no, there's not enough roles. Especially at entry-level.

INTERVIEWER: How common do you think volunteering is in the film industry?

PARTICIPANT B: Um, yeah pretty common from my experience and the experience of people I know who are still volunteering now. Most of them are the ones who did screenwriting and directing, the more creative ones. They're the ones who are struggling more to find even running jobs because... I don't know why. Maybe they're easier to push over; I'm not sure (laughs). Could be. I think that a lot of them say straight up they studied directing, and people are like 'oh, ok you want to be a director'... there's a little bit of instant judgement there, to an extent.

INTERVIEWER: So how important do you think volunteering is to gaining longer term paid work within the industry?

PARTICIPANT B: I think it's good for the first six or so months, maybe even a little bit longer. But not all of your work volunteering, but some here and there just to get those lines on your CV, to get that on set experience and, um, every bit helps, you know, the more you have on there the better...

INTERVIEWER: So you said there are people you know still out there looking as it were. Have they been doing regular volunteer work for that whole period since you graduated?

PARTICIPANT B: Yeah, well while trying to do part time jobs as well. So I think that would compromise some of their availability, as well as, yeah... one girl I'm thinking of in particular, she's 36 and she's been doing a little bit of Second AD and things, but, yeah pretty minimal pay or none on some web TV... webisodes? Whatever the terminology is. People have resorted...

well I say resorted because it's not my ideal, but to doing wedding videos and, you know for cash or whatever...

INTERVIEWER: It's probably not living the dream.

PARTICIPANT B: No, exactly.

INTERVIEWER: What advantages do you think volunteering presents to those who volunteer, aside from the obvious of hopefully finding work?

PARTICIPANT B: Um, yeah... it goes kind of back to those, the attributes that work well in the industry, and that's just kind of mucking in and being able to lend a hand without the premise of money. And to prove your worth, yeah, um... experience, which you can't buy – you can only do for free or get paid for. Um, and what else...

INTERVIEWER: So what advantages do you think it presents to the employer?

PARTICIPANT B: Cheap labour (laughs), and also a way to scope out who is good. And often we are looking for crew and we always go back to the people we have used... and it's quite unusual to go for someone new unless everyone is unavailable. So it's a good way to, if you do get that chance, to prove that you should be called again. Because we're often getting paid thousands of dollars to make a video for a client we need crew that know what they're doing.

INTERVIEWER: So if they're not available do you get 'Newbies'?

PARTICIPANT B: Um, not if it's their first running job, or, they need to have a little bit of a track record. Quite often it is – one of the directors knows their Mum, or um, they've been recommended by someone we do work with regularly so it's sort of a little bit of who you know and, yeah, experience so we wouldn't... we wouldn't call **** and say 'who have you got'... because it's just... we need that bit of experience... yeah.

INTERVIEWER: So do you think there are any disadvantages to volunteering? For either the volunteer or the employer?

PARTICIPANT B: The volunteer if they repeatedly get used by the same person without pay. Employer... potentially the volunteer not caring as much, you know there might be that unreliability aspect. But, yeah, um...

INTERVIEWER: So when you did volunteer, or you've observed other people doing it, did you feel like there were systems in place to mentor volunteers?

PARTICIPANT B: Um... no not particularly.

INTERVIEWER: So how did you know what to do when you turned up?

PARTICIPANT B: I... the production manager was often my point of contact. And then they'd give me something to do. I would try and use initiative all the time and do what... if someone needed a hand I'd jump in - if I knew I wasn't meant to be doing something somewhere else. And so, yeah it was always keeping an ear out and I'd always ask as well, I was like you know 'anything else? Anything else?' Just to stay on top of it. So...

INTERVIEWER: Were some production managers more helpful than others?

PARTICIPANT B: Most of them are really friendly and really open and they're like 'if you're stuck with anything just ask', you know there's never that kind of assumption that I'd know exactly what to do. But, they were all very open to... but you know, they're *busy* they can't focus on you, so... you're aware of that, but, yeah, they're always willing to answer any questions or show you quickly.

