

Precarious Work and Communities:
The Impact of Neoliberalism on Working Class Politics

by

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Abstract

Precarious work, which refers to work that is poorly paid, lacks benefits, and where workers have relatively little political power, has been on the rise in North America in the last few decades. If precarious workers are isolated and unengaged, they will not be able to represent their political needs. The goal of this research is to clarify the relationship between precarious work and levels of community engagement and social support. Using feminist political economy and hegemony perspectives, this project engages with the question of whether precarious work has a direct impact on community engagement and social support and how demographic variables moderate this relationship. A quantitative analysis of 2014 telephone survey data done by the Poverty and Employment Precarity in Southern Ontario project demonstrates the effect of precarious work. Results show that precarious work has a large significant negative effect on social support but an inconsistent impact on community engagement. I conclude that more information is needed about participation in extra-parliamentary activities to fully understand whether precarious workers suffer from lack of political representation. However, precarious workers are clearly more isolated than other workers and this may contribute to continued intergenerational precarity.

Key words: community; neoliberalism; political economy; precarious work; social reproduction

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Chapter One: Introduction

1.1: Precarity and Communities

Labour markets in North America and around the world are unable to provide prosperity for all, causing stress and insecurity for workers. Policies around work and social benefits have been transitioning to private and individualized systems for some time, yet state leaders have been implementing neoliberal policies encouraging individualist attitudes particularly since the 2007/2008 global financial collapse. Although unregulated financialization and other neoliberal policies were arguably responsible for the recession, some analysts argue that governments have assisted banks and multinational corporations with economic recovery more than the working class (McNally, 2011). Part of the neoliberal process is to disrupt labour relations to facilitate profit. Harvey (2007) argues that “the process of neoliberalization has, however, entailed much ‘creative destruction’, not only of prior institutional frameworks and powers ... but also of divisions of labour, social relations, welfare provisions...” (p. 3). In other words, neoliberals have destroyed and rebuilt welfare and labour relations in such a way that many in the working class cannot be certain about their long-term financial situation.

For example, in Ontario welfare policy requires recipients to search for work or take part in job training to continue receiving payments, even though most of the available jobs are part-time with unpredictable schedules (Evans, 2007). Although welfare payments are intended to act as a safety net for people who cannot find a job, unemployed people find themselves stuck between the choice of entering an insecure employment relationship which could end at an unknown point, or staying on welfare and taking the risk of being removed from the program. The Ontario government’s response to the 2007 recession did not make this choice any easier, nor did it ease the difficulties for impoverished families most affected by the economic

downturn. The response came in part from the Open Ontario Plan the Liberal party introduced in 2010, which aimed to privatize public services, freeze wages, and make changes to employment legislation amongst other deregulatory acts (Fanelli and Thomas, 2011). For many of Ontario's working class, day-to-day job security does not exist and they feel constant fear about the potential loss of income.

Some recent changes to the Employment Standards Act (ESA) in Ontario could counteract some of these issues by improving precarious workers' day-to-day lives. In November 2017, the ESA was updated with the Fair Workplaces, Better Jobs Act. The bill aimed to eliminate some precarious employment practices. Changes include a mandatory minimum pay for on-call workers and temporary employment agencies being required to give workers notice of a cancelled contract (Legislative Assembly of Ontario, 2017). The changes to the ESA are important and will likely make a qualitative difference to many workers' lives. However, Ontario's individualized and weakly enforced employment standards make it easy for employers to avoid conforming to the ESA (Vosko and Thomas, 2014). Thus it is important to consider that legislative standards may not be enough to stem the increase in precarious work.

Precarious work is related to the broad concept of precarity. The term precarity refers to a general sense of insecurity brought on by certain social conditions including lack of housing (Campbell and Price, 2016). In the past few decades, research on precarity paved the path for the introduction of the concept of precarious work. Precarious work is what occurs when precarity affects the workplace: poor employment standards erode workers' sense of security. Precarious work occurs in all sectors, and outcomes include poor health, loss of free time, and difficulties with childcare. Bettie (2014) notes that "instability in one area of life often contributes to instability in another: a rough marriage might lead to drinking or drug use, which in turn leads to

missing work and job loss” (p. 13). Negative outcomes tend to impact social minorities disproportionately, necessitating attention to how workers, politicians, and their communities work to make changes and whether these changes protect the most vulnerable. As a result, labour scholars study insecure work from a variety of angles.

Guy Standing argues in his 2011 book *The Precariat* that precarious workers can be seen as a separate social class from other workers. He argues that precarious workers lack work-based identity and experience heightened alienation, anger, and other such feelings. Regardless of the respective position, research shows precarious workers face a variety of difficult conditions and suffer greatly from their exploitation.

Although precarious work – a central feature of the neoliberal labour market – is desired by employers, there are ways that it can be resisted. However, currently the precarious elements of the working class do not have an outlet for making the necessary political changes. Arguably the entirety of the working class lacks political representation. Canada’s New Democratic Party has become more centrist, and in Ontario the party is particularly unpopular because of its record of austerity measures when in office in the 1990s (Savage and Ruhloff-Queiruga, 2017). Parliamentary politics are historically unkind to the most vulnerable members of the working class. If precarious workers want to see change to their situation, existing mainstream political parties have proven themselves unreliable.

Given the difficulties the working class has addressing their needs in the current political climate, it is essential that they strategize to find methods for self-organization. To make change, the working class must unite within its communities. Pyles (2014) defines a community loosely as “a group of people with a common affiliation, identity, or grievance that may be geographically or nongeographically based” (p. 9). Using this twofold definition, a community

can have a geographical or social basis. First, it can refer to a neighbourhood or city, whose residents may share specific issues such as higher unemployment rates, an anti-union political atmosphere amongst others. Community can also refer to a close-knit unit of family and friends or more generalized groups with common interests such as racialized people, women, or workers. Precarious workers fit this second definition of community, as they share a common position of insecurity. What is less clear is the extent to which these two definitions overlap. After all, secure workers and precarious workers living in the same geographical region may still voice different complaints and political concerns.

The objective of this project is to understand how members of the working class engage in their local social and political communities, particularly the most vulnerable and insecure workers. I examine both politically oriented activities, such as voting, and socially oriented activities and concepts, such as recreational group participation or having a friend to spend time with, as both can contribute to community bonds. My research draws from a 2014 survey on workers' experiences with precarious work in Southern Ontario (Lewchuk et al., 2015) to investigate workers' levels of community engagement. I also use Lewchuk et al.'s (2015) Employment Precarity Index, which measures precarity as a continuous variable based on participants' responses to a cluster of questions about their working conditions, as an analytical tool. I also introduce a community engagement scale and a social support scale which I constructed to measure participants' level of involvement with community and friends. I utilize a literature review and a statistical analysis to uncover potential outcomes for precarious workers in terms of community engagement and social support, as well as identify activities which provide potential solidarity and organizing opportunities to the working class. This research

contributes to ongoing theorization about the class status of precarious workers and illuminate the social barriers to the organization of a powerful working-class movement.

1.2: Chapter Outline

The following four chapters of this work engage with the concepts of precarious work, community engagement, and social support, and attempts to explain the relationship between the ideas. Chapter two, the literature review, outlines the major theories relevant to the project and contextualizes the central research concepts in previous research. Chapter three, methodology and data analysis, explains the procedures of the survey research the original research team performed as well as the statistical approach for analyzing the resulting survey data. Chapter four, the results, presents tables constructed from SPSS output. Results include frequency tables, cross-tabulations, and multiple regression models. Chapter five serves as the discussion and conclusion. Here I put the results of this study into conversation with other researchers' ideas to draw some key conclusions about the implications of precarious work for working class politics.

Chapter Two: Literature Review

In this chapter, I review research related to precarious work, community engagement, and social support to set the context for my own project. First, I discuss the theoretical frameworks underlying this project. Next, I trace the background of the use of the term “precarious work” and attempt to operationalize the concept. I follow this by relaying some of the impacts of precarious work, especially as it relates to collective organizing and interpersonal relationships. Finally, I introduce the specific research questions I consider which fill some of the gaps in the research.

2.1: Theoretical Framework

Political economy. This work draws primarily from various Marxist political economy perspectives. These perspectives attribute changes in the workplace and class positions to changes in the economy. Smith (2010) describes the objective of capitalism, the current global economic system, as increasing private profit for the owners of the means of production rather than pursuing collective wealth. Neoliberalism is not a distinct form of socioeconomic organization from capitalism. Rather, it is a form of organization within capitalism that makes use of means such as supporting free markets and cutting social spending (McNally, 2011), which the ruling class employed in order to defend their economic and political interests (Harvey, 2008). As such, neoliberalism provides fertile ground for employers who wish to further exploit workers. As a form of capitalism, there are two basic social classes under neoliberalism: the proletariat, or those who sell their labour for wages, and the bourgeoisie, who own the materials necessary for production (Engels, 1914).

Recent academic discussions around precarious work have formulated precarious workers as a separate class from the traditional proletariat, most popularly explored in Guy Standing's 2011 book *The Precariat*. This argument is contentious. Hardy (2017) claims that conceptualizing precarious workers as a social class uses status to define class, rather than the relationships around production, and, in fact, the working class has always struggled with insecurity. On one hand, this definition is inconsistent with how Marxist scholars traditionally define class. On the other hand, it does relate to ideas about class mobility and the middle class that may affect how workers view their work and day-to-day lives. The middle class is associated with ideas about class mobility and status. Bettie (2014) explains that poorer members of the working class feel that they can achieve more and be more successful if they obtain more education, learn new languages, or work in certain occupations.

Many workers strive to obtain middle class status, but it is important to note that at least in the United States, people tend to overestimate the likelihood of changing class status, especially if they are young or believe themselves to be higher class (Kraus and Tan, 2015). Smith (2014) notes that most people identify themselves as being in the middle class, which he believes acts as "a powerful factor inhibiting the development of the working class as a 'class for itself' while also fostering the notion among working-class people that they are rather typical members of a middle-class society" (p. 292). Striving for class mobility may prevent members of the working class from striving to improve overall working conditions for more vulnerable workers while furthering notions that reaching the middle class is an ideal goal.

Furthermore, according to Frase (2013), to be considered a separate class a group must "[occupy] a distinctive position in the economic system of production and distribution of goods and services, and reproduction of human beings and society as a whole" (p. 12). Little existing

research attempts to defend precarious workers as fitting this definition. If the “precarariat” occupies the same position in the economic system as the traditional proletariat and the means of production have not shifted, it is not useful to define precarious workers as a new class.

At the same time, the study of precarious work shares important continuities with Marxist theory. Marx defines alienation generally as a worker’s perception that the product of their labour is independent and holds power, and writes further that workers can be alienated from the products they produce, their work, their humanity, and other humans in a relational sense (Musto, 2010). Precarious workers deal with heightened alienation as a group in part because of their instability and struggle to build an identity around work (Standing, 2011). As alienation grows, workers begin to see one another simply as objects for personal gain (Christ, 2015). Such alienation has the ability to suppress solidarity. Thus, while precarity may not be a new concept, per se, it is still relevant to many of the contemporary working class’ experiences and deserves study. Frase (2013) warns that the labour movement should not simply proceed forward with a goal to return to Fordist production and workplace organization. Rather, the politics of labour should move beyond the workplace and consider how issues such as basic income, affordable housing, and education quality affect the working class today.

Therefore, examining shifts in labour practices both within and outside the workplace is vital. Labour process theory is a long-studied theory of political economy which studies changes in workplace processes. The labour process at its base is made up of the activity, object, and instruments at work, but researchers expand on this base to include structural dynamics such as how workers attempt to resist and organize (Coulter, 2016). Labour process theory may further be thought of as “a meso- and micro-level theory analysing changes in workplace dynamics not as benign but as a struggle over control” (Cunningham, Baines, Shields, and Lewchuk, 2016, p.

456). Rather than viewing the rise in precarious work as the direct result of changes in the economy, it is important to also ask how changes in the economy have altered workplace power dynamics.

The following literature review explores how neoliberalism set the stage for the rise of precarious work. Labour process theory is particularly relevant to precarious employment. Thompson (2010) recognizes that changes in working dynamics lead to more intensified labour and employers having increased skills expectations for workers. Also, as mentioned above, labour process theory may help clarify worker resistance. Lloyd (2017) brings labour process theory into conversation with workplace resistance with the claim that “informal acts of disobedience and resistance to the work process, shared amongst co-workers, indicate their collective exploitation and form the basis for potential co-ordinated resistance” (p. 275). Thus workers are also able to alter work processes and take part in the struggle for power. However, Lloyd (2017) cautions about being too optimistic about the role of successful individual struggles, as capitalism tends to co-opt such struggles to avoid real structural challenges.

In an attempt to locate working class struggles outside the workplace, scholars in feminist political economy focus on how changes in the economic system relate to reproduction. Social reproduction refers to unpaid household work such as cooking and teaching social skills to children which serve to reproduce people as workers (Coulter, 2016; Cohen, 2013) as well as ensuring that the state meets certain needs such as health care and education (Cohen, 2013). Bezanson (2011) notes that during recessions, women enter the workforce at higher rates but men do not take on more social reproduction. If neoliberal policies involve both an increase in precarious work and more individualized social reproduction, it is unclear how this social reproduction will take place. Bezanson (2011) suggests that “the depth of the effects of income

insecurity and family stress is only beginning to become plain” (p. 97). As a result, precarious work has implications for social reproduction and family relationships and likely causes types of strain that scholars have yet to identify.

Additionally, the feminist concept of intersectionality is relevant here. Intersectionality originated in black feminist thought, and provides a conceptual framework for study the “interrelationships of gender, class, race and ethnicity and other social divisions” (Yuval-Davis, 2006, p. 194). In acknowledging the necessity of this type of study, this work engages with differences in precarious work and community engagement across class, gender, citizenship status, and other social locations. This work does not examine the experience of those in the intersections of these groups. Thus, in keeping with Carastathis’ (2014) critique that “so popular has the concept of intersectionality become that common usage makes it acceptable, in certain circles, for one to refer to ‘intersectionality’ as a synonym for oppression, without specifying what, in particular, is intersecting, or how” (p. 305), this project cannot be said to be fully intersectional. Rather, I introduce this concept to draw attention to the fact that who holds power in the workplace is relevant to the emergence of precarity, and that future studies should engage with a further intersectional analysis of precarious work, community engagement, and social support.

Hegemony. Theories of hegemony can illuminate why precarious workers do not all resist their increasing labour market marginalization. Gramsci (2014) defines hegemony as “the ‘spontaneous’ consent given by the great masses of the population to the general direction imposed on social life by the dominant fundamental group” (p. 12). Put in other terms, hegemony is the process through which the values of the dominant class are spread to the dominated class through moral and political means (Woolcock, 1985). The working class must at

least subconsciously agree to the ruling class' domination for these values to spread. Typically, workers give consent to hegemonic values because members of the dominant class which support them enjoy high status and other comforts (Gramsci, 2014). As mentioned earlier, many in the working class aspire to a higher status position and thus are receptive to hegemony.

Under capitalism, collective processes such as production appear to be an intrinsic feature of the economic system (Musto, 2010), and as such capitalism seems to be a superior and well-organized system. Hegemony can make scenarios that are harmful to workers appear beneficial for everyone. For example, Cushen (2013) argues that accounting practices such as billable hours are used as a form of hegemonic control over workers. Another example of hegemony within the workplace is the use of timers in drive-throughs at fast food restaurants, which serve to remind employees that speedy work is beneficial for customers but also allow workers to feel a sense of pride when they complete tasks quickly.