INTERVIEWER: Do you think there's a need for more formal systems or maybe even contracts in the employment of volunteers in the industry?

PARTICIPANT B: It would be nice if there was some sort of minimum sort of standard. Even if it was a \$50 petrol voucher. If it was just a known. Because, um, even I, um know very experienced freelancers can go weeks without work, and that's just part of it, but also volunteers are gonna be the, Newbies are gonna be the worst off. They haven't had years of working and saving up thousands of dollars just to get through those few weeks, so it would be

good if there was some system. If you're just starting out... we're humans still... we need some sort of thing to rely on even if it's small. A token that would just make your week a bit easier.

INTERVIEWER: Maybe just in the form of being acknowledged? Or is there always that acknowledgment?

PARTICIPANT B: Yeah there's always the 'thanks sooo much, you were great. We'll give you another call' (laughs). Sometimes too being on the call sheet is quite nice.

INTERVIEWER: Sorry explain that?

PARTICIPANT B: So a big production. If you've made it on to the call sheet that's at least your name noticed.

INTERVIEWER: As a possibility if they need somebody?

PARTICIPANT B: Yeah, even just, even if, um, you're the random runner and someone in the art department is like 'oh who was that girl that helped'. I don't know if they do that. I don't know even know if they care.

INTERVIEWER: What was your personal experience as a volunteer?

PARTICIPANT B: Generally positive. Lots of petrol vouchers. And I did get calls back from those times and paid at other times from them. Um, yeah, I'm, ah, again glad that I was at my grandparents. That made all the difference, so it made me much more eager to do the volunteer jobs because I knew that I'd benefit in some way even it weren't monetarily. And... it makes me more mindful of the days to come... in many years time when I will be in charge of a shoot and know what it's like, what it feels like, and what level might be appropriate, even it might have changed by then.

INTERVIEWER: In the context of your industry are there aspects of voluntarism that you see as exploitative?

PARTICIPANT B: Not from my own experience, but I think from people that I do see who are still doing it a year and a half later, yes, because they, especially on short films and smaller

projects that are quite independent... they have difficult directors or people who are like 'oh just a few more hours' and, you know, they've ended up being exploited. But they do it because they want the experience and a reference and, um, to say they worked on that project, um, so yeah... not my own experience, but I know that it happens. But that's also whether they, I think there's, because of the whole networking thing it's harder to stand up and say 'no, I don't want to do this anymore' because if you burn a bridge with that person when you're not even being paid, you know that could be... that could be negative for you in the long-term... but you don't actually know you're just sort of, you just want to kind of keep everyone happy.

INTERVIEWER: Do you think this exploitation is widely seen or acknowledged in the industry? Or is it just part of the job, 'get on with it'?

PARTICIPANT B: I think it's just part of the job, get on with it. And it's funny because when you *are* that person running around, being all smiley and friendly to everyone, you can tell that they're like 'oh, here's another one'. Especially, you know, the older guy DOPs, or the directors, and they sort of, they don't want, they don't have time to entertain your friendliness, they sort of don't really care and they know that you could be gone tomorrow as well, so they're not interested in getting to know you all the time. But that depends on who you're talking to really.

INTERVIEWER: So is it seen or acknowledged?

PARTICIPANT B: Yeah, yeah I think it's acknowledged but it's not like 'oh you're doing this for free aye?' Like it's not sort of like that open, but you know that you're the runner (laughs), you're the one carrying the coffee; it kind of comes with the territory. You might not be getting paid shit all, but you earn your way there eventually, yeah.

INTERVIEWER: Do you perceive your role in the industry as a creative?

PARTICIPANT B: Not hugely. I know that with some companies it has the potential to be, and the place I work the Production manager she's got lots of creative ideas and there very open if everyone wants to talk about them, so it's very, it's received very well and encouraged. But I know that in some big corporation, when I say corporation I mean production house, maybe I don't know that you'll list them, but like Ogilvy or something, where there's frequent

contractors and people rotating through, that if you're contracted to make a TVC happen, it's not creative because you're not there for the briefing, your there to do the organising. So it depends if you're, yeah, what sort of environment you're in. But production generally *isn't* as creative, it's more practical.

INTERVIEWER: How do you perceive the level of creativity in your role compared to that of others in the industry?

PARTICIPANT B: Compared to the technical ones, um, yeah far less. But... still a huge contribution to it. In that... well, I don't know, nothing can happen without it. Yeah, so to some extent it's always involved, but it's not the driving force behind the creativity.

INTERVIEWER: So do you think those in more creative roles are more likely to volunteer their labour?

PARTICIPANT B: Yes (laughs). I think they have slightly different ideals and notions of what volunteering will lead to for them. Um...

INTERVIEWER: And what do you mean by that?

PARTICIPANT B: Well in production you're quite realistic and you know that it's only, you know, if you're not getting a call back it's not happening, whatever, I don't know... I'm on the wrong train of thought there but...

INTERVIEWER: No you are - you're making perfect sense.

PARTICIPANT B: I think, just from the creative people I know that are struggling still, they're just, they're a bit more easier with their time. They're not seeing themselves as a little business. They're sort of like, 'oh that'll be great'... I don't know (laughs) that sounds really bad, like it's derogatory to them or something. They're just slightly more idealistic than realistic, and, so... yeah.

INTERVIEWER: Do you think creative people in the industry are more prone to exploitation?

PARTICIPANT B: Yeah... I guess it's kinda the same thing

APPENDIX C

Transcript of Interview with Participant C

INTERVIEW C:

Female, 32, 'freelance slash self-employed slash unemployed'.

INTERVIEWER: Tell me first about how you got started in the film industry?

PARTICIPANT C: Well I went to film school. And then, uh yeah, been looking for work since... you know freelance slash self-employed slash unemployed. Yeah so that's been quite an interesting... I think for everybody who's left film school who's like, well who's trying to get work in film. It's like fuck how do you get work in film... it's a mystery.

INTERVIEWER: Sorry did you say 'how do you get work'?

PARTICIPANT C: Well how do you get consistent work, you know and then where you feel like you're actually learning and, you know a lot of the jobs I've gotten it's like 'fuck man I'm thirty two, give me something a bit more responsible'. I get the whole 'you have to work your way up' but...

INTERVIEWER: Surely you knew that was the film industry before you started studying?

PARTICIPANT C: Oh yeah of course. I never thought it was going to be *easy*.

INTERVIEWER: But you didn't think it was going to be into a nine to fiver?

PARTICIPANT C: No! I would shoot myself if I had a job like that.

INTERVIEWER: What did you specialise in at film school?

PARTICIPANT C: Directing and script writing. Yup. They combined directing with script writing. And I was only interested in script writing. So I did both, um, and yeah, and kind of expecting that I was going to get a production type job afterwards, so I just wanted to like have fun for the year.

INTERVIEWER: Oh I see, so maybe vocationally you wanted to end up in production?

PARTICIPANT C: Um, no I knew I could, I knew it was going to be much more practical and with my previous life skills and work skills it wasn't going to be... like I didn't think I had to study it, do you know what I mean? Um so I kind of, I went into production and then half way through listening to the professors course of the script writing I was like 'oh my god I just want to be doing that'. So I was like 'oh well I'll probably get a job in production anyway, might as well just have fun while I'm doing it'. It's not like you can go out into the world and get a script writing job just like that, you know.

INTERVIEWER: Absolutely. So what sort of roles have you done since you left film school?

PARTICIPANT C: Since I left film school? Uh... quite a lot of different ones. I've done production stuff, so production managing, production coordinating, um co-producing, um unit, um...

INTERVIEWER: Sorry what was that one again?