Hegemony can be a long-term process which has major structural impacts. Eckelt and Schmidt (2014) report that many young workers in Germany have difficulty finding secure, well-paying work out of school and this lowers their job expectations for the future. One student they interviewed was promised a position if they completed an unpaid internship but were never offered the job, which the student interpreted as a personal failure for trusting the company (Eckelt and Schmidt, 2014). Here, hegemonic forces are working to obtain consent for neoliberal practices. As precarious work grows across North America, workers may experience a similar cooling of expectations. As fewer employers offer employees benefits or other forms of job security, more workers will stop expecting these benefits. Standing (2011) supports this by arguing that precarious workers experience greater alienation from their work when they are told

to be grateful for insecure work despite not being able to see the benefits of such. Whether or not this is deliberate, it still serves to create a population that is easier to control.

However, resistance also exists within hegemony. Cushen (2013) considers that “whilst hegemonic narratives emerge hegemony is not automatic and competing narratives always exist” (p. 316). Lawson and Elwood (2017) argue that current understandings of poverty contribute to neoliberalism and that poor people are individualized to keep them from forming solidarity. The same may be true of precarious workers, who can be forced into competition with one another. Understanding how precarious workers engage in building solidarity and social alliances is thus important to “[recognising] attitudes and feelings of injustice that have been silenced, but which hold the potential to change the terms of debate, including rethinking attitudes toward care” (Lawson and Elwood, 2017, p. 111). If people are not participating in local activities, then taking part in community and social activities could form one part of a greater strategy to combat the neoliberal hegemony which convinces people they must accept insecurity.

2.2: The Origins of Precarity

The concept of precarious work is gaining popularity in the sociology of work. There are competing ideas about what makes work precarious, but many of these ideas share some basic characteristics. A simple definition of precarious work is that it is work that is either seasonal, temporary, casual, or the worker is self-employed (Lewchuk et al., 2013, p. 17). Most researchers build upon this basic definition to conceptualize precarity. Sectors that employ high numbers of precarious workers are characterized by other labour issues as well. In the retail sector, along with being insecure, jobs are poorly paid and only part time work may be available (Coulter, 2014).

However, in recent years more types and sectors of work are entering the realm of precarity. Lewchuk et al. (2014) found that many careers which have typically been considered professional, secure employment are becoming precarious. For example, knowledge workers are typically considered to be secure and professional yet Albo (2010) argues that they are “just as subject to the real subordination of labour into industrial production and ‘proletarianization’ as were earlier forms of work” (p. 11). A third of the most precarious workers make over \$40,000 a year (Lewchuk et al., 2014), so clearly precarity is not limited to low-paid sectors such as retail even if this is where it flourishes.

Neoliberalism and precarious work. Precarious work exists within certain political and economic contexts. Researchers began approaching the topic of precarious work in the late 1800s and by the late 1900s scholars were approaching the topic from a wide variety of angles (Vosko, 2006). Guy Standing (2011) recently popularized the term in his book *The Precariat*. Most contemporary research on precarious work attributes its rise in use to neoliberalism, especially considering the 2007/2008 global financial crisis. Neoliberalism is a form of capitalist accumulation that relies on an intensification of labour exploitation (McNally, 2011). McNally (2011) relates three ongoing processes that make up neoliberalism: repression of labour practices, industrial restructuring and downsizing, and capitalist globalization.

Neoliberalism often appears to be reliant on deregulation of the market, but, conversely, it is a specific set of government regulations that create space for neoliberalism (Fanelli and Thomas, 2011). Although neoliberal policies became more commonplace beginning in the 1970s, in 2008, neoliberalism and global financial capital were catalysts for a major worldwide economic crisis known colloquially as the Great Recession (McNally, 2011). McNally (2011) argues that this catastrophe is better termed a “global slump,” in an effort to “capture a whole

period of interconnected crises ... that goes on for years without a sustained economic recovery” (pp. 8-9). Neoliberalism, and capitalism more generally, has created a long series of such collapses, and most people (and countries) have never had the opportunity to recover what they have lost, despite apparent stability in the economy. Indeed, Harvey (2007) argues that “the main substantive achievement of neoliberalization, however, has been to redistribute, rather than to generate, wealth and income” (p. 159). While neoliberalism appears to provide short-term economic gains, those gains do not apply to most people, let alone the working class.

Neoliberalism is related to processes in the economy which gradually make workers less secure. Arnold and Bongiovi (2013) describe these as informalization, referring to the lack of, removal of, or lack of enforcement of labour regulations; casualization, which refers to employers either explicitly or implicitly replacing regular positions with short-term or part-time positions; and contractualization, which refers to increasing use of fixed-term contracts to replace permanent employment. Combined with a rise in service and knowledge employment and the increasing presence of new technologies (Clement, Mathieu, Prus, and Uckardesler, 2010), neoliberalism exposes workers to many varieties of insecurity.

Before moving on to discussing precarious work in more detail, it is important to note that neoliberalism has indirect as well as direct economic effects. In order for neoliberalism to survive, the capitalist elite needed to manufacture a strictly individualist, market-based culture (Harvey, 2007). Individualism has transformed many areas of people’s lives, but one area where there has been significant change is in social support. For example, when government policies individualize services -- which adds to domestic labour -- people undergo great strain in their personal relationships (Bezanson, 2011). I expand upon neoliberal individualism later to understand its relationship with social support.

Neoliberalism manifests differently in different contexts, so to fully understand precarity in Ontario it is necessary to understand how neoliberal policy makes space for precarious work in the region. A major success of neoliberal politicians in the region is conflating public values with for-profit interests, and arguing the resulting policies are the only realistic options (Coulter, 2009). Liberal political workers in particular appear to prefer not to identify with any particular ideology, preferring to try and find compromise between opposing political sides (Coulter, 2009). When centrism is treated as a political ideal, requesting changes to the status quo seems especially subversive. A union on strike, or a worker trying to organize a union, may be met with hostility from a public who wants them to make peace. Any labour movement would struggle to make progress in such an atmosphere.

Aside from the political context, Ontario's neoliberal employment legislation allows precarious work to grow. As mentioned in chapter one, employers who do not follow the Employment Standards Act are usually not punished unless an individual reports them in reaction to an incident. Surveys find that an alarmingly high number of employers violate employment standards regulations, including paying less than minimum wage, not paying overtime, or firing employees without notice (Vosko and Thomas, 2014). Lowering employee's expectations about employment standards normalizes aspects of work that are insecure. The Ontario Works welfare system also creates room for more precarious work, as taking part in job-related interviews and action plans are a requirement of receiving benefits (Evans, 2007). Policy mandating welfare recipients accept jobs means workers cannot have high expectations or standards for what work they accept.

Precariat or proletariat? One of the reasons the term precarious work is so popular in contemporary sociology and labour studies is that it refers to a specific set of shared experiences

that are seen as new, especially in North America and Europe. Many of these experiences are a result of the above process. As I discussed in 2.1, Standing (2011) takes this analysis a step further to claim that precarious workers are part of a new “class-in-the-making” (p. 7), although not yet constituting an independent social class. The argument would be that rather than being a new struggle for the working class to face, the heightened exploitation precarious workers face suggests they are a new group entirely. Standing (2011) defines the precariat as lacking most or all of seven different forms of security, including representation by unions and regulations for companies around hiring and firing. Presumably the traditional understanding of the proletariat has access to these forms of security, but other researchers distinguish between secure and insecure lifestyles *within* the working class.

Bettie (2014) highlights the difference between settled-living and hard-living lifestyles and families. Settled-living families and workers enjoy benefits such as job security, union protection, and high pay which can lead to more stable households, while hard-living families are those who lack such security and stability (Bettie, 2014). Bettie (2014) analogizes hard-living families to the working class and settled-living families to the middle class. Following these arguments, Standing’s precariat resembles the settled-living lifestyle which has continuities with previous theoretical arguments about the working class.

Claims about the precariat as a separate class (whether in-the-making or otherwise) tend to be controversial amongst political economists and run counter to common theorizations about capitalism. Jonna and Foster (2016) argue that discussions about precariousness date back to Marx and Engels, who used precariousness as part of their original definition of the proletariat. Marx pointed to a reserve army of labour as causing these precarious conditions, particularly the floating reserve army, whose numbers change as exploitation increases and who are under

constant threat of being replaced with younger, more physically capable workers (Jonna and Foster, 2016). Thus, Standing's (2011) assertion that insecurity has eroded the precariat's work-based identity compared to the former working class is not necessarily accurate, as the floating reserve army of labour would also not have had much opportunity to identify with their work.

Additionally, the creation of a new social class implies that the economy is acting differently than is normal, or that capitalism is in transition. However, if the growth in precarious work comes as a result of the 2008 financial crisis, then it is simply a result of capitalism acting as usual. McNally (2011) points out that "growth in a capitalist economy invariably generates great breakdowns in the system ... cycles of expansion and contraction are thus hardwired into capitalism" (p. 61). While it may be true that the more prevalent service and knowledge workers today are different from manufacturing workers because they do not produce goods, Smith (2010) does not believe unproductive workers are all sufficiently distinguishable from the proletariat. As such, precariousness is not an inherently unique experience to contemporary workers and it is not useful to distinguish precarious workers as a separate class from the proletariat. However, it is still useful to examine how precariousness manifests under the neoliberal regime.

2.3: Defining Precarious Work

Employment Precarity Index. For the purposes of this project, I used Wayne Lewchuk's employment precarity index to define precarious work (see Lewchuk et al., 2014). Rather than defining precarious work on a yes or no basis where a worker is either secure or not, the index measures insecurity across four general categories using ten questions (see Appendix A). The first of these is form of the employment relationship, which refers to whether or not an employee is in a permanent, full-time standard employment relationship and how job insecurity

varies based on the type of employment held (Lewchuk et al., 2014). Jokela (2017) confirms these concerns with her research on domestic workers, which demonstrates that workers' security can greatly vary depending on whether their work is full time versus part time, or temporary versus permanent.

The second category is income uncertainty, measured based on income variation, employer-provided benefits, likelihood of hours of work being reduced, and whether a worker is paid if they miss a day of work (Lewchuk et al., 2014). If well-paid jobs can be precarious, the inverse can be true as well; jobs that seem otherwise secure might still be poorly paid. Clement et al. (2010) recognize that "even a secure long-term job may be labelled 'precarious' if it keeps one poor" (p. 58). Income is still an important factor in precarity, as poorly paid work can compound job insecurity. The employment precarity index does not include income level, but does consider income variability, which would prevent a worker from having a consistent idea of what expenses they can afford.

A third aspect of employment precarity is scheduling uncertainty, which can be determined by whether a worker knows their schedule in advance and how often they work on call (Lewchuk et al., 2014). This aspect is related to the expectation that precarious workers be flexible. Unpredictable scheduling can lead to interpersonal issues and interfere with family time or family planning, extending precarity beyond the workplace (Chan and Tweedie, 2015). Additionally, it is becoming more common now for workers to be on call, work on fixed-term contracts, and/or hold multiple jobs (Duffy, 2011). Scheduling uncertainty makes it more difficult for people in these situations to plan their work.

Finally, relationship uncertainty refers to whether an employee is paid in cash and if they feel they might face employer retribution if they lodge a health and safety complaint (Lewchuk

et al., 2014). Lewchuk et al. (2014) believe this measure “captures both the degree to which employment relationships can be viewed as informal or casual relationships and the relative power of employers and workers in a relationship” (p. 55). This aspect is relevant because it highlights how policy is not the only factor creating precarious work. Passing legislation to protect workers is not effective if the laws are not enforced (Arnold and Bongiovi, 2013).

Clement et al. (2010) add that protection from discrimination and other poor labour practices is an aspect of precariousness, which is related to the power relationship between employers and employees. By centring these four aspects of insecurity, the employment precarity index provides a good starting point for discussing precarious work, but further distinctions are necessary due to varying experiences with precarity.

Sustainability in precarious work. While precarious work is known for its negative social effects, some precarious workers see their labour conditions as favourable to their lifestyle. Clarke, Lewchuk, de Wolff, and King (2007) differentiate between sustainable precarious work, where workers do not want better working conditions, and unsustainable precarious work, where workers wish for more secure work. Precarious workers who consider their job sustainable have better mental health and suffer from less job stress than those in unsustainable work (Clarke et al., 2007). Campbell and Price’s (2016) research on high school students in Australia extends this concept. Though students’ work is often poorly paid and lacks security and legislative protection, students also usually have access to family income and may not remain in precarious work indefinitely (Campbell and Price, 2016).

Arguably it is difficult to comprehend the true effects of precarious work due to the variety of individual experiences. However, precarious work causes issues for most workers. Chan and Tweedie (2015) found young workers delay starting families or hide pregnancies to

cope with precarious employers' demands. These arguments run contrary to the belief that precarious work is beneficial for young people as a whole. While precarious work can be defined according to objective features, precarity does not have the same implications across all groups of workers.

Precarity in a globalized context. Precarious work must also be examined across global contexts. Although it is encroaching rapidly in many economies, in other countries it may not have taken hold or appears different than it does in North America. Vono de Vilhena, Kosyakova, Kilpi-Jakonen, and McMullin (2016) found work that is viewed as secure has varying characteristics depending on the country under study. In Russia, non-precarious work offers social benefits, while in the UK non-precarious work may simply mean having a permanent work contract. Furthermore, most research on precarious work is Western and fails to acknowledge regions where "precarious" conditions are the standard employment arrangement (Jokela, 2017). Global neoliberalism has also had varying effects on different countries. In China, between population growth and labour migration, the traditional proletariat has grown by over 200 million since 1978 (Harvey, 2007). As a result, this work proceeds with the understanding that findings are limited to clarifying the interaction between precarious workers and institutions in North America.

2.4: Impacts of Precarious Work

Health impacts. Precarious work has major effects on workers, extending into various facets of their lives. Sociologists have widely studied the impact of precarious work on health. Overall, 85% of studies on the subject indicate that job insecurity and industrial downsizing have negative health effects, whereas only 1.2% have positive findings (Quinlan and Bohle, 2009). Clarke et al. (2007) found that precarious workers whose work cannot sustain their needs in the

longer term suffer from increased headaches, sleeping problems, and high blood pressure amongst other problems. Some of these health impacts are related to the lack of regulatory protection within precarious work. One issue Underhill and Quinlan (2011) identify is that in temporary agencies, training is often insufficient and workers fear reporting injuries as agencies may refuse to hire them in the future. As such, insecurity at work can both cause and worsen injuries.

Precarity-related injuries and health impacts may be long-term and are not always physical. Unsustainable precarious workers who believe they have a chance of securing stable work may put off necessary health care or stress relief for years if they believe they will have more time or resources available to secure proper health care in the future (Clarke et al., 2007). Heightened stress also affects mental health. Han, Chang, Won, Lee, and Ham (2017) found that precarious workers experience significantly increased levels of depression, and these effects were worse for participants with lower socioeconomic status.

Beyond direct health impacts, precarious work can affect workers' emotions, self-image, and lifestyle. Precarious workers have particularly heightened "anger, anomie, anxiety, and alienation" compared to the rest of the working class (Standing, 2011, p. 19). Precarious workers may be ashamed of the position they occupy to the point that they lie to friends and family about their job, especially if they considered themselves to have a more respectable job in the past (Standing, 2011). Retail workers may find their work undervalued, and employers or customers may disrespect them while leaving them with few outlets for their frustration (Coulter, 2014). Precarious work can also erode workers' identities and lives in the longer term. When combined with individualized policies for care work, such as those neoliberal states craft, precarious work can interfere with young workers' ability to make decisions around family planning (Chan and

Tweedie, 2015). In general, the features of work insecurity can force workers to enter a cycle which keeps them dependent on precarious work.

Precarity traps. Standing (2011) uses the term “precarity trap” to refer to the excessive financial and temporal costs associated with participation in precarious work that the work itself does not adequately compensate for. Costs of childcare, travel, and clothing during job searches can cost upwards up \$100, and expenses can add up quickly if a worker only receives temporary contracts (Standing, 2011). Thus, if jobs searches constantly indebt a worker, they cannot afford to insist upon high quality work and whatever precarious work employers choose to offer them will keep them trapped. Chan (2013) offers another example: precarious workers spend time and money on education to improve their chances in the job market, but given the impossibility of predicting what kind of work they will end up in, their training may not provide them with improved wages or security to address their educational debt. Precarity traps are significant to the study of precarious work and community engagement as they demonstrate that precarious workers do not have access to as much free time as more secure workers. As a result, they may not be able to participate in activities they may otherwise prefer to, such as neighbourhood activities or domestic care.

Social location and precarity. While precarious work has a variety of effects, not all workers feel these effects equally. Research on social location in precarious work reveals that members of marginalized groups can be more vulnerable to the negative outcomes of precarity. Clement et al. (2010) note that “class practices at the workplace are embedded with patriarchal and ethnic-discriminatory assumptions, wage-setting systems, and divisions of labour” (p. 45). As a result, marginalized individuals are more likely to find themselves in precarious employment, and employers and co-workers treat them more poorly within this type of work.

Fuller and Vosko (2008) explore the likelihood of being in temporary work by gender, race, and immigration status, and found that although there was variation among job types, as a general rule, socially disadvantaged workers found themselves in precarious work more often. Although precarious work encompasses more than temporary work, it is likely that this pattern is replicated in other types of precarious work.

Other research corroborates these findings. According to a study on human capital and family investments, men are more likely to benefit from investments such as educational training and it is less likely that housework and having children will impact their work (Young, 2010). Racialized workers also fare poorly, with a lower likelihood of unionization and lower levels of security and income (Cranford and Vosko, 2006). Citizenship status also influences experiences with precarity. Jackson and Bauder (2013) found that even when refugees come from skilled work backgrounds, when they arrive in Canada temporary and part-time work is often the only work available to them. While precarious workers are generally disadvantaged, gendered, racialized, and immigrant workers experience worse effects.

There are other factors to consider when studying precarity. People expect better job security from employers in exchange for higher educational attainments, and thus it seems logical that people with higher educational levels will experience better working conditions (Vono de Vilhena et al., 2016). Clement et al. (2010) agree that education can lead to class mobility, but that depends how accessible the educational system is for the working class.

Finally, precarious work looks different and affects workers differently depending on their life stage. On one hand, student workers may be protected from some impacts of insecurity if they share income with parents and work takes up less of their time (Campbell and Price, 2016). On the other hand, young workers who are exposed to precarious work may find their

work disrupts their entire life course (Chan and Tweedie, 2015). Age and educational level are vital to consider when studying precarious work as they can have diverse and sometimes unexpected effects.

2.5: Collective Action and Precarity

Precarious workers and collective organizing. Precarious work is clearly detrimental for the working class, but less clear are the strategies workers use to resist precarity. Precarious workers take more risks when they organize. For example, labour unions have served as an outlet for workers' voices in the past. Some unions still find great success organizing in the contemporary labour market. Such unions succeed by continually organizing new members and making use of unconventional strategies such as organizing several branches of a company simultaneously (Coulter, 2013). Unions may also use collective work and legislation to reduce precarity, however, despite the use of multiple strategies precarious work is still common (Keune, 2013).

As precarious work grows, most unions lack the ability to represent these workers. Although this attitude is not inherent only to precarious work, companies employing high numbers of precarious workers strongly oppose unionization. One retail worker involved in organizing reported that managers would go as far as monitoring her bathroom use to ensure she was not taking part in union activities (Coulter, 2014). Even when workers certify a union in the precarious sector, their jobs are still not necessarily secure. After a meat cutting department in Texas and an entire store in Quebec unionized, Wal-mart shut down the Quebec store and all its meat cutting departments (Coulter, 2013). Such actions "serve as a form of worker and class disciplining, fueling a climate of fear among retail workers who feel that they have to choose between a low-paying, precarious job and no job" (Coulter, 2013, p. 51). Precarious work stays

insecure because employers work to foster a culture of fear and distrust of unions and collective organizing in general.

Closures can occur in stable workplaces as well. Employers closing previously secure locations gives evidence to the argument that precarious work becoming commonplace weakens all unions. Edralin (2014) found hotel workers' employers would resort to precarious work practices to lower operational costs or to increase labour flexibility. Union shrinkage is a direct result of employers hiring higher numbers of part-time and temporary workers, who may not be covered by collective agreements (Edralin, 2014). Thus, joining a union is often not an ideal organizing tactic for workers in areas where precarity is common.

Furthermore, unions have traditionally struggled to equally represent marginalized workers. Canadian unions used to exclude racialized workers entirely, and today union membership can still exclude such workers from national leadership positions and treat them disrespectfully when they run for executive positions (Das Gupta, 2007). While Rayside (2007) praises unions for their efforts to include women and promote sexual diversity, he also notes that they have only minimally addressed issues of race and disability. As mentioned earlier, marginalized workers tend to feel the impacts of precarious employment more severely, so unions with discriminatory histories may not appeal to them.

Fortunately, there are other existing platforms for collective action and resistance available to precarious workers. Much of precarious workers' political action occurs outside of the workplace, where employers have less power (Lewchuk and Dassinger, 2016). In the US, immigrant workers, whose work security is threatened with deportation and criminalization, involve themselves with marches and political campaigns to resist legislation that will increase their precarious situations (Milkman, 2011). Retail workers who do not have access to labour

unions also have the option of engaging in store- and sector-based organizations to put pressure on employers (Coulter, 2013). Many of these efforts have led to great improvements for precarious workers, yet these community-based actions may not be sustained forever. According to Putnam (2000), the number of Americans who participate in at least one type of civic activity dropped by 25% between 1973/1974 and 1993/1994, and the activities which lost the most participants were group-based actions such as attending a meeting or rally. These statistics have important implications for precarious workers.

Individual workplace resistance. Collective action has important benefits for the working class, including precarious workers. Meyer (2016) found that people who take part in political campaigns or other actions believe more in the worth of collective action and solidarity. Activists who believe collective action is effective have higher levels of self-worth and experience what they see as positive changes to personal values (Blackwood and Louis, 2012). Collective action has material benefits as well. Participating in groups and associations allows people to more effectively voice their demands and this community engagement improves health outcomes and can even prolong lives (Putnam, 2000). These benefits are especially relevant when considering the poor mental and physical health outcomes of precarious workers.

In an era of neoliberalism, however, people and workers see collectivism as undesirable due to the upswing in individual values. Workers in precarious employment can be hostile to one another, and fear employer reprisal for organizing (Lewchuk and Dassinger, 2016). The state intensifies this, being “necessarily hostile to all forms of social solidarity that put restraints on capital accumulation” (Harvey, 2007, p. 75). Individualism combined with insecurity means that precarious workers can often only resist on an individual level. Such resistance can take the form of sabotage or work slowdowns, although these actions typically have the goal of work

avoidance rather than social improvements (Lewchuk and Dassinger, 2016). Other forms of individual resistance include constant skill training and searching for new jobs, and quitting or refusing to take jobs that do not meet certain standards (Lewchuk and Dassinger, 2016).

Precarious workers having ways to resist poor labour practices seems positive, but these actions cannot lead to wider change and may even negatively impact a worker's income or employment opportunities. As such, collective community participation is more likely to lead to benefits for insecure workers.

2.6: Neoliberalism, Social Support, and Institutional Access

Neoliberalism and families. Neoliberalism and neoliberal individualism have a profound effect on family relationships. As mentioned earlier, precarious workers are more likely to delay starting a family as many workers simply do not have time to care for children (Chan and Tweedie, 2015). Even those who manage to secure stable employment may delay making major life decisions, including buying a house or starting a family, because they fear their security is only temporary (Worth, 2016). Even when a family is already established, the stress of precarious work adds to tensions. Women and youth are, on average, working more and for longer hours than they did twenty years ago (Duffy, 2011). Economic pressures often mean more family members join the workforce, and there is less time available for household responsibilities (Duffy, 2011).

The need for domestic labour persists, however. Bezanson (2011) points out that when governments cut public services, people still require the services and these services usually become unpaid work for women. The extra workload puts strain on individuals and partners. The result of such strain is “some carework simply does not get done, and the consequences are dire” (Bezanson, 2011, p. 89). If a woman in precarious work is romantically involved with someone

who makes significantly more money, their partner often expects them to take on additional housework to make up for not having as large an income (Chan, 2013). Sometimes the stress of precarious work on families is so great that it leads to breakups or divorce (Chan and Tweedie, 2015). Precarious work can cause stress that subtracts from the family's ability to soothe or protect from negative outcomes. For some the family can be less of a source of support than for more secure workers.

Neoliberal individualism and isolation. The culture of individualism neoliberals foster impacts how much support people accept. Normalized neoliberalism makes dependence unappealing, particularly financial dependence. Precarious workers who must rely on family support, even only in emergencies, feel shame for not supporting themselves (Chan, 2013). During her research on single mothers on welfare, Little (2001) found mothers felt great pressure to prove they were taking care of their children. Even when people are making use of familial assistance or social services they feel pressure to prove they are self-sufficient. Precarious workers, who Standing (2011) argues experience more anxiety, do not have access to social support as a coping mechanism.

Isolation from social support is a common experience for precarious workers. Standing (2011) argues that “those in the precariat lack self-esteem and social worth in their work; they must look elsewhere for that esteem, successfully or otherwise” (p. 21). Due to finances and other sources of stress, precarious workers may stop spending time with friends and family altogether (Clarke et al., 2007). Putnam (2000) specifies that having a low income does not necessarily lead to social withdrawal, but worrying about money does. This echoes the existence of precarity across levels of income. Such purposeful isolation likely contributes to the mental health issues precarious workers already deal with. Worth (2016) agrees with this, claiming that

community involvement and social support can aid workers in managing their stress levels and distract them from worries. Not only do precarious workers have poorer mental health, but they lack support which could mitigate health problems.

If community engagement and social support are low, the working class will likely experience diminished access to social institutions and influence on policy. The link between individualist social policy and precarious work is clear. Evans (2007) found that 56% of those who stop receiving Ontario Works payments do so because they found a job that could be characterized as precarious, and a third of that group performed worse financially after leaving Ontario Works. If Ontario's welfare system did not require recipients to accept any kind of work offered to them, people could wait until more suitable and secure jobs are available before they begin working.

Some evidence points to the reverse being true as well. Precarious work may lead to individualist policies because the people these policies affect are not involved in the political process. Many of the social groups most present in precarious work According to Standing (2011), the most politically disengaged group of workers in the UK are those under the age of 35. Citizenship is also used as a mechanism to restrict access to resources (Boatcă, 2015). Migrant workers face more danger when demanding access to better jobs as they risk deportation among other dangers. As I explained above, women who are precariously employed have less time available to be involved in their community because of domestic duties. If the most precarious workers are absent from political decision-making, there is no guarantee any involved political actors will protect their interests. Thus, the working class is exposed to more neoliberal policies impacting their everyday lives, further alienating some of the most vulnerable workers as a result.

2.7: Research Questions

Previous research has thoroughly identified a variety of causes and impacts of precarious work. Many precarious workers who might otherwise be active do not have as much time to socialize or to get involved in community activities as more secure workers. Qualitative work has found that precarious workers feel socially withdrawn, experience more difficulty in familial and friendly relationships, and are less involved in their communities. However, further research is necessary to understand the exact effects of precarious work on community engagement and social support. Disengagement may occur more generally among precarious workers, but it is also important to find out if workers only disengage from certain activities.

Ontario is a model location for studying the political impacts of precarious work. Canada has moved away from manufacturing jobs to focus on resource extraction, and the manufacturing sector has shrunk by 40,000 jobs (Stanford, 2008). The shift to service and resource based work caused Ontario's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) to decline (Stanford, 2008). As a result, studies of precarity in the region can highlight how precarious work is intertwined with changes to the economy. Workers in Ontario also have relatively little legislative protection. The Employment Standards act is generally only enforced when workers make individual complaints (and sometimes not even then), and workers who are already insecure risk retaliation from their employer if they file a complaint (Vosko and Thomas, 2014). The results of this research may be used to understand trends in politicized class behaviour occurring in regions where similarly insecure workers face the effects of deindustrialization and loss of manufacturing jobs.

To further understand how changes to political economy affect the behaviour of the working class, I pursue the following research questions: What is the impact of precarious work on community engagement and social support? What facets of community engagement and

social support does precarious work impact most? Finally, how does a worker's social location affect their level of engagement?

Chapter Three: Methods and Data Analysis

In this chapter, I briefly discuss the methodology the original researchers used to collect the data for this project. I also describe the variables I analyze and my proposed hypotheses based on previous research. I conclude by clarifying the analytical techniques necessary for addressing these hypotheses.

3.1: Data Collection and Participants

The Poverty and Employment Precarity in Southern Ontario (PEPSO) research project collected the data I analyzed in this project, with Dr. Wayne Lewchuk providing permission for its use. The processes in this section are based on descriptions by the PEPSO research team involved in the original project. For more information, see their 2015 report *The Precarity Penalty* (Lewchuk et al., 2015).

PEPSO hired Canadian polling company Léger to collect survey data in 2014 using a telephone survey. Léger recruited respondents using random digit dialing. The sample consists of 4,193 respondents ($N = 4,193$) between the ages of 25 and 65 who live in Toronto, its surrounding municipalities, Hamilton, and Burlington. According to Lewchuk et al. (2015), the sample has a similar proportion of respondents by age, sex, and region to the 2006 census. Since 2006 was when Statistics Canada last collected mandatory Canadian census information as of the time of PEPSO's data collection and is thus the most recent data least likely to suffer from non-response bias (Veall, 2010), results should be accurate and generalizable to these populations.

3.2: Study Variables

Questions in the PEPSO survey cover a wide range of topics related to work and security. The survey consists of roughly seven sections covering the following topics: community

involvement, health, personal characteristics, family and household issues, job characteristics, job experiences, and stress related to income. The employment precarity index, which Lewchuk et al. (2015) originally operationalized and I described in detail in chapter 2.3, serves as one of the key independent variables in this study. Participants' scores on the index are a composite variable Lewchuk et al. (2015) constructed from responses to ten questions related to form of the employment relationship, income uncertainty, scheduling uncertainty, and relationship uncertainty. They can score between 0 and 10 on each question, and between 0 and 100 on the overall index. The variable was also divided into quartiles, with the highest scores labeled 'precarious,' with 1,156 participants, and the lowest scores labeled 'secure,' with 910 participants (Lewchuk et al., 2015, pp. 170-171). The respondents' age, gender, race, citizenship status, education level, and region are used as control variables in order to understand variations in the impact of precarious work across contexts.

I grouped dependent variables into two categories for the purposes of creating a community engagement scale and a social support scale. Participants can score between 0-10 on the community engagement scale based on yes or no responses to questions about their participation in political meetings, ethnic events, art and culture groups, adult sports clubs, religious events, support groups, school meetings, and neighbourhood events, as well as whether they enroll their children in sports clubs and if they vote in every election. The social support scale measures between 0-7 and is based on yes or no responses to whether participants have friends to talk to, have a friend to help with household work, help friends around the house, have friends to do things with, have friends to loan money, have work friends who provide support, and whether they live alone. Either Lewchuk et al. (2015) or I coded all variables making up the indexes, with the exception of whether or not one lives alone, as "0 = No, 1 = Yes," meaning that

participants received a score of one for each question to which they responded with “yes.” Living alone awarded a point for answering no, as living with others provides more potential for increased social support.