PARTICIPANT C: Unit. It's food. Assistant directing, um, running, um, costume running, um a lot. What else have I done? I think that's the main different ones. Like I've combined production managing and first assistant directing on a bunch of films... um... additional Assistant Director

INTERVIEWER: So have you got experience in any of those roles being employed as a volunteer?

PARTICIPANT C: Oh yeah. Most of those. I would say like six of them I was paid for.

INTERVIEWER: Six out of what, like eight or nine roles?

PARTICIPANT C: Oh no, I mean, well those roles I've done many times... but out of those, entire I've been paid for about six.

INTERVIEWER: So, roughly, what percentage of all the work you've done has been voluntary?

PARTICIPANT C: Probably about three quarters. Oh, maybe not, maybe a bit less than that. Ballpark sixty or seventy five.

INTERVIEWER: So what appealed to you about working in the film industry initially?

PARTICIPANT C: Well I've always liked film. I've always wanted to go into film. And then when I started being on set I was hooked, I loved it. When we were at film school, with ours it was quite, um, practical, so we got to go on set half way through the year. We first did short films and stuff, then working with professionals while we were doing it, so that was awesome. And then I was like 'yeah I definitely want to be on set'.

INTERVIEWER: That's interesting because you said you studied to write scripts, and then you were thinking of production managing. Production managing isn't on set is it?

PARTICIPANT C: I wasn't thinking of production managing – no I knew I could work in production, yeah, to pay bills.

INTERVIEWER: Has that been the case?

PARTICIPANT C: Um... I've had to do a lot to pay bills. I've had to have lots of non-industry jobs too. Um, but I found out afterward Assistant directing is what I really like to do. Because I mean really, at the end of the day, there's only three roles that are creative. There's writing, directing, and camera. Everything else you're assisting the production... unless of course you're the costume designer, but that's not even...

INTERVIEWER: What about sound and stuff?

PARTICIPANT C: Yeah but you're not, um, you're *assisting* the production, you haven't created it, you know where the writer, the director and the cinematographer get together and decide what it's gonna look like. So those are kinda the roles that I would... directing not really interested, camera not really interested, writing is interesting to me, but assistant directing I feel that I'm in that, kind of, assisting the creative side of it instead of the film production side of it. Personally... that's what I don't... I, I, I, feel like I'm kind of like a dog... like I want to be where all the action is... like I... um... just the same way that I would shoot myself if I had a nine to five job, I would shoot myself if I couldn't be creative or near creative. So I limit myself to... I don't limit myself... I've realised over the last two years I guess, that I'm not very happy with just, just production work.

INTERVIEWER: So you are pursuing assistant directing now at the core of all the other stuff going on?

PARTICIPANT C: Yeah, yeah, and I mean the [bottom line?] of assistant directing is you are just production really if you think about it. But I do eventually want to get to firsting 'cause then you're basically with the director going through every single shot. That's what I'd like to do the most.

INTERVIEWER: I've asked you what about initially appealed to you about working in the film industry. Have your thoughts and feelings changed about this in any way?

PARTICIPANT C: Um that specific feeling? No. Maybe refined it. I think film school gives you just enough to have a taste for it but you really need to go out and figure out whether you actually like it or not. You don't really get that opportunity for very long, you know? Um, like it would be great if it was like six months afterwards where they placed you in different roles and you got to see what it was like. 'Cause you enter into film school and you make choice right away, so you're already limiting yourself right away. And it's only a year, so if you've got into production and then like three years down the track you might be like 'oh you know what I'd really like to work in costume'... you would never have known that three years before.

INTERVIEWER: What attributes do you think film industry employers most favour in new workers?

PARTICIPANT C: Um, I'd say hard work and common sense.

INTERVIEWER: How important do you think industry-specific training is to finding work?

PARTICIPANT C: Very. I think it gives you confidence, because you have a bit of understanding so you're not bullshitting from the beginning. And if you're paying attention it teaches you a lot of things that are between the lines.

INTERVIEWER: What do you mean by stuff in between the lines?