While Lewchuk et al. (2015) also investigated the impacts of social support and community engagement for the purposes of *The Precarity Penalty* (see pp. 121-123, 127-129), the analysis in this project makes use of a different set of variables. Furthermore, this analysis engages in a more in-depth manner with results as *The Precarity Penalty* is intended for a more general audience and covers a wider variety of subjects.

3.3: Hypotheses

Based on my discussion of previous research in chapter two, this project proposes the following hypotheses:

1. Precarious workers participate in all community and political activities at a lower rate than secure workers.
2. Precarious workers have less access to all types of social support than secure workers.
3. Precarious work has a significant negative impact on community engagement levels.
4. Precarious work has a significant negative impact on levels of available social support.
5. Alongside precarity, workers’ home region, race, gender, age, citizenship status, and education levels have a significant impact on community engagement and social support.

3.4: Data Analysis

I used IBM’s SPSS Statistics version 24 for the analytical procedures in this project. First, I produced descriptive statistics and frequency tables to more fully comprehend implications and breadth of impact of further procedures. Next, I generated cross-tabulations to determine whether there is a relationship between precarious work and the individual community

engagement and social support variables that would eventually make up the indexes. I also ran Pearson's Chi-square and Cramer's V tests to determine the strength and statistical significance of these relationships. The results of these procedures allow for a more in-depth examination of the specific impacts of precarity and to see which areas of community and social life it affects most.

Finally, I used multiple ordinary least-squares regression, a technique for understanding the impact of a range of potential explanatory variables on a chosen dependent variable (Haan, 2013), to demonstrate whether precarious work has a significant effect on community engagement and social support, and which groups of workers experience this impact most profoundly.

Chapter Four: Results

In this chapter, I present and interpret the results of various stages of my data analysis. I present frequency tables, cross-tabulations and multiple regression results alongside written interpretations to aid reader understanding.

4.1: Demographics/Control Variables

First, to give readers a bird's eye view of the data, I generated frequency tables to show the distribution of participants across different geographical locations.

Region.

Table 1: Location of Participants		
	f	%
Toronto	1,894	45.2
GTA	1,638	39.1
Hamilton	497	11.9
Burlington	164	3.9

n=4,193

Most participants in the study lived in Toronto (45.2%) or the surrounding Greater Toronto Area (39.1%). This difference makes sense given their relative population sizes.

Age.

Table 2: Age Distribution of Participants		
	f	%
25-34	1,044	24.9
35-44	1,238	29.5
45-54	1,121	26.7
55-65	790	18.8

n=4,193

Participants in the study had a relatively even distribution of ages, although workers 55 or older were slightly less present in the study (only making up 18.8% of participants). As noted earlier, the survey did not include workers younger than 25 and older than 65.

Sex.

Table 3: Sex of Participants		
	f	%
Male	2,028	48.4
Female	2,165	51.6

n=4,193

The study was approximately equally composed of men and women.

Race.

Table 4: Race of Participants		
	f	%
White	2,642	63.6
Chinese	200	4.8
South Asian	440	10.6
Black	313	7.5
Filipino	84	2.0
Latin American	92	2.2
Southeast Asian	136	3.3
Arab/West Asian	128	3.1
Korean/Japanese	22	0.5
Aboriginal	16	0.4
West Indian	20	0.5
Mixed	53	1.3
Other	7	0.2

n=4,153

The sample is slightly over-representative of white workers (n = 2,642), making up 63.6% of the participants, compared to 56.1% in the overall population for the region (see Lewchuk et al., 2015, p. 183). The remaining twelve racial categories each had less than 500 participants. South Asian participants were the only other group to represent over 10% of participants, while Korean/Japanese, Aboriginal, West Indian, and participants who identified with another racial/ethnic group each made up less than 1% of the sample.

Citizenship status.

	f	%
Born in Canada	2,513	60.1
Canadian	1,452	34.7
Landed	149	3.6
Temporary Visa	27	0.6
Refugee	4	0.1
Other	39	0.9

n=4,184

The vast majority of survey participants were either born in Canada (n = 2,513) or had since obtained Canadian citizenship (n = 1,452). While landed immigrants (n = 149) made up 3.6% of the sample, the remaining three categories represented less than 1% of the sample each.

Level of education.

	Yes (f)	Yes (%)	No (f)	No (%)
Secondary School	3,601	86.3	574	13.7
Trade Certificate	649	15.5	3,526	84.5
College Diploma	1,265	30.3	2,910	69.7
Some University	590	14.1	3,585	85.9
BA	2,175	52.1	2,000	47.9
Graduate Degree	1,006	24.1	3,169	75.9
No Degrees/Diplomas	90	2.2	4,085	97.8

n=4,175

Participants could select all educational achievements that applied to them. The sample group is well-educated, with at least half the sample obtaining BA degrees and nearly a quarter of the sample possessing a graduate degree. Only a small number of participants ($n = 90$) reported having no degrees or diplomas whatsoever.

4.2: Community Engagement

Chi-square analyses. The results of chi-square analyses demonstrate the significance of the relationship between work insecurity and attendance/participation in several community and political events which eventually made up the community engagement scale. Lewchuk et al. (2015) originally divided the precarity index is divided into quartiles, and event participation is based on a yes/no response. Cramer's V along with contingency tables clarify the strength of the relationship. The level of statistical significance set for this test and all following chi-square/regression tests is $p < .05$, but I report exact significance levels for all tests.

Table 7: Political Meeting Attendance (last 12 months)				
	Secure	Stable	Vulnerable	Precarious
Yes	101	128	84	142
No	808	895	875	1,013
% Yes	11.1%	12.5%	8.8%	12.3%
Chi-square = 8.87	$p = .031$	d.f. = 3		
Cramer's $V = .047$				

$n=4,046$

According to the results presented in table seven, precarity has a significant impact on political meeting attendance ($p=.031$). Although overall most participants did not attend political meetings in the last twelve months, 11.1% of secure workers did, compared to 12.5% of stable

workers and 12.3% of precarious workers. These results suggest that precarity significantly increases political meeting attendance, which is the opposite of predictions. However, the effect is small ($V=.047$), and vulnerable workers participate less in political meetings despite being more secure than precarious workers.

Table 8: Attendance at Ethnic Association Event (last 12 months)				
	Secure	Stable	Vulnerable	Precarious
Yes	218	217	191	287
No	691	806	768	868
% Yes	24%	21.2%	19.9%	24.8%
Chi-square = 9.41	$p = .024$	d.f. = 3		
Cramer's $V = .048$				

n=4,046

Table eight demonstrates that participation in ethnic association events is also uncommon, although not as much as political meeting attendance. 24% of secure workers attend ethnic events, and that number lowers as workers become less secure. Precarious workers, conversely, have a higher attendance rate at 24.8%. This slight difference may be related to the overrepresentation of racialized workers in precarious work. Standardized residual scores of 1.6 and -1.7 respectively suggest that precarious workers participate in ethnic association events more often than expected and vulnerable workers participate less often than expected. There is still a significant relationship between precarious work and attendance at ethnic association events ($p=.024$), although it is fairly weak ($V=.048$).

Table 9: Arts and Culture Group Membership (last 12 months)				
	Secure	Stable	Vulnerable	Precarious
Yes	147	159	176	244
No	762	864	783	911
% Yes	16.2%	15.5%	18.4%	21.1%
Chi-square = 14	$p = .003$	d.f. = 3		
Cramer's $V = .059$				

n=4,046

Table nine indicates that in general, precarity has a significant relationship with arts and culture group membership ($p=.003$). 16.2% of secure workers have been part of an arts and culture club, while 18.4% of vulnerable workers and 21.1% of precarious workers have joined an arts and culture club. Although the relationship appears to be positive, it has only a small effect.

Table 10: Enrollment of Children in Sports and Recreation Club (last 12 months)				
	Secure	Stable	Vulnerable	Precarious
Yes	397	424	316	340
No	512	599	643	815
% Yes	43.7%	41.4%	33%	29.4%
Chi-square = 8.87	$p = .031$	d.f. = 3		
Cramer's $V = .047$				

n=4,046

Table ten shows the effect of precarious work on whether participants enrolled their children in sports and recreation clubs. Nearly half of secure workers (43.7%) had enrolled their

child in a club, but that number lowers as workers become less secure. Less than a third of precarious workers (29.4%) enrolled their children in a sports club, highlighting a small significant relationship between the variables ($p < .001$; $V = .123$).

Table 11: Sports and Recreation Club Membership (last 12 months)				
	Secure	Stable	Vulnerable	Precarious
Yes	348	384	267	359
No	561	639	692	796
% Yes	38.3%	37.5%	27.8%	31.1%
Chi-square = 33.6	$p < .001$	d.f. = 3		
Cramer's $V = .091$				

n=4,046

Table eleven addresses the proportion of workers who have been part of a sports and recreation club in the last year. There is a small significant relationship between precarious work and sports club attendance ($p < .001$; $V = .091$). Again, vulnerable workers join sports and recreation clubs somewhat less often than precarious workers do.

Table 12: Support or Self-Help Group Membership (last 12 months)				
	Secure	Stable	Vulnerable	Precarious
Yes	72	89	99	142
No	837	934	860	1,013
% Yes	7.9%	8.7%	10.3%	12.3%
Chi-square = 13.21	$p = .004$	d.f. = 3		
Cramer's $V = .057$				

n=4,046

As table twelve demonstrates, the relationship between precarious work and support/self-help group membership is significant ($p=.004$). Very few participants belonged to a self-help/support group in the last year, and only 7.9% of secure workers belonged to one. That percentage rises to 12.3% as workers become more precarious.

Table 13: School Meeting Attendance (last 12 months)				
	Secure	Stable	Vulnerable	Precarious
Yes	425	413	353	397
No	484	610	606	758
% Yes	46.8%	40.4%	36.8%	34.4%
Chi-square = 35.93	$p < .001$	d.f. = 3		
Cramer's $V = .094$				

n=4,046

School meetings were one of the most well-attended events. More than a third of all participants attended a school meeting in the last year. 46.8% of secure workers attended a

school meeting in the last year, and this moves gradually downward to precarious workers, 34.4% of whom had attended a school meeting. This change demonstrates a significant relationship between precarious work and school meeting attendance ($p < .001$).

Table 14: Voting in Every Election				
	Secure	Stable	Vulnerable	Precarious
Yes	773	789	676	709
No	112	199	240	361
% Yes	87.3%	79.9%	73.8%	66.3%
Chi-square = 129.66	$p < .001$	d.f. = 3		
Cramer's $V = .183$				

n=3,859

Voting rates among workers in the region appear to be high. The majority of the sample report voting in every election (n=2,947). There is also a moderate significant relationship between voting and precarity ($p < .001$; $V = .183$), as 87.3% of secure workers vote in every election compared to 66.3% of precarious workers.

Additional chi-square analyses indicated that attendance in religious events ($p = .107$) and attendance in neighbourhood meetings ($p = .377$) did not have a significant relationship with precarity. These variables were still included in the community engagement scale.

Community engagement scale. After measuring the impacts on individual variables, I constructed the community engagement scale as I described in chapter three. Table fifteen presents the frequency of different scores on the scale.

Table 15: Community Engagement Scale Scores		
Score	f	%
0	215	5.4
1	682	17.1
2	750	18.9
3	702	17.7
4	693	17.4
5	452	11.4
6	272	6.8
7	145	3.6
8	45	1.1
9	14	0.4
10	7	0.2

n=3,977

Notably, all but 5.4% of the sample (n=215) participated in at least one meeting or club in the last twelve months, or vote in every election. Most respondents took part in between one and three activities. Only a small number of respondents scored a nine (n=14) or ten (n=7), suggesting that it is difficult or unappealing for most people to make time for nine different types of activities and voting in every election. The median score on the community engagement scale was three.

Following the collection of frequency data, I constructed a linear regression model was using the precarity index as the sole independent variable and the community engagement scale as the dependent variable. This original model showed that there was a highly significant relationship between the two ($p < .001$). However, once I added control variables, the precarity

index lost its significance. Table sixteen presents the results of the final regression model with all independent variables included. The reference worker for this model is a white man between the ages of 25 and 34 who lives in Toronto, was born in Canada, and possesses no educational degrees or diplomas. Note that a few ethnic categories with few identified respondents were collapsed into larger categories based on geography.

Table 16: Predictors of Community Engagement Scale Scores				
	<i>B</i>	β	<i>Sig.</i>	VIF
Constant	2.029		$p < .001$	
Precarity Index	-.035	-.021	$p = .198$	1.087
GTA	-.003	-.001	$p = .964$	1.171
Hamilton	-.215	-.037	$p = .026$	1.145
Burlington	.107	.011	$p = .490$	1.067
Age 35-44	.520	.125	$p < .001$	1.604
Age 45-54	.645	.151	$p < .001$	1.644
Age 55-65	.184	.037	$p = .05$	1.551
Female	.289	.076	$p < .001$	1.027
Chinese/Japanese/Korean	-.916	-.109	$p < .001$	1.152
South Asian	.027	.004	$p = .813$	1.375
Black	-.126	-.018	$p = .293$	1.187
Filipino	-.414	-.028	$p = .073$	1.061
Latin American	-.442	-.033	$p = .035$	1.069
Southeast Asian/West Indian	-.183	-.018	$p = .269$	1.144
Arab/West Asian	-.425	-.037	$p = .021$	1.119
Aboriginal	.200	.006	$p = .680$	1.007
Mixed/Other	.271	.017	$p = .276$	1.028

Canadian	.080	.020	$p = .283$	1.504
Landed	-.146	-.009	$p = .583$	1.048
Temporary Visa	-1.320	-.027	$p = .075$	1.016
Refugee	-1.263	-.015	$p = .323$	1.007
Other Citizenship	-.205	-.006	$p = .709$	1.014
Secondary School	.141	1.488	$p = .137$	1.240
Trade Certificate	.117	.022	$p = .163$	1.075
College Diploma	.345	.084	$p < .001$	1.156
Some University	.465	.085	$p < .001$	1.027
BA	.760	.199	$p < .001$	1.833
Graduate Degree	.306	.069	$p < .001$	1.441

$n=3,805$; $R^2=.112$; $p<.001$; dependent variable: community engagement scale

Without the confounding effects of the control variables present in the model, the precarity index no longer retained its significant effect on community engagement levels ($p=.198$). This outcome was inconsistent with predictions, as literature suggests that precarious workers struggle to find time for participating in activities that are not necessities. However, the remaining results are still important to examine as this could be an effect of a higher concentration of people who are younger, gendered, racialized, less educated, or non-citizens in the precarious workforce.

In terms of region, only living in Hamilton ($p<.026$) made a significant change to community engagement levels. People living in Hamilton scored 0.215 points less on the community engagement scale than those living in Toronto. However, the weight of living in Hamilton is relatively low ($\beta=-.037$). Living in the Greater Toronto Area or in Burlington did not make a significant difference to community engagement scores. This result may be because the

areas this data represents are too close to one another to see varying results. Hamilton possibly faces different levels of community engagement due to retaining some of its industrialization.

All age groups had a significant impact on community engagement levels compared to those aged 25-34. To a certain extent, aging increases one's likelihood of being involved in community events or voting. Those aged 35-44 ($p < .001$) scored 0.52 points higher, over half a point, on the community engagement scale than those aged 25-34, with relatively high importance to the model ($\beta = .125$). Participants who were 45-54 years old ($p < .001$) scored highly as well, with 0.645 points higher than 25-34-year-olds. This age group was also highly relevant to the model ($\beta = .151$). This pattern does not hold up as strongly for workers older than 55 ($p = .05$). Their community engagement levels only increased 0.184 points over workers in the 25-34 age category, and the relationship barely passed the significance threshold ($p = .05$).