PARTICIPANT C: Well I think if you listen to, I mean again I went to film school with like a bunch of twenty year olds, and so like there were twelve of us that were over thirty, and we were there because we really really wanted to be there... so, so we're listening to everything they say, and what they don't say as well, you know, so... they were pretty much telling you 'don't be an idiot, be smart, be responsible. Watch what you say... everywhere you go you have to watch yourself because you are your brand.' So they may not have a class on that, but through the little things they mention once in a while you kind of get that after a while, you know.

INTERVIEWER: So being a brand. That's about being a project-based worker in the industry is it? Where you're not representing the company – you are the company?

PARTICIPANT C: Yeah... well I mean jeez if you have a bad reputation you're never going to get work ever. Everybody knows everybody. So I think what they were trying to tell us was 'don't screw up'. You know, like if you screw up, I dunnoh, like a couple of times you're fucked. So you really have to watch yourself, and watch yourself in public too, because you never know who you're going to talk to, who you're going to run into. Don't talk bad about people.

INTERVIEWER: And you mention an age gap. Do you think that went over the head of a few twenty year olds?

PARTICIPANT C: Well, I think so, I definitely think so... they kept telling us things like 'make sure you change your email address so it's not, you know, stupid, and change your voice mail so it's professional. And if you say you're going to be somewhere, then be there....' But of course over the course of the year that didn't happen with a lot of the young ones, you know I mean god, I think what I was like at twenty... I'm nowhere close to doing what I was doing when I was twenty.

INTERVIEWER: Do you think there's anything missing from the formal training?

PARTICIPANT C: Yeah definitely. Placements. And I think it was too short. You know, we just got to do our one short film, and then sit in the editing room for two weeks going 'oh my god, if I could just do it again', you know, and perfect it.

INTERVIEWER: Do you think the amount of tertiary courses available in screen production now is relative to the amount of work available in the industry?

PARTICIPANT C: There's just not enough work for everybody who's going to film school. But, really out of a hundred and something that I went to film school with, I bet fifty percent are doing film, or trying, you know. A lot of the people I know went back to uni, did this, and, because they're so young. They decide 'oh I'll go to film school and see what's that like', and um, through no fault of their own they might just realise 'you know what, this isn't actually what I want to be doing', and so, so many people are weeded out by that anyway... it's kind of like the first year of university, you know like two thirds drop out after a year.

INTERVIEWER: What effect do you think it has on the industry? All those graduates and not so much work?

PARTICIPANT C: Well I think it means there's more supply than there is demand, so they cannot pay you.

INTERVIEWER: How common do you perceive the gifting of labour is in the film industry?

PARTICIPANT C: It's everywhere. It's expected of you. I think it's a luxury to be able to say no, that's what it feels like.

INTERVIEWER: There's an interesting point to be raised there about saying no. Surely there is a point where you've done X amount of work, surely you just turn around and say no one day? Is it you that says that? Or is it someone in the industry who finally turns around and says 'hey actually, you know what, we know you're good now, we'll pay you'?

PARTICIPANT C: I've had both. But then also, I guess I've just, I'm listening so I do know that when they - maybe two weekends I worked for free and then the third weekend they said 'you know what we'll pay you' and I was like 'oh that's really nice' but it's fifty dollars for the day and I know they were paying the person before me two hundred dollars a day. So it's like 'thank you' but at the same time it's like 'you're still abusing me'. I mean I've had ones where I have said... I was working on a short film and I did quite a lot of work for free and I basically said 'look I'm doing way more work than we expected and I'd really like a minimum payment per day'. Anyway I ended up getting three hundred dollars out of a couple of weeks' work. But you know that's still considered 'pay'. And that was me turning around and going 'look you're just...' And that was I think because of his lack of experience... the director. The director, he was the writer director producer and cameraman.

INTERVIEWER: So are you doing more Indy stuff than bigger more commercial projects?