Women had significantly higher community engagement levels compared to men ($p < .001$). They scored 0.289 points higher on the scale, although the variable was only of moderate importance to the scale ($\beta = .076$).

Race/ethnic identity had varying impact on community engagement levels. Participants who were Chinese, Japanese, or Korean participated in significantly fewer community activities ($p < .001$). Belonging to one of those groups led to a score 0.916 points lower than identifying as white - almost an entire point. Identifying as Latin American ($p = .035$) or Arab/West Asian ($p = .021$) also had a significant negative impact on community engagement. Respondents who identified as Latin American scored 0.442 points fewer than white respondents, and Arab/West Asian respondents similar scored 0.425 points lower. In terms of importance to the model, being Chinese, Japanese, or Korean had the largest effect ($\beta = -.109$), followed by being Arab or West Asian ($\beta = -.037$) and Latin American ($\beta = -.033$). Identifying as South Asian, Black, Filipino,

Southeast Asian/West Indian, Aboriginal, or mixed/other did not appear to have a significant impact on community engagement in either direction.

Surprisingly, citizenship does not appear to have much of an impact on community engagement. Although respondents belonging to certain categories of citizenship had different scores than Canadian-born respondents (refugees and temporary visa holders scored over a point less on the community engagement scale), none of their effects were significant. The small number of respondents in most citizenship categories likely influenced these numbers, and was not easily mediated through collapsing categories.

Education level has a significant effect on community engagement, but only when participants pursued a post-secondary qualification other than a trade certificate. Earning a college diploma, completing some university, or receiving an undergraduate or graduate degree all had a highly significant positive effect ($p < .001$ for each). Earning a graduate degree had a weaker effect ($\beta = .069$), giving only a 0.306-point increase in community engagement. Earning a college diploma ($\beta = .084$) and completing some university ($\beta = .085$) had similarly slightly higher effects, with those holding college diplomas experiencing a 0.345-point increase in community engagement and those who completed some university experiencing a 0.465-point increase. Earning an undergraduate degree provided the biggest boost to community engagement of all educational attainments: it has a high importance to the model ($\beta = .199$) and possessing an undergraduate degree increases community engagement by 0.76 points. Secondary school completion and obtaining a trade certificate did not have a significant effect on community engagement levels.

According to low VIF levels, collinearity is not an issue for this regression model. When considering the impacts of precarious work on community engagement it is important to also consider the effect precarity has on social support, which is key to collective action.

4.3: Social Support

Chi-square analyses. Chi-square analyses of the individual variables making up the social support scale highlight the impact that precarious work has on specific aspects of social support. All the relationships I tested were significant. Results show how pervasive precarious work is in impacting different aspects of one's life outside of the workplace.

Table 17: Having a Close Friend to Talk to				
	Secure	Stable	Vulnerable	Precarious
Yes	749	819	746	865
No	161	204	219	289
% Yes	82.3%	80.1%	77.3%	75%
Chi-square = 18.66	$p < .001$	d.f. = 3		
Cramer's $V = .068$				

n=4,052

There is a clear relationship between precarious work and social support, as shown in table seventeen. 82.3% of secure workers report that they have a close friend to talk to, and this number moves steadily downward as workers become more precarious. Only 75% of precarious workers have a close friend to talk to, implying that a quarter of precarious workers face serious social isolation. While the relationship is small ($V=.068$), it is certainly significant, ($p<.001$).

Table 18: Having Friends to Help Around the House				
	Secure	Stable	Vulnerable	Precarious
Yes	605	614	564	686
No	305	409	401	468
% Yes	66.5%	60%	58.4%	59.4%
Chi-square = 15.72	$p = .001$	d.f. = 3		
Cramer's $V = .062$				

n=4,052

Table eighteen highlights the relationship between precarious work and having friends to help out around the house (such as with chores or childcare). This relationship is also significant ($p=.001$). 66.5% of secure workers have friends available to help them around the house, opposed to 59.4% of precarious workers, suggesting potential difficulty for workers whose employers expect them to have a flexible schedule around childcare.

Table 19: Helping Friends Around the House				
	Secure	Stable	Vulnerable	Precarious
Yes	657	664	609	738
No	253	359	356	416
% Yes	72.2%	64.9%	63.1%	64%
Chi-square = 21.78	$p < .001$	d.f. = 3		
Cramer's $V = .073$				

n=4,052

A comparison between table eighteen and table nineteen shows that in general, participants believed they were more likely to help friends around the house than to have friends to help them around the house, with an approximate 5% increase between tables per category of worker. 72.2% of stable workers help friends with household chores, while 64% of precarious workers help friends around the house. The relationship is significant ($p < .001$).

Table 20: Having Friends to Spend Time With				
	Secure	Stable	Vulnerable	Precarious
Yes	745	770	718	835
No	165	253	247	319
% Yes	81.9%	75.3%	74.4%	72.4%
Chi-square = 26.83	$p < .001$	d.f. = 3		
Cramer's $V = .081$				

n=4,052

The vast majority of all workers reported having friends to spend time with. 81.9% of secure workers report having friends to spend time with, and 72.4% of precarious workers have friends to spend time with. The relationship between precarious work and having friends to spend time with is significant ($p < .001$). Notably, the largest difference is between secure and stable workers, where the number of participants who have friends to spend time with drops by 6.6% from secure to stable. Changes between other categories are much smaller.

Table 21: Having Friends who will Loan Money				
	Secure	Stable	Vulnerable	Precarious
Yes	690	721	627	717
No	220	302	338	437
% Yes	75.8%	70.5%	65%	62.1%
Chi-square = 50.81	$p < .001$	d.f. = 3		
Cramer's $V = .112$				

n=4,052

Table twenty shows the moderate significant relationship between precarious work and having friends who will loan money ($p < .001$). 75.8% of secure workers have friends who are willing to loan them money, compared to 62.1% of precarious workers. Interestingly, for every category of workers, participants believed their friends were more likely to loan them money than to help them with household chores (in comparison with table nineteen). Even for precarious workers who typically have lower incomes, it appears time and social isolation are more relevant to their experiences than income alone.

Table 22: Having Supportive Friends at Work				
	Secure	Stable	Vulnerable	Precarious
Yes	799	832	711	736
No	197	180	242	393
% Yes	88.2%	82.2%	74.6%	65.2%
Chi-square = 171.31	$p < .001$	d.f. = 3		
Cramer's $V = .207$				

n=4,000

One of the strongest significant relationships discovered in this research was that between precarious work and whether one has supportive friends at work, highlighted in table twenty-two ($p < .001$). The relationship itself is moderate ($V = .207$). A large majority of secure workers have supportive work friends (88.2%), while only just under two-thirds of precarious workers (65.2%) believe they have supportive work friends. Not only are precarious workers isolated from their wider communities, but they are also isolated from communities at work, which has implications for collective action.

Table 23: Living Alone				
	Secure	Stable	Vulnerable	Precarious
Yes	133	160	170	266
No	772	859	791	889
% Yes	14.7%	15.7%	17.7%	23%
Chi-square = 30.14	$p < .001$	d.f. = 3		
Cramer's $V = .086$				

n=4,040

Less than 25% of participants in each category of work lived alone as of taking the survey. Familial support is still somewhat available to workers who might otherwise not have access to social support. 14.7% of secure workers live alone, and this number increases minimally across categories. However, the largest increase is between vulnerable and precarious workers, where 5.3% more precarious workers live alone than vulnerable workers. The relationship is statistically significant, although weak ($p < .001$; $V = .086$). Since workers could theoretically be living with family, roommates, or romantic partners, the higher score for precarious workers means they may not have the same access to any of those individuals as everyone else.

None of the variables which I selected for construction of the social support scale resulted in a non-significant relationship with precarious work.

Social support scale. After examining the relationship between precarious work and individual sources of social support, I constructed the social support scale. Table twenty-four presents the frequency of participants having access to different sources of social support.

Table 24: Social Support Scale Scores		
Score	f	%
0	33	0.8
1	149	3.6
2	410	10
3	302	7.4
4	447	10.9
5	640	15.7
6	853	20.9
7	1253	30.7

n=4,087

The median score on the social support scale was six, indicating that most respondents enjoy a variety of different sources of social support. However, only about a third of participants (n = 1,253) have access to every source of support the scale measures. A small number (n = 33), less than one percent, have no access to social support whatsoever.

Similarly to the community engagement scale, I ran the social support scale through a linear regression model. When the model included the social support scale as its dependent variable and the precarity index as its sole predictor, the precarity index had a significant effect on social support scale scores ($p < .001$). Unlike with the community engagement scale, adding control variables to this model did not reduce its significance. Table twenty-five below presents results of this final regression model. The reference worker for this model is also a white man between the ages of 25 and 34 who lives in Toronto, was born in Canada, and possesses no educational degrees or diplomas.

Table 25: Predictors of Social Support Scale Scores				
	<i>B</i>	β	Sig.	VIF
Constant	5.017		$p < .001$	
Precarity Index	-.167	-.101	$p < .001$	1.093
GTA	.084	.022	$p = .186$	1.167
Hamilton	.303	.053	$p = .001$	1.144
Burlington	.206	.021	$p = .187$	1.065
Age 35-44	.063	.015	$p = .427$	1.589
Age 45-54	.045	.011	$p = .585$	1.635
Age 55-65	-.093	-.019	$p = .312$	1.534
Female	.208	.055	$p < .001$	1.026
Chinese/Japanese/Korean	-.504	-.061	$p < .001$	1.150
South Asian	-.169	-.028	$p = .123$	1.379
Black	-.454	-.064	$p < .001$	1.182
Filipino	-.802	-.061	$p < .001$	1.077
Latin American	-.303	-.024	$p = .136$	1.067
Southeast Asian/West Indian	-.735	-.075	$p < .001$	1.143
Arab/West Asian	-.565	-.053	$p = .001$	1.124
Aboriginal	-.858	-.028	$p = .067$	1.008
Mixed/Other	.596	.038	$p = .015$	1.028
Canadian	-.204	-.052	$p = .006$	1.499
Landed	-.099	-.01	$p = .538$	1.097
Temporary Visa	-.238	-.01	$p = .500$	1.026
Refugee	-2.294	-.034	$p = .029$	1.011
Other Citizenship	-.130	-.007	$p = .660$	1.036

Secondary School	.344	.063	$p < .001$	1.244
Trade Certificate	-.245	-.047	$p = .003$	1.070
College Diploma	.312	.077	$p < .001$	1.155
Some University	.232	.043	$p = .892$	1.028
BA	.265	.071	$p = .001$	1.826
Graduate Degree	.011	.002	$p = .892$	1.431

$n=3,940$; $R^2=.078$; $p<.001$; dependent variable: social support scale

The precarity index retained a high level of significance even after controlling for the effects of region, age, gender, race, citizenship status, and education. This result confirms that precarious work has major implications for the isolation and alienation which workers already experience. For each increase in precarity, workers scored 0.167 points fewer on the social support scale, which can mean a major change for the most insecure of workers. Additionally, with a standardized Beta score of $-.101$, precarious work is the most important variable in the model.

Hamilton is again the only region to experience a significant change in social support levels compared to Toronto ($p=.001$). Hamilton has a moderately high importance to this model ($\beta=.053$) and living in Hamilton provides a 0.303-point increase in social support over living in Toronto. Notably, living in Hamilton leads to increased social support yet decreased community engagement. People who lived in the GTA or Burlington did not experience significant change.

None of the age groups under examination had a significant impact on social support levels. Since the sample excluded workers over the age of 65, theoretically there could still be changes in social support levels past that point. Women, however, appear to have more access to social support than men ($p<.001$). They score higher on the social support scale by 0.208 points with a moderate effect on the model ($\beta=0.55$).

Access to social support varied depending on participants' racial/ethnic identities. Interestingly, those who identified as mixed/other ($p=.015$) experienced an increase of 0.596 points on the social support scale. Despite the change, the variable is not of particularly high importance to the model ($\beta=.038$). All other racial/ethnic categories faced decreased levels of social support. Black participants ($p<.001$) scored 0.454 points less on the social support scale, with slightly higher relevance to the model ($\beta=-.064$). Chinese, Japanese, or Korean ($p<.001$) participants had similarly lowered levels of social support, with lower scores by 0.504 points. Participants who were Arab or West Asian ($p=.001$) experienced a decrease of 0.565 points, but with a smaller importance to the model ($\beta=-.053$).

Participants who identified as Filipino or as Southeast Asian or West Indian ($p<.001$ each) dealt with even larger significant decreases to their social support levels. Southeast Asian and West Indian respondents scored 0.735 points less on the social support scale, with a higher relevance to the model ($\beta=-.075$). Filipino participants had least access to social support of all racial/ethnic identities; they scored 0.802 points lower on the social support scale. Despite the decrease, Filipino participants had only a moderate effect on social support overall ($\beta=-.061$). Participants who identified as South Asian, Latin American, or Aboriginal did not see significant changes in social support levels.

Canadian citizens who were not born in Canada as well as refugees experienced different levels of social support than workers born in Canada. Citizens born in other countries ($p=.006$) experienced a small decrease of 0.204 points in social support compared to Canadian-born citizens. This variable is moderately important to the overall model ($\beta=-.052$). Refugees ($p=.029$) had the least access to social support of any other group examined in the model, scoring 2.294 points lower on the social support scale than Canadian-born citizens. Although the variable is of

relatively low importance to the model ($\beta=-.034$), such a high score is still cause for some interest. Landed immigrants, temporary visa holders, and people who identified as having another form of citizenship did not experience significant changes to social support.

Obtaining educational degrees and diplomas almost always had a significant effect on social support levels. Finishing secondary school ($p<.001$), a college diploma ($p<.001$), or an undergraduate degree ($p=.001$) all led to increased access to social support. These degrees bestowed a social support increase of 0.344 points, 0.312 points, and 0.265 points respectively. Education is also an important predictor for social support levels as secondary school completion ($\beta=.063$), college diplomas ($\beta=.077$) and undergraduate degrees ($\beta=.071$) had somewhat high standardized coefficient levels compared to other variables. Courses in these educational streams tend to involve a lot of peer interaction, so these results are expected. Earning a trade certificate ($p=.003$) broke this pattern, as it appeared to lower social support by 0.245 points, with moderate importance to the model ($\beta=-.047$). Completing some university and obtaining a graduate degree did not have a significant effect on social support levels.

All reported VIF levels are low, so collinearity is not an issue in this model. Finally, I constructed a linear regression model to test if community engagement scores had an impact on social support scores and vice versa, but findings were not significant. The results of these analyses provide evidence for a number of important observations about the relationship between precarious work and wider community outcomes of neoliberalism.

Chapter Five: Discussion

This chapter opens by considering how results support the initial hypotheses, and where revising hypotheses is necessary. Following is a discussion of the more relevant or surprising results of the analyses, and an attempt to explain these results. Finally, I draw general conclusions about the implications of results for workers and working class politics, and outline some of the limitations of this project.

5.1: Final Hypotheses

Hypothesis one (precarious workers participate in all community and political activities at a lower rate than secure workers) has some support from the results (see tables 10, 11, 13, and 14). Precarious workers participate in adult's sports clubs and school meetings less often, are less likely to enroll their children in sports clubs and are less likely to vote in every election. However, I present other results which do not support this hypothesis (see tables 7, 8, 9, and 12). Precarious workers participate more often in political meetings, ethnic association events, arts and culture groups, and support or self-help groups.

Hypothesis two (precarious workers have less access to all types of social support than secure workers) had full support from the results (see tables 17 through 23). Precarious workers are less likely to have a close friend to talk to, have friends to help around the house, help friends around the house, have friends to spend time with, and have friends who will loan them money. They are also less likely to have friends at work and live alone more often.