PARTICIPANT C: Well I... probably since about ***** I've been doing more of the bigger stuff. I'm actually over no-budgets. You know what? I just want to work with professionals. I want to learn from people you know? And I just feel like it's almost like I'm in a rush to get my career going and I feel like unless it's worth it because the person is super organised, and it's not frustrating to work with him, um, or they, or it's an awesome project. But, um, I'm finding less and less value in working for... I mean I'm not being... it's.... I wouldn't even do my short film. I'm not even interested in doing my scripts because I just want to learn as much as I possibly can from people who know what they are doing. So it's not like I think my ideas are better... it's like 'I'm in a rush'

INTERVIEWER: How important do you perceive the gifting of labour is in gaining longer term work in the industry?

PARTICIPANT C: I think that one is really tricky because I've done a lot of volunteer work where I've got nothing out of it at all, like sometimes not even thank you. Especially when I first got out of film school and um the first group that I started doing stuff with were like 21 years old, and I didn't think anything of it, and then I realised very shortly afterwards 'fuck man I don't know anything, and I'm the one teaching you'.

INTERVIEWER: And these people hadn't been to film school?

PARTICIPANT C: No, and they're young and they hadn't even had that much life experience, so I found it really... two projects we did were beneficial, but most of the time it was [inaudible].

INTERVIEWER: But with more professional organisations there's a carrot being dangled in front of you if and when you get more work?

PARTICIPANT C: I think it's abusive. If I think about it I've been trying to get work for a year and a half, and people are still expecting me to work for free – and not only are they expecting me to work for free, they tell you things overtly or not overtly: 'this is where you get to meet contacts'. You don't fucking get to meet contacts. That's how they get people to work for free... and... because they make you feel like you have to, because this is how you get your foot in the door. Sometimes it is if you happen to work for good people, like the TV show I worked on over the weekend. That was awesome because the producer ended up getting me a paid job on another project for a friend of hers. But... that's when you work for professionals.

INTERVIEWER: What advantages do you think volunteering presents to those who volunteer?

PARTICIPANT C: Um... well there's... if you're lucky you meet someone who likes you who might get you a job. Ah... you meet other people who are in the same situation as you, who *possibly* down the line could get you some work. Um... and then I guess you do get a little bit of experience, I mean, mainly the jobs they get you to volunteer for are the low jobs, they're not going to get you to volunteer to be a director. Um, so, and I think, the best thing I think is you get to figure out how it works on set.

INTERVIEWER: What advantages do you think volunteering presents to those who employ volunteers?

PARTICIPANT C: Free labour.

INTERVIEWER: Free labour, yeah.

PARTICIPANT C: And not only that, but I don't think everybody... I think it also gives certain people who would do tasks normally the permission to get volunteers to do the shit work that they don't want to do because they know the volunteers are not going to say no. They're not in a position to say no.

INTERVIEWER: But then do you think there is a counter-argument that employers do use volunteers to weed out the people who are rubbish?

PARTICIPANT C: If they hired you after that, yeah. I think there's probably more people who volunteer that probably never end up getting a job through that same person than there is who do. And I don't necessarily think it's because they are crap. Maybe they were just never going to pay those people, you know, I mean not everybody is like that but there are some pretty shitty productions out there that would.

INTERVIEWER: So what disadvantages do you think volunteering presents to the employer, or the person 'at the top'?

PARTICIPANT C: Well I could only imagine, because I'm not in that position, that, I suppose if you got, um... no... Um... I suppose if there was a disadvantage to them they wouldn't do it. I mean, I'm thinking, it depends what you are talking about: the Indy stuff or the professional stuff.

INTERVIEWER: Do you think there's a need for more formal systems for volunteers?

PARTICIPANT C: Yeah, I think...

INTERVIEWER: I mean we mentioned the intern word.

PARTICIPANT C: But I mean who can afford to be an intern? That's my question. Unless you live with your parents, how are you going to pay your bills? You know, it just doesn't make any sense. And it happens everywhere and that's fine, and I'm sure it's worse in the States. It's just, I think it should be really reduced... I mean you don't need... it's like you're dating somebody. You need *maybe* three dates, and then you know if you like them or you don't. So, why would you continue dating them knowing for three months? It's like, you either know or you don't. And if you do know and you're still doing it, then you're taking advantage of that person. So, if the motivation for doing it is to find out if they're good workers... you need maybe a day. And then you pay them or you don't. I mean a day is enough – I did one day for ***** in the ***** as a ***** ***** ******, and then the next day they said that they'd pay me, and I was like 'that's great'. And that's all you need is one twelve hour day. And if you can a) make it through twelve hours and...yeah there needs to be something... and then it's just also the idea that every new person, and if you're looking for work you're constantly looking for work your constantly looking at working for new people. So, it's kind of like, do you have to do a free day for every single person? I suppose if someone one was like, 'well we'll give you a week's work but we'll have one trial day'. Good. But if they don't really plan on giving you more work, I'd be less willing.

INTERVIEWER: You mentioned living at home with parents. Do you think someone with that level of support, who say doesn't have to pay rent, maybe has an easier chance of making it?

PARTICIPANT C: Ah, well, I dunnoh about an easier chance of making it, but I'd say the majority of people at film school were living with their parents. And they borrow their parent's car and um, they can afford to do it. I don't know if what happens is they end up getting, because they know mentally they can do it they keep getting that kind of job, whereas out of necessity I have to say no so I'm trying to get other kinds of jobs. So, who knows what actually happens? Do they stay within that Indy pool, because they can't justify not to be? Whereas I can't justify volunteering, so I have to say no, and then I can only do paid work. Well... that's my plan... we'll see whether it actually works.

INTERVIEWER: So what's your personal experience or observations of volunteer work in the industry?

PARTICIPANT C: I think it borders on forced labour. It's like slavery in a sense. If you think about the fact that you don't feel like you can say no, um, there's all these advantages to you saying yes to them and all these disadvantages to you saying no to them, it's almost like you are forced to do it. Unless you have the courage, the self confidence, or the stubbornness to be like 'oh no thank you I'm OK'. That's what slavery is. It's forced labour. So, even a friend I know who worked in a ***** and got me to work for free for ***** weeks, I mean that almost ruined the friendship. And I mean that friend was like 'don't you see the advantages here?' I'm like 'sure! But I could have worked for six different ***** for free and not just your little one'. Or if there's no room to move in your production company... so for a friend to tell me that I should be thanking them for the experience... minimally yeah, but ***** weeks is taking advantage.

INTERVIEWER: I feel you have already answered this, but in the context of your industry are there aspects of voluntarism that you see as exploitative?

PARTICIPANT C: I think when you've passed that stage of checking that person out, then you are exploiting them. If you make them feel like they have to, even if you say it with a smile and sweet words, like they're being stupid not to, then you are exploiting them. Um, you shouldn't have to manipulate people to work for free. They tell you 'oh well... if you want to get your foot in the door'...

INTERVIEWER: Can I come back to where you said you can't put a foot wrong in the industry? Is it ever like the coercion to volunteer and the former combine, whereby it's like 'you'll never work again if you don't do this'?

PARTICIPANT C: Oh for sure, and then they tell you that if they don't like you then they won't call you back, um which makes you start to question yourself. And they tell you take every opportunity you can. But you know, I've tried to think about it in terms of an actor in Hollywood. I mean, people are quick to judge their career choices; they're like 'oh they just

take any job'. Then you see the ones that have been picky; and sure they've been picky with a giant sacrifice financially, but because that's their guiding principle. And the other guys are like the rest of us, who are just trying to work, and they're just taking any job because they want to work. So, at one point last year I had to figure out, there has to be some kind of guiding principal in my career, like, what is it? If not I'm gonna be doing just doing everything for free for everybody... so that, so because everyone wants you to work for free, you know and everybody says it's going to help you and your going to meet people and I'm like 'cool thanks', but when I look at the crew list I'm like 'I know these people already' and like none of them are ever gonna be able to give me a job, so I don't want to work with these people, I want to work with people who [inaudible] employ me.