Hypothesis three (precarious work has a significant negative impact on community engagement levels) does not have support. Table sixteen shows that after controlling for the effects of social location that although precarious work appears to have a small negative effect on community engagement, the effect is not significant. Thus, the initial apparent impact of

precarious work on community engagement is likely due to the overrepresentation of uneducated, racialized, and young people in precarious work. These effects are explored further under hypothesis five. Therefore, hypothesis three requires revision.

Table twenty-five provides support for hypothesis four (precarious work has a significant negative impact on levels of available social support). Even when controlling for the effects of demographic data, precarious work has a significant negative impact on social support. Although precarious work provides a smaller incremental decrease than other variables in the regression model, according to standardized beta scores it is one of the most important variables in the model.

There is evidence both to support and not support hypothesis five (alongside precarity, workers' home region, race, gender, age, citizenship status, and education levels have a significant impact on community engagement and social support) present in tables sixteen and twenty-five. As a result, I present two new revised hypotheses based on the variance in results.

The final, supported hypotheses based on research results are as follows:

1. Precarious workers participate in most community and political activities at a different rate than secure workers, but the direction of this relationship is inconsistent.
2. Precarious workers have less access to all types of social support than secure workers.
3. Precarious work is not sufficient for explaining changes in levels of community engagement.
4. Precarious work has a significant negative impact on levels of available social support.
5. Rather than precarity, workers' age, gender, and educational level are significant predictors of community engagement levels.

6. Alongside precarity, workers' gender, race, and trade certificate are significant predictors of social support levels.

5.2: Discussion

Community engagement. Analyses of the data show that precarious work has an uneven impact on participation in individual activities. For about half the event or club types examined in the survey, precarious work decreased participation, while for the other half precarious work increased participation. At first glance it is unclear why the data is inconsistent with the proposed hypothesis based on previous research. The types of events examined could have differing motivations behind their attendance, which would explain why precarious workers attend some event types more often and some less often.

The community activities in which precarious workers participate more often than secure workers are political meetings, ethnic association events, arts and culture groups, and self-help groups. There are straightforward explanations for some of these. Generally, racialized workers are more likely to work in a precarious environment (Cranford and Vosko, 2006; Fuller and Vosko, 2008; Lewchuk et al., 2015), explaining precarious workers' increased presence in ethnic association events. Precarious workers, particularly those who struggle financially, are also more vulnerable to stress and other mental and physical health issues (Clarke et al., 2007; Quinlan and Bohle, 2009; Underhill and Quinlan, 2011; Lewchuk, de Wolff, King, and Polanyi, 2006) which would might mean that they have more motivation to join a support group.

One might expect precarious workers to be less likely to participate in arts and culture groups, given the potential cost of participation and supplies. This result points toward certain hobbies and creative outlets having more relevance to certain workers. Research in schools has shown that music programs help improve students' engagement with their school and other

students, particularly for more disengaged learners, as well as providing health benefits (McFerran, Crooke, and Bolger, 2017). Precarious workers, who Standing (2011) argues are more alienated and less politically engaged, may join arts clubs more often because it provides easy access to a community. Karcher (2017) further argues that art can be therapeutic to those who experience sociopolitical oppression. Precarious workers, as members of the working class, experience economic oppression which is complicated further by workers being racialized, non-citizens, or belonging to various other marginalized populations. Only 21.1% of precarious workers belong to an arts and culture group, compared to 16.2% of secure workers, which is higher than other groups but still quite low. Community networks could grow stronger if more workers joined arts groups.

One of the most unexpected results was that precarious workers are more likely to participate in political meetings than secure workers. Based on evidence suggesting precarious workers have less time for non-workplace activities (Duffy, 2011; Standing, 2011) and that overall people are less civically engaged despite a general rise in malaise (Putnam, 2000), I expected that precarious workers would attend political meetings less often. Precarious workers having a more vested interest in the direct results of local and community politics might explain this disparity, although the data does not specify whether these meetings are related to municipal, provincial, or federal politics. The survey also does not ask participants to specify what type of meeting they are attending. A political meeting is not necessarily tied to any specific politician or political party, so participants might have also attended a meeting for a grassroots campaign or some other type of community-based politics. Whatever the reason, this data makes it clear that the relationship between precarity and political activities is not as straightforward as my hypothesis predicted.

The concept of hegemony may help to explain this unexpected result. Secure workers may be more comfortable in their position than precarious workers, but they are still members of the working class. Taking a different perspective on rates of political participation, it is likely that there is a moderate level of suppression of all numbers. Perhaps rather than precarious workers' participation being most suppressed because of their unpredictable scheduling and other issues, secure workers' participation is suppressed because they fit more comfortably in hegemonic culture. As Standing (2011) discusses, the alienation precarious workers experience is compounded because they are also told to be grateful to have a job at all. Precarious workers are vulnerable to a certain kind of pessimism about the necessity of their working conditions, but perhaps precarious workers better understand the value of taking part in counter-hegemonic practices. What Standing discusses does not necessarily have to be limited to precarious workers. Secure workers may be under the impression that they are doing as well as they can in the most viable economic system, and they should be grateful to be in such a privileged position. Along with the reinforced consent to the economic system these beliefs create, an element of coercion exists where secure workers may fear employer retribution for outspoken political engagement.

The community activities precarious workers participate in less often than secure workers are sports and recreation clubs, enrolling children in sports and recreation clubs, school meetings, and voting in every election. The difficulties precarious workers experience when starting and caring for families can explain this decline in part. Lewchuk et al. (2015) found that precarious workers are only slightly less likely to have children, but also that precarious workers with children were sometimes less likely to be able to pay for activities outside of school for them. Sports and recreation clubs are only one of several extracurricular activities available to children, so it is possible that enrollment in other types of activities is higher for children of precarious

workers. There are also informal activities that kids could participate in that might mitigate the social effect of less participation in formal activities. However, based on the available information, it can be suggested that insecure work leads to intergenerational isolation, as children grow older without being able to take part in the same activities as their peers, whether due to family finances or scheduling issues. Taking part in informal activities may not be enough to dispel the effects of being barred from certain types of clubs or activities. If the next generation of precarious workers grows up in isolation and is susceptible to neoliberal individualism, the lack of social support and subsequent effects will become even more pronounced.

Overall, only about a third of workers participate in adults' sports clubs, which is slightly less than the number of secure workers who do so. The difference between secure workers and precarious workers' participation is significant, but not particularly large. Differences could be attributed to the cost of participating in such activities or scheduling uncertainty making it difficult to take part in regularly scheduled clubs or practices. The importance of this result depends on the link between sports clubs and community building, especially compared to the relationship between art and community building. Something to consider is the disparity between adult workers in sports and recreation clubs and children in sports and recreation clubs. The difference is small, but it is notable that other than for precarious workers, more children are involved in sports clubs than adults. If fewer children are involved in sports it is reasonable to assume fewer will go on to be involved in sports as adults, which may only end up replicating a pattern of precarious workers' children having fewer and fewer athletic opportunities.

Lack of representation at school meetings has implications for precarious workers and across social demographics. The specific outcomes depend on what type of school meetings are

being missed. If parents are attending fewer individual parent-teacher meetings, they will be less aware of how their children are performing in school and unable to give them the assistance they require. This outcome again indicates a downloading of precarity from parent to child, where children's education will suffer if their parents are unable to fit extra events into their already busy and unpredictable schedules. Furthermore, lower attendance in parent-teacher association meetings and school board meetings means that education will be designed with wealthier children in mind. While precarious work cannot be defined only in terms of income, precarious workers do generally have much lower incomes than secure workers (Lewchuk et al., 2015). This becomes problematic when it comes to decision-making around schools. In the United States, politicians and some members of the public use neoliberal discourse to suggest schools should be in competition with one another (Allweiss, Grant, and Manning, 2015). One outcome of this discourse is the closure of schools which do not perform up to certain standards, which tends to target schools in low-income and racialized areas (Allweiss et al., 2015; Green, 2017). If these neoliberal discourses gain popularity in Southern Ontario, the low-income and racialized individuals who are much more likely to work insecurely will have to deal with more threats to their children's education. Attending community-based school meetings may be one of only a few opportunities for parents to resist such discourse.

The relationship between precarity and voting is one of the strongest examined in this research. There is a 21% decline from secure to precarious workers in terms of voting in every election. This result has major implications for working class politics and political outcomes. A review of research on causes of low voter turnout cites income inequality as a potential factor due to poorer citizens not being able to access political institutions (Stockemer, 2017). Income as a factor is again relevant to precarious workers as they typically have less access to income, and

thus results imply that Ontario and further Canada suffer from income inequality which impacts precarious workers' voting patterns. If Standing (2011) is correct that precarious workers are so burnt out from overwork that they experience a "crowding out of activities that have social or personal value, such as time spent with family" (p. 126), voting would naturally suffer as a result. Working class political participation becomes disjointed, and participation in political realms may not be representative of issues that are important to many of the more vulnerable members of the working class.

Voter turnout has potential to be relevant to resisting neoliberal policy. Ideally, precarious workers could use their vote to support political parties which would resist neoliberalism. However, in practice this idea becomes more complicated. Traditionally in Canada the New Democratic Party (NDP) has been considered the mainstream political party most aligned with labour's interests, it is also true that "relations between [the NDP] and organized labor have undergone periods of intense strain" (Savage, 2010, p. 20). In particular, Ontario labour has had a rocky relationship with the provincial NDP since its election to government in 1990, headed by Bob Rae. Despite some positive changes the party made to the Ontario Labour Relations Act which increased statutory protections and extended coverage (Walchuk, 2010; Martinello, 2000), the Social Contract Act they introduced which froze wages and introduced mandatory unpaid days off to the public sector has created long-lasting hostility between the NDP and many of its former supporters (Walchuk, 2010). As such, insecure workers in Ontario who may want to participate in electoral politics do not necessarily have access to a party which represents their needs.

Arguably, low voter turnout for precarious workers is a reflection of the separation in values between the working class and its allegedly representative politicians, and an increased

turnout would not benefit the working class. While low income or impoverished people might vote for a more progressive or social democratic party, this does not mean those candidates always line up comfortably with their own values. A note on the relevance of voting to the working class is necessary here. These arguments are not intended to suggest voting is the only option available to, or the most viable option for the working class to be involved in the political realm. Data on more radical forms of political participation would be useful for labour scholars, and this is discussed in more detail in section 5.3. Nevertheless, although insecure workers may be aware of their own political interests, not all of them are aware of the benefits of or interested in more radical action. While work is necessary on that front, in the meantime voter turnout can provide a good indication of which groups feel they have a stake in electoral politics and who has begun to be involved in change.

Interestingly, precarious work has no effect on some types of activities. Insecurity does not appear to affect participation in religious events or neighbourhood meetings. Less than a quarter of participants at each level of precarity participated in neighbourhood meetings, which more likely indicates that these meetings are unavailable or inaccessible to the general public. While it is unclear whether precarious workers have less access to neighbourhood meetings than the general population, the overall lack of attendance at these meetings still carries implications for the working class.

One example of the potential importance of neighbourhood meetings is the case of gentrification in Toronto. The municipal government exacerbates the process of driving out the poor from certain areas by restricting the development of certain types of cheap housing (Slater, 2004). Higher attendance of the working class at neighbourhood meetings might be one way to prevent this kind of “municipally managed gentrification” (Slater, 2004, p. 314). While there are

ongoing campaigns in Toronto to combat the loss of affordable living spaces (Wheeler, 2017) and the resulting rent increases (Parkdale rent strike campaign, 2017), the same may not be true elsewhere. As the Southern Ontario economy experiences ongoing change, there may be further threats to working class communities. Whether through neighbourhood meetings or campaigns such as those above, the local level of organizing is important for providing counter-hegemonic narratives. Results show that participation of this type is not repressed specifically for precarious workers, but overall low levels of participation are cause for concern.

Approximately half of the workers at all levels of security attended a religious event in the last year, although precarious workers were slightly less likely to do so than workers in other groups. There do not appear to be any highly significant implications of this relationship. Putnam (2000) does point out that “religious involvement is an especially strong predictor of volunteer and philanthropy” (p. 67) and other research suggests that religious attendance leads to forming habits of community participation (Ammann, 2015; Perks and Haan, 2011). A lack of religious involvement among precarious workers may diminish their overall community involvement over time, but no major effects to the sample are apparent.

Overall precarious work does not have a straightforward linear relationship with community engagement levels. These results are inconsistent with Lewchuk et al.’s (2015) findings, which suggested that precarious workers participate more because part-time and temporary work allows them more free time (see p. 121). One major difference between these two analyses is that Lewchuk et al.’s model accounts for volunteer work (see p. 122). Some research has suggested in certain sectors, such as the non-profit sector, employers require their employees to perform what is referred volunteer work (Cunningham, Baines, Shields, and Lewchuk, 2016). Lewchuk et al. (2015) suggest that precarious workers may take part in

community activities for networking purposes, and it is possible that this applies more so to volunteer work than other types of activities. Volunteering can sometimes lead to permanent positions, so individuals hoping to find more secure employment may volunteer more regularly. Motivations for volunteering would explain the difference in significance between Lewchuk et al.'s (2015) research and the community engagement scale used in this research. However, it is worth questioning whether community engagement solely for employment-related purposes can be considered a positive form of participation for the working class.

Another difference between the two models is that the model constructed for this project puts more emphasis on how workers are involved in their children's communities, reflecting how precarious work impacts social reproduction. This difference does not help much to explain why precarious work does not have a significant relationship with community engagement. Variables related to children's activities had a significant relationship with precarious work, and thus should draw the scale closer to being significant. This further emphasizes the centrality of volunteer work to community engagement scores, and highlights that more research is still necessary on insecurity and community participation. Understanding whether volunteer work leads to increased participation in other types of community activities would lead to a greater understanding of how precarious workers make decisions about collective engagement. If volunteering leads precarious workers to engage more in other types of activities, then this could be considered a positive outcome. However, given the busy schedules precarious workers must already work around, volunteering may also lead to a decrease in other types of activities. In that case, it is worth examining whether the volunteer work precarious workers partake in is more beneficial to themselves or to their employers.

The relationship between precarious work and community engagement requires more complex study. Despite the inconsistency in results related to community engagement, further examining results related to social support elucidates how insecure workers build collective networks on a more localized level.

Social support. Conversely, as predicted, precarious work lowers access to all included sources of social support: having a close friend to talk to, having friends to help around the house, helping friends around the house, having friends to spend time with, having friends who will loan money, having supportive friends at work, and living with someone else. The cumulative relationship between social support and precarious work is also highly significant. Not only are precarious workers limited from taking part in certain types of community activities, but they also experience difficulty establishing informal social networks. As established by previous research, precarious workers are more susceptible to feelings of loneliness and isolation (Clarke et al., 2007; Standing, 2011). The results of this research help illuminate the specific sources of those feelings of isolation.

Low levels of social support impede individuals' abilities to organize on a less formal, grassroots level. A major obstacle activists deal with is burnout. Burnout "can manifest by having a negative impact on people's physical, mental, emotional and spiritual well-being" (Pyles, 2014, p. 28). Burnout typically occurs when people are involved in an organization or workplace that does not recognize their mental and physical needs (Pyles, 2014). Activists who do not have the appropriate support to combat burnout will not stay involved in political activism in the long term. While Pyles (2014) suggests self-care is the primary tactic for preventing burnout, activists should also give weight to the ability of their allies to recognize when burnout is starting to manifest and provide resources and support for self-care. A lack of social support

affects the sustainability of activist movements and political participation, and so precarious workers will likely find that a lack of support hampers their political movement.

Most workers in the survey would probably not refer to themselves as activists, and most of the activities the survey discusses are not solely meant for activists. However, it is important to acknowledge the organizational parallels. If precarious workers unite around common complaints in, for example, political meetings, they may want to unite at a higher level in their own organization. Burnout may well not be an issue for workers who are organizing toward a single goal, but could detract from future movements and prevent grassroots organizations from building momentum.

What appears to be the most major source of isolation for precarious workers is that they simply have fewer friends. While none of the survey participants claimed to have no friends whatsoever, they either have fewer relationships or the relationships they have are not as strong as those of secure workers. The vast majority of all workers believe they have a close friend they can talk to, but the percentage of those who believe they do drops as workers become more precarious. As mentioned, up to a quarter of precarious workers do not have a close friend to talk to. Not only do these workers lack a vital form of social support, but they have less access to venting about their problems than secure workers who have less need for it. Retail workers “engage in individual and collective venting strategies to express their frustrations and gain a kind of catharsis” (Coulter, 2014, p. 46). Workers in other sectors who share some characteristics with precarious workers may also benefit from venting, but precarious workers as a whole will not have a chance to experience the potential mental and emotional benefits.

These effects should also be considered in relation to the number of workers who have supportive friends at work. Twenty-three percent fewer precarious workers have supportive

friends at work than secure workers and, in fact, more secure workers believe they have supportive friends at work than have friends to talk to. Given the negative impacts of precarious work on mental health, this finding highlights that work relationships may contribute more to positive mental health than relationships outside the workplace. Much fewer precarious workers have workplace friends than have close friends to talk to overall. Having supportive friends had the strongest relationship with precarious work out of all variables included in cross-tabulations and only 65.2% of precarious workers have friends at work. Not only does this contribute to their isolation, but it also interferes with workplace solidarity. In an individualist era, workers who feel like they do not share interests with other workers may still be willing to organize to assist friends. For precarious workers, this is much less likely to happen.

Complicating the social relationships of insecure workers further, many of them do not have friends to spend time with. This result is similar to the percentage of precarious workers who do not have friends to talk to (27.6% for the former and 25% for the latter). A similarly smaller percentage of all workers have friends to spend time with than have friends to talk to, but all others are still more likely to have friends to spend time with than precarious workers. Given the numbers, it can be extrapolated that about 25-28% of precarious workers do not currently have any deep, meaningful friendships. Aside from the aforementioned mental health effects, a lack of important friendships leaves workers with little opportunity should they wish to begin organizing against precarious work or other socioeconomic conditions. Pyles (2014) notes that it is vital for community organizers to build trust over time. Trust-building is an act which becomes difficult to impossible if workers have no real connection to one another.

Precarious workers are also less likely to help each other with household chores. This outcome supports Bezanson's (2011) claims that privatizing care work in a neoliberal state

means less is performed. Not only may care work, especially care work performed for those outside the immediate family, be repressed for all workers, but precarious workers are even less likely to find time for helping others with reproductive labour. Table nineteen shows that while almost three-quarters of secure workers help friends with household chores, but only 64% of precarious workers do the same. Further complicating the matter is that fewer workers believe they have a friend who would help them with household chores. For all groups of workers, approximately 5% fewer participants believe this is true than would help their friends with chores. For precarious workers this means a striking 40.6% of precarious workers do not have a friend to assist them with chores.

There are a few points to consider here. For those workers who help their friends but whose friends would not help them in return, there could be some bitterness over uneven contributions, which would weaken friendships and in turn community connection. Moreover, it is reasonable to assume pairs or groups work more efficiently than a person alone, and sharing chores among friends is one strategy workers could use to allow themselves more free time or reduce some of the uncertainty of their day-to-day lives. Two precarious workers may find it difficult, or next to impossible, line up their schedules enough to help each other with household chores, which would reduce workers' ability to assist each other. These findings support the call for the state to take more responsibility for the provision of care work in the absence of better working conditions, although that would not replace the need for workers to struggle politically toward a more functional and equitable socioeconomic system.

Of course, precarious workers, as most other workers, may rely more on romantic partners or other people living in the same household than friends for help with household work. More than 75% of workers at all security levels live with someone else, and although

significantly more precarious workers live on their own than secure workers, it is still only 23% of that group. One detail to take into consideration is that there could be disparities between what people different workers choose to live with. If fewer precarious workers have children (Lewchuk et al., 2015) and tend to delay forming families (Chan and Tweedie, 2015), there is a potential disparity. Perhaps precarious workers live more often with friends, roommates, or landlords who do not provide help with housework, so even with a similar rate of living with others as secure workers, precarious workers could end up doing more care work. Living with other people is also not an ideal solution for making domestic work less time-intensive. As mentioned, precarious workers with more secure partners often have to take on more housework to make up lost income (Chan, 2013). Precarious workers' relationship with others in regard to housework is complicated and emphasizes the need for a more equitable distribution of domestic work, with particular attention to the situation of insecure workers.

Considering household chores include child care, these results again point to a downloading of precarity. Since precarious employers tend to expect flexibility rather than just providing it, and precarious workers have fewer outlets through which to demand flexible hours fitting their schedule (Chan and Tweedie, 2015), working parents who have nobody to help with childcare and cannot afford quality day care suffer further insecurity. They may struggle to find employers who will provide them hours that work for their situation, if they can find employment at all, and also may not have the opportunity for paid sick leave if a child is sick and needs care. Thus, workers who have less of this type of support will be even more uncertain about their financial future, and their children suffer as a result, whether through inadequate care while parents are working or through poverty due to an often unemployed parent.

Understandably, precarious workers are somewhat less likely to have friends who will loan them money, and it is one of the sources of social support that fewest precarious workers have access to, with 62.1% of precarious workers having access to this support. This result recalls scholarly discussions of precarity traps and the economic situations which lead precarious workers into a cycle of insecurity (Standing, 2011; Chan, 2013). Debt can also be considered a precarity trap, as desperation for regular income to cover sometimes increasing payments could lead people to take any jobs available to them, including precarious positions. Lending money between friends does not necessarily take place in the same context as a loan from a larger financial institution. Loans to friends can come with less or no interest, and the timeline for paying back money may be more relaxed. Friend and family loans can serve as a resource for workers who are struggling financially, although people are often reluctant to rely on money from those whom they have close relationships with (Chan, 2013). Family finances could also be entering the individualist realm, and those who would not ask for money also assume they would not receive money. Precarious workers are potentially more likely to befriend other people in the same socioeconomic situation, leading to their friends also struggling with income uncertainty and being unable to part with their money. Nevertheless, only 62.1% of precarious workers believe they have friends that would loan them money, meaning close to half of these workers are especially vulnerable to predatory lending and other financial struggles if their precarious employment relationship ends.

Taking a more general view, precarious workers score lower on social support. There are a few potential resulting outcomes for working class politics. First, social support is possibly linked to community engagement levels. While the social support and community engagement scales in this project do not have a significant relationship with each other, there are limitations

to generalizing this discovery. Testing this link was not the goal of this research, and a project geared toward that relationship has potential to uncover different information. Social isolation could easily discourage less confident or social people from joining movements or groups, particularly when burnout becomes a concern, alienating the working class even further from direct political action.

Second, this finding emphasizes how neoliberal individualism moderates access to social support. Aside from having supportive friends and work, precarious workers fared worse in relation to variables which required a friend to help them or vice versa. Neoliberal hegemony affects all workers and it is believable that if these conditions were not the case, access to help around the house and loans would be higher for all groups of workers. In every case, though, precarious workers have less access than secure workers. Since precarious workers have less free time, they naturally have less time for assisting others. Beliefs about individualism and self-sufficiency likely also prevent people from approaching others for help, as Chan (2013) finds is often the case for finances. If workers did not feel pressure to be independent and responsible, help with household chores and other responsibilities might be more accessible to them.

Third, the lack of social support could cause serious disruption in social reproduction processes. Fewer precarious workers have children and those that do struggle with barriers that make it more difficult to care for children and provide a clean home environment. If the state is unwilling to provide social reproductive services, and workers are unable to provide them, then many children will not receive the care their parents wish to provide. Precarious workers have fewer options for affordable child and home care than secure workers. As such, neoliberalism simultaneously creates an environment where parents are less able to provide for their children and insists parents take responsibility for all social reproduction. While some socially

reproductive activities might be attributed to hegemony, others are necessary (e.g. the cleanliness of an environment would affect a child's health; childcare would affect their nutritional level). Many precarious workers do not even have the ability to substitute their own social reproduction for that of a friend, and although the implications are somewhat unknown, possibilities appear negative. Before drawing some preliminary conclusions about precarious work and how it disrupts social networks and communication, the differing impacts of demographic characteristics on community engagement and social support require some explanation.

Impact of social location. Demographics and social location have a more complex relationship with community engagement and social support than originally envisioned. Original hypotheses predicted that region, race, gender, age, citizenship status, and education levels would all have a significant effect with both community engagement and social support, with a built-in assumption that relationships would be either all negative or all positive. That is not the case, and scores on the community engagement scale and social support scale vary by social location. For example, I expected region to have a significant effect due to potential differences for workers in manufacturing-based economies versus service- or knowledge-based economies. Toronto, which experiences clusters of technology and knowledge companies around its transportation infrastructure and downtown (López and Páez, 2017), can be considered a knowledge-based economy and served as the reference group for region.

Compared to Toronto, Hamilton was the only other region which experienced a significant change in community engagement or social support. Hamilton still retains a portion of its industrialization, although this is residual and it is beginning to move toward a cultural/creative-based economy. The situation in the region is perplexing, as workers enjoy higher levels of social support but tend to engage in their community somewhat less. Neither the

Greater Toronto Area nor Burlington had different levels of either variable from Toronto.

Though the economy in these areas has not been studied extensively, it might be concluded that their economies are organized similarly to Toronto and there are no other factors which greatly contribute to a regional difference in participation and communication levels.

Age has a significant positive relationship with community engagement, but no relationship with social support. Participants between the ages of 25 and 34 served as the control group to see how aging affects one's interactions with their social circles and communities.

Aging turned out to be one of the highest positive predictors of community engagement, as all age groups over 34 experienced an increase in scores. Those between the ages of 45-54 are the most engaged overall, while those aged 55-64 barely meet the significance threshold and have the second lowest levels of participation compared to 25- to 34-year-olds. The most straightforward explanation for this is that younger workers are more likely to be precariously employed, contributing to the original apparent significance of precarity on community engagement. Aging increases social engagement, but that could have diminishing returns after a certain point. Obtaining data on workers over the age of 65 would help to confirm or disprove this conclusion.

Surprisingly aging does not reduce levels of social support. Previous research indicates that elderly people are more susceptible to feeling lonely or losing communication with others (Abitov and Gorodetskaya, 2016; Nomura, McLean, Miyamori, Kakiuchi, and Ikegaya, 2016). Isolation puts them at particular risk of physical and mental health decline (Crewdson, 2016). As such, it is puzzling that these results do not confirm the effect of aging on social support. As mentioned above, though, workers above 65 are not included in the study. Data which includes those workers would clarify the link between social support and aging, as there remains a

possibility that social support does not lower until after reaching the age of 65. If workplace friendships are important to mental health, then precarious workers who have fewer friendships likely suffer more ill effects to social support from aging. Even if it is the case that in the precarious economy people will continue to retire around the age of 65 in Canada, precarious workers will not have had the opportunity to build a social network to support them as they age. The long-term health effects on the working class could be devastating, especially in a neoliberal society where cuts to pensions and old age security would seem a viable solution for economic problems.

Women have higher levels of community engagement and levels of social support than men. These increases are significant but not particularly large. Though it is heartening to see women who work part-time and multiple jobs so often building social networks and still being able to participate in community activities, there is some concern of workers stretching their resources too thin. Research on the “second shift” explains that women who work are often still responsible for the majority of housework and child care at home (Wharton, 1994). Combined with increased community participation, it is likely that women will experience more burnout from increased activism. These implications are increased for women from rural areas and non-English speaking women, who have even longer work weeks than other women (Craig, 2007). At this point, there are no easy solutions for the second shift. While precarious workers’ situation is not ideal, professional workers with more secure jobs find themselves penalized if they do not take time off for childcare (Blair-Loy, Hochschild, Pugh, Williams, and Hartmann, 2015). A change to social attitudes about work and effort is necessary if women are to have the opportunity to fully engage in their communities, especially those in precarious work. If women

are more active in their communities it is advantageous that they have extra social support although it is important to question the source of the support as well.

Race and ethnic identity have a more complicated relationship with the dependent variables in this study. Whether ethnic identity has a significant effect on community engagement or social support depends upon the specific identity and groups do not always have a similar relationship with community engagement and social support. When relationships exist, they are largely negative. In terms of community engagement, participants who identify as Chinese/Japanese/Korean, Latin American, or Arab/West Asian experience a lower level of community engagement. These results imply that community clubs and events are not accessible to these communities, or they do not feel welcome in these spaces.

The effect of ethnic identity on social support is somewhat different, with many more racialized participants having less access to support. Participants who identify as Chinese/Japanese/Korean, Black, Filipino, Southeast Asian/West Indian, and Arab/West Asian experience at least a third of a point decrease each on the social support scale compared to white participants. Those identifying as Mixed/Other have higher scores on social support than white participants, although there was only a small number of participants in this category and so results might be inaccurate. Community groups need to make more of an effort to reach out to and address the needs of racialized people. Being more accessible serves the dual purposes of allowing racialized groups more inclusion in community engagement activities and giving them an outlet through which to access social support.

Surprisingly, citizenship status does not have a significant relationship with community engagement, but sometimes changes levels of social support. Since migrant workers deal with higher levels of precarity in their everyday lives, one might expect them to combat precarity

more actively than citizens. However, part of that precarity stems from a fear of deportation or other punishment. Drawing political attention to oneself may seem unwise under these conditions, especially if criticism involves a temporary or undocumented worker's employer. These factors seem to balance each other out to lead to no change in community engagement. Migrant workers also lack some of the social support necessary to maintain community networks, according to results. Jackson and Bauder (2013) draw attention to the multitudes of employment discrimination barriers for non-citizens, including accent discrimination and language proficiency discrimination. Employment discrimination stems from larger social forms of discrimination, meaning migrant workers do not face discrimination only at their workplace. Unsurprisingly, many migrant workers in Ontario feel isolated. Note, though, that the number of temporary migrant workers and other non-citizens who participated in the survey is very low, so it is difficult to draw final conclusions about either of those groups.

Educational level has varying effects on community engagement and social support, although the effects are generally positive. Other than a trade certificate, post-secondary education benefits community engagement sizably. Since post-secondary institutions typically offer a variety of clubs and activist groups for students to take part in, lifelong engagement habits can be formed at schools. Trades training is more isolated than other forms of education, focusing more on apprenticeships, and trade students do not have the opportunity to be involved in the same activities as college or university students. Similarly, the different form of training can account for the decrease in social support participants experience after obtaining a trade certificate. Education does not affect social support as strongly overall, though, and only provides a minor increase for college and bachelor degree graduates. Since workers who did not graduate high school, did not attend post-secondary, or trained for a trade do not have the same

access to social networks as more educated workers, more outreach is necessary to bring them into their communities.

In combination with previous scholars' findings, the results of the statistical analyses in this research unearthed a number of problems for the contemporary working class, particularly those in precarious employment. The above discussion points to a number of key conclusions about the outcome of precarious work for politics and for families. I conclude by offering paths that future researchers might take to extend or clarify the conclusions of the project.

5.3: Conclusions

Outcomes of precarious work. From these results, some general conclusions can be drawn about the outcomes of precarious work. Precarious work primarily appears to remove people from activities which do not have a direct impact on themselves, that is, voting, sports clubs, and school meetings. Unexpectedly, their participation in events or groups with more direct personal importance or which provide personal fulfillment is higher than for secure workers: ethnic association events, self-help groups, political meetings, and art club membership. Of more direct concern to insecure workers is the dampening effect it has on their ability to or willingness to use social support.