INTERVIEWER: Can I ask what you decided your guiding principle is?

PARTICIPANT C: Integrity. It just has to be people that I want to work for, who are nice. Nice people. I just want to work for nice people. I don't need to be [inaudible]. So, yeah at the end of the day I will work so f ing hard for anyone who is nice to me. You know I might have someone I don't really like and they ask me to do quite a lot of stuff and my feet go to the ground right away, and then I have people ask me to go what the others asked me, and I'm more than willing to do it. So... yeah. I have to... I'm always very surprised and happy when I'm on a set and people are nice... and that's when I'm like 'wow I'm really happy and excited about that and surprised'. Which says something in itself. But then I'll continue wanting to working for them.

INTERVIEWER: Do you think this exploitation is widely seen or acknowledged? How much outward recognition goes on?

PARTICIPANT C: I don't think there's that much. Everybody knows it happens. Nobody talks about it. You know, um... yeah it's kinda, I'm sure it's not directly said but it's kind of a feeling of 'well who do you think you are to ask for money?' You know at the end of the day what are we but our labour? So by subtly saying that, or the film industry subtly saying that or expecting that of you tells you something about the value of the human [inaudible]. So, no one's going to want to talk about it, especially if they're in the position of doing it, but, like I've been on film

crews for **** months, I don't know, and I was on ***** last year, and I got some calls through them, and I was asking 'at what point am I not a Newbie?'

INTERVIEWER: You were directly vocalising this?

PARTICIPANT C: Yeah, and they totally agree, they're like well... one of the people sitting there was like 'I still get Newbie rates', and they had been there like ***** years. So it depends on the job. People automatically put you on the lowest salary they can. It makes you feel, if you feel like you need this job... you take it. You know, but, the feeling you get you need to take that job is [inaudible]. If you don't... you're an idiot, which, you shouldn't feel that way.

INTERVIEWER: You mention 'Newbie rates'; so there's no formal Newbie rate?

PARTICIPANT C: Well people will call and say 'can I have some Newbies?' Which a) means no work or no pay, or one hundred and fifty dollars a day, which is the lowest, well you can get lower than that, but anyway, I was working on ***** and I was getting very low pay to the point where like ***** and I were jokingly comparing our salaries. **** was like 'I bet I'm earning less than you', and I was like 'I bet I'm earning less than you', and **** said 'well what's the bet?' And then, ah 'cause you know **** feels on a lower... ***** always feels like the lowest on production. Um, and I was like 'I'll bet your salary that I'm earning less than you'... and I was like earning **** dollars less than **** a day. And **** was like 'oh my god'. And I started off thinking 'oh that's an alright salary', and then I started hearing what everyone else was earning, and I was like 'holy shit'.

INTERVIEWER: Do you perceive your role in the industry as a creative one?

PARTICIPANT C: Not really. It depends what you mean by creative, it's very subjective. The roles I've mainly done thus far have not been very creative, um I've been assisting people in their roles. I consider creativity the ability to dream up and execute my own idea' like, writing and directing. So according to me, and this is just my opinion, I haven't been working in creative roles for the most part... at least not paid ones.

INTERVIEWER: How do you perceive the level of creativity in your role compared to that of others?

PARTICIPANT C: I think the HODs have most of the creativity and I'd consider them to be much more creative than me. I think apart from the HODs, most of us are just assisting people in their vision.

INTERVIEWER: Do you think those in more creative roles are more likely to volunteer their labour?

PARTICIPANT C: I can't answer this... um I have no idea.

INTERVIEWER: Do you think creative people are more prone to exploitation?

PARTICIPANT C: No idea sorry. I think anyone who wants to get into any industry wants to work hard and prove themselves, sometimes that means being suckered into working for free for a long time... or on many different occasions.