Precarious work does not have a consistent effect on how people engage with those around them. Once the effects of race, gender, age, and education level are accounted for, precarious work does not have a particularly significant effect on levels of community engagement. Despite inconsistent overall effects, precarious work should be considered a major contributor to social isolation. Its prominent negative impact on the social support scale shows that precarious workers are not getting access to the support that is necessary for combating

some of the ill health effects of insecurity as well as mitigating some of the anxiety and worry that problematize precarity in the first place.

One long-term outcome this research points to is that the concept of a precarity trap may not only apply to on an individual level. Precarious workers' children and sometimes other immediate family feel the long-term outcomes of precarious work even when they are not in an insecure working position themselves. In other words, being exposed to others' precarious work can extend insecurity into one's own life. Worth (2016) suggests that millennial women who see their friends and family experience insecurity in the labour market tend to expect the same for themselves. However, anticipating insecurity is not an illogical conclusion, especially relevant for the children of precarious workers. When precarious workers have children, those children are less likely to be involved in activities at their school, administrative priorities at schools will be less likely to reflect their interests, and less quality child care may be available to that child. All these issues can lead to academic problems and isolation, maintaining the cycle of insecurity.

Uniting around precarity. As discussed throughout this thesis, the term 'precarity' is a source of controversy among labour scholars inasmuch as it is used to replace the traditional conceptualization of the proletariat. My research does not necessarily imply that precarious work is practically different from previous forms of waged work, nor does it imply that precarious workers intend to organize around a common political goal. Despite poor political outcomes, precarious workers do not take part in policy-oriented activities such as school meetings and voting. Precarious workers might not have enough similar experiences around which to organize, and neoliberal individualism discourages people from reaching out to others in times of need. The research heavily supports this assertion, as demonstrated by insecure workers' poorer scores on the social support scale as well as having less access to individual forms of support.

Despite these more generalized claims, the results leave some space for considering the relevance of the term “precarity.” Contrary to expectations, precarious workers have a higher tendency to attend political meetings than secure workers. Such meetings might include activities ranging from campaign meetings for a local political candidate to planning a protest or educational campaign. While rates of political meeting participation are disappointingly if unsurprisingly low for all workers, it is heartening to see that precarious workers may be able to locate some commonality for political organizing. Given the individualized nature of resistance in precarious workplaces (Lewchuk and Dassinger, 2014), it is vital that precarious workers have another outlet to use for organizing, although it is not yet clear if this individualized organization would extend beyond the workplace.

Nevertheless, if precarious workers face some of the most vulnerable workplace conditions, they have the potential to gain more insight into the nature of the relationship between worker and employer. “Precariat” may not be as useful as a term for categorizing classes, but as precarious workers experience increased levels of alienation and less control over their work process, they may start to make connections between their experiences at work and the insecurity in their everyday lives. Precarious workers potentially have the knowledge and power to convince other workers to see these conditions as well. Assuming this revelation will lead to the working class organizing to take control over their work processes and the means of production may be farfetched, but at the very least precariousness can lead to people acknowledging certain social conditions and seeing the unjust power that employers hold over them.

Theoretical considerations. Before concluding this work, it is necessary to recall some of the theoretical underpinnings of this project. In general, theories of political economy examine

how political changes are related to changes in the economy. My project contributes to that field by demonstrating how the transition to precarious work leads to a cycle wherein workplace policies suppress precarious workers' ability to engage in their communities and access social support. In turn, political and capital forces in the political system which wish to take advantage of this new trend of insecurity face little resistance. While I do not explicitly engage with the portion of labour process theory that might examine how precarious labour is performed, it contributes to understandings of how changes in the labour process are political.

This project also works to contextualize long-term effects of precarious work on social reproduction. Insecurity in relation to families does not stop at precarious workers delaying families or workers experiencing strain in their relationships. The lifestyle which precarious work necessitates has a potential tendency to reproduce precarity in one's children. Furthermore, precarity forces women to choose between putting effort into work, childcare, or community engagement, either engaging in only one or two of those activities or spreading their efforts to all three in what one might see as a "triple shift" of sorts. Wharton (1994) mentions that women often use unpaid labour of friends or others they know to mitigate some of the pressure of the double shift, but precarious workers have more precarious colleagues who cannot afford to work essentially for free. The implication is that families where the main income earner(s) and caretaker(s) are insecure face a social reproductive gap.

5.4: Limitations and Future Research

Limitations of methods. Some limitations exist to survey methodology which might have limited the findings of this research. Telephone surveys can be limited in that the non-response rate can be high and the survey will not reach people who do not have consistent access to a telephone. When planning the project, I was also limited to the use of already existing

questions, which meant that there were limited ways I could measure community engagement and social support.

This survey is also potentially affected by “social desirability bias” or the tendency for respondents to attempt to answer questions in a socially acceptable way (Neuman and Robson, 2015, p. 170). The effect is most noticeable when looking at the number of participants who claim to vote in every election. Considering the 2015 federal elections turnout rate of 68.3%, which is as high as it has been since 69.6% in 1993 (Voter turnout), it is unlikely that as many participants vote as they claim to. Only precarious workers appeared to have a lower voter turnout rate than the national average and secure workers claim to vote almost 20% more than the average. While this effect may limit some of the generalizability of results, it is likely that the effect is similar across all groups of workers. Some numbers may be inflated, but the patterns should still be consistent.

A statistical issue presented itself throughout the research on community engagement which may have impacted how the precarity index and community engagement scale interacted. Despite most cross-tabulations indicating that overall increasing precarity either increases or decreases participation in certain activities, the category of “vulnerable” workers tended to disrupt the pattern. For sports and recreation club membership, although precarious workers participate significantly less often than secure workers, the percentage of vulnerable workers attending sports clubs is even lower. In other activities such as ethnic event attendance or political meeting attendance where precarious workers participate more often, vulnerable workers. The pattern holds despite vulnerable workers appearing to have more secure working conditions than precarious workers. This issue occurs a few times when examining social support, but not nearly as often or to the same extent. Potentially, the assumption that precarious

work would share a linear relationship with community engagement is incorrect. These results introduce the possibility that precarity has a curvilinear relationship with community engagement, which requires more study. Precarious work may also have a different effect if it were coded as a continuous or dichotomous variable, although I explored this possibility during some procedures with little change.

Limitations of survey. As Lewchuk et al. (2015) mention, the survey is under-representative of race. The lack of representation limits how results can explain the experiences of racialized workers in precarious work. Similarly, it is hard to tell if the effect of citizenship status presented is accurate as the number of participants who were not Canadian citizens is quite small, making up only 5.2% of the data, while the number of temporary residents was even smaller (up to 1.6% of the sample depending on how respondents interpreted the ‘other’ category). While this is not necessarily under-representative, it does make testing for significance more difficult. Only four refugees took part in the survey, for example, so it is difficult or impossible to tell if the effect of being a refugee on community engagement and social support is truly different from the rest of the population.

There were also some limitations to how the survey variables could measure the concept of community engagement. Questions were limited to questions about engaging in specific types of clubs or activities, and did not cover all activities which might be relevant to the working class. The survey did not ask about union participation despite asking whether participants belonged to a union (and given the rise of the precarious economy, a worker does not necessarily have the choice in whether they work at a unionized or non-unionized workplace). Furthermore, the survey did not cover participation in more direct forms of political action, such as protests. Since these activities are more relevant to precarious workers in many ways, including them may

have led to results which were not supportive of research hypotheses anyway. Despite this, including radical forms of engagement would have helped to clarify how workers engage in ways that resist the neoliberal hegemony that has been constructed around Canada's electoral politics and workplace. Knowing the extent to which workers engage in activities that are not approved of by the state would also give more insight into how developed working class solidarity currently is.

Future research. The results and limitations of this research provide several avenues for future research. The first of these is on precarious work and community engagement in different types of economies. As the only region in the study which differs significantly from Toronto in levels of community engagement and social support, Hamilton offers some interesting suggestions. Hamilton and Toronto have differences in the density of certain sectors; Hamilton has more manufacturing industry and Toronto has more knowledge industry. In all likelihood this difference implies that either the economic organization of a region or the sector an individual works in can temper how one interacts and organizes with others. Also notable is that workers in Hamilton engage in their community less often but have more access to social support. Most other variables are more consistent. A positive relationship with community engagement usually means a positive relationship with social support, and the same is true for negative relationships. An analysis of the relationship between precarious work and community engagement and social support across different sectors and regions would clarify the source of this difference.

As discussed in limitations, the data this survey offers about the effects of ethnic identity and citizenship may suffer from some generalizability issues. The number of racialized workers is lower than exist in the actual population of the region and the number of participants in most

of the non-Canadian citizen categories are possibly too low to properly calculate significance. The data is potentially missing information about racialized workers, and even more so about migrant workers. Migrant workers live in a precarious state of existence and particulars about how they build networks and resist insecurity require more research. Activists groups supporting migrant workers are growing commonplace in Canada (see *Migrant Workers Alliance for Change*; *Students Against Migrant Exploitation*; *Justicia for Migrant Workers*), and it would be useful for these groups to have data about precarious migrant workers' methods of community and social participation to build better working relationships with the workers they hope to aid.

More research is also needed to identify other possible contributors to the regression models in this study. The regression models explain 11.2% and 7.8% of the variation in community engagement and social support respectively. To truly understand the factors and contributions shaping how the working class build relationships with others, more in-depth research is necessary across a variety of categories. On one hand, it would be helpful to produce more quantitative research identifying a variety of predictors of community engagement and social support scale scores. Not only would this research identify reasons people are not involved with community or social networks, it would also help to test the validity of the scales and see how they compare to other measures of engagement. On the other hand, qualitative research could help to clarify some of the more confusing aspects of the research. Having participants specify why they take place in certain activities over others, or what factors moderate their access to social support, would make some of the speculations about results more concrete.

The nature of the relationship between community engagement and social support needs further exploration. The variables were run in regression models together to see if community engagement has an impact on social support, and vice versa. Neither model was significant.

However, given the potential for informal networks to lead to organizing and the potential for workers to gain social support from being part of a community group or movement, it is difficult to believe there is no relationship between the two whatsoever. Such confusion again justifies further quantitative research to ensure the community engagement scale and social support scale are as conceptually accurate as possible. Testing the scale in other regions or contexts is a good first step to refining contributing variables, as there may be common community engagement activities or sources of social support in other geographies which have not been considered up to this point. Once the scales are more refined, tests on the relationship between the two can produce more generalizable results.

As alluded to earlier, more research is necessary on subversive political activities in relation to precarious work. Many of the activities the survey addresses take place within the scope of the Canadian state and parliamentary politics. These activities, which typically do not have an end goal of making structural changes to the state, may not be entirely relevant to the working class. Voting, joining arts clubs, and participating in political meetings and ethnic association events probably do not have the power to help workers transition to a more equitable political system. For example, voting cannot make major change if none of the available candidates are interested in making change. As such, it is necessary to investigate participation in grassroots organizing, political protest, and more to test precarious workers' participation in activities which help them exercise working class power. Naturally precarious workers should be more interested in this type of activity as it has more potential benefits for them than for secure workers, so if these numbers are found to be suppressed, the implications of precarity for working class politics are heavier than already thought.

Two relationships which require further investigation are that between aging and community engagement and that between aging and social support. The lack of significant effect of aging on social support and the decreased significance of the positive impact of being 55-64 on community engagement demonstrate there are more complexities surrounding how aging Canadians connect with others in their communities. Little research on precarious work in general examines the effects on this community, perhaps working under the assumption that people over the age of 65 are retired and thus unaffected by the transition to a precarious economy. Considering that precarity tends to have long-term effects, even if this is currently the case, it is unlikely that today's precarious workers will all be able to retire at a desirable age. As researchers begin to suggest there are benefits to raising the qualifying age for Old Age Security in Canada (see Brown and Aris, 2017), it becomes more important to investigate the ways aging Canadian workers can resist neoliberalism and insecurity. For the time being, it appears only economically right-wing organizations are suggesting this, but in the recent past Stephen Harper's Conservative administration considered raising the age for retirement benefits. Canadians need to be prepared to resist such changes in the future.

Moving forward, scholars and the working class both need to work toward considering solutions for the negative effects of precarious work. The most obvious solution to any potential repression of community engagement and social support by precarious work is a return to secure work and the standard working relationship. This solution is irresponsible for a few reasons. First, this thesis has explored the concept of the standard working relationship and why the term can be considered a misnomer. The 40-hour work week with a single employer has only been standard for some people and in certain parts of the world. For those who have left this relationship to return would only lead to minor improvements for these select few. Secondly,

neoliberalism has exacerbated precarity, but the working class has always been insecure under capitalism. Slowing the aggressive increase in precarity does not address the root of the working class' issues.

Rather, solutions for precarious work should look at mitigating some of the most damaging effects and working toward structural changes. Researchers and workers should not simply accept the effects of precarity, which contributes to the hegemonic belief that no other alternatives are possible. Instead it is important to understand what can be done in other areas to increase social support and community involvement, and how workers and activists can use their collective resources to ease precarious workers' difficulties. Lewchuck et al. (2015) suggest some policy changes which might ease these troubles, such as easier access to government-provided child care, encouraging employers to recognize volunteer activity on resumes, and social service providers being more flexible about meeting precarious workers' needs. Policy changes such as these would be a start to improving the material conditions of precarious workers.

However, what these changes will not do is alter the power relationship between the employer and the precarious worker. For instance, some precarious workers who work varying hours may find it useful to have improved access to childcare. Childcare does not address a workers' problem if it would be easier for them to work on a regular schedule, which could improve mental health and sleep patterns if not social relationships. Furthermore, employers and governments are free to ignore any recommendations if it suits their interests. The working class will have to make use of their own power to make any changes which will fundamentally alter the way employers and states exert power.

As a result, political changes should go beyond attending more political meetings or voting more often or for more “progressive” candidates. Improved scores on the social support or community engagement indexes would indicate some improvement in the conditions for precarious workers, but meetings, clubs, and mutual social support are not working to operate outside neoliberal capitalism. If the working class builds a united and self-led movement, they can build power to resist economic changes which put the employer in further control of their lives. Ideally this would involve precarious workers and allies contributing to mutual resource and social supports while spreading political consciousness and counter-hegemonic narratives, but more community-based research is necessary to see how this might take place. Precarious workers cannot organize out of capitalism if they do not organize to build class power.

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Appendix A

Employment Precarity Index

The Poverty and Employment Precarity in Southern Ontario (PEPSO) team designed the Employment Precarity Index (EPI) which I used as the central independent variable in this project. The EPI measures employment precarity continuously from 0-100, and is also divided into quartiles representing secure, stable, vulnerable, and precarious workers. The EPI serves as a potential resource for measuring precarity in different locations and contexts. PEPSO used the following questions to make up the EPI, as seen in Appendix B of their 2015 report *The Precarity Penalty* (Lewchuk et al., 2015):

- I have one employer, whom I expect to be working for a year from now, who provides at least 30 hours of work a week, and who pays benefits.
- What is the form of your employment relationship (short-term, casual, fixed-term contract, self-employed, permanent part-time, permanent full-time)?
- Do you receive any other employment benefits from your current employer(s), such as a drug plan, vision, dental, life insurance, pension, etc.?
- In the last 12 months, how much did your income vary from week to week?
- How likely will your total hours of paid employment be reduced in the next six months?
- Do you usually get paid if you miss a day's work?
- In the last three months, how often did you work on an on-call basis?
- Do you know your work schedule at least one week in advance?
- In the last three months, what portion of your employment income was received in cash?
- Would your current employment be negatively affected if you raised a health and safety concern or raised an employment-rights concern with your employer(s)?