

October 23, 2015

Announcements:

Your *PWR: work&labour news&research* editor-in-chief has been called to Jury Duty. We will resume publication upon the editor's return. We will keep you posted!

[Reminder: Inaugural Morley Gunderson Lecture in Labour Economics and Industrial Relations](#)

Follow us on the CIRHR Library Tumblr and on the CIRHR Library Twitter.

- [#elxn42: A Record Number of Aboriginal and Female MPs](#)
- [The Return of the Long Form Census](#)
- [Job-to-Education Mismatch for Immigrant Women in Canada](#)
- [Questions Emerge on the Trans-Pacific Partnership](#)
- [The Global Age Bomb](#)
- [How Does Declining Unionism Affect the American Middle Class and Intergenerational Mobility?](#)
- [#AskMe](#)
- [More and More MOOCs](#)
- [Working from Home is the Worst](#)
- [Is the Gig Up for the Gig Economy?](#)
- [An Artist's Approach to the Daily Grind](#)
- [What Happened to Working Women?](#)
- [2015 Millennial Impact Report Update -- A Geographical & Gender Lens](#)
- [Right-to-Work Pay Penalty](#)
- [Book of the Week](#)

#elxn42: A Record Number of Aboriginal and Female MPs

"The Liberals' decisive election win on Monday will radically alter the complexion of the House of Commons. Given that the party went from having 37 seats when the writ was dropped in August to 184 on election night, the extent of the change was bound to be significant. It has also made the House more diverse."

Record total of indigenous MPs

"There will be a record number of indigenous people in the House of Commons following Monday's federal election, which saw 10 indigenous MPs elected."

"That's an increase of three from the 2011 election, when seven indigenous people won seats."

The highest number of female MPs ever

"In total, 88 women were elected -- 50 for the Liberals, 18 for the NDP, 17 for the Conservatives, two for the BQ and one for the Green Party."

"That builds on the previous record of 76, which was set in the 2011 election. (Due to byelections, the last Parliament contained 77 women when the writ was dropped on Aug. 2.)"

“The 88 women elected on Oct. 19 will still only represent 26 per cent of the total MPs in the House of Commons â€” almost the exact proportion of female MPs when the election was called on Aug. 2.”

[CBC News, October 20, 2015](#): “The new House of Commons: More women and aboriginal MPs”

[CBC News, October 20, 2015](#): “Record 10 indigenous MPs elected to the House of Commons,” by Tim Fontaine

#elxn42

“#elxn42, coined for the 42nd Canadian general election, is a hashtag used across social media platforms to track discussion of the federal election.”

[Global News, October 19, 2015](#): “Twitter users around the world weigh in on #Elxn42,” by Nicole Bogart.

[Back to top](#)

The Return of the Long Form Census

“Restoring the mandatory long-form census in time for the 2016 survey is doable, say two former chief statisticians of Statistics Canada, but the incoming Liberal government will have to move swiftly to make it happen.”

“Researchers are already pressing for action. 'Undoing these mistakes cannot wait; the time for action is now as Statistics Canada is on the cusp of launching the 2016 census,' says a letter signed this week by 61 academics and directors of research centres, including Statscan's former assistant director Alain Belanger.”

[The Globe and Mail, October 21, 2015](#): “Long-form census could be reinstated for 2016, experts say,” by Tavia Grant

The Politics of Evidence: Where science and technology intersect with social and environmental justice [\[website\]](#)

A Special Issue of [CanadaWatch on the Politics of Evidence](#)

[Back to top](#)

Job-to-Education Mismatch for Immigrant Women in Canada

“Immigrant women were more likely than their Canadian-born counterparts to hold a university degree. Despite this, unemployment was higher among immigrant women compared with Canadian-born women. Furthermore, university-educated immigrant women were more likely than Canadian-born women to report that they were working in a position that required less education.”

“These findings are taken from a new chapter, 'Immigrant Women' in the seventh edition of Women in Canada, released today. The chapter provides a socioeconomic and demographic profile of immigrant women in Canada, compared with Canadian-born women and immigrant men.”

[Statistics Canada's The Daily, October 21, 2015](#): “Study: Women in Canada: Immigrant women”

[Statistics Canada, October 21, 2015](#): “Women in Canada: A Gender-based Statistical Report (seventh edition) -- Immigrant Women” by Tamara Hudon (39 pages, PDF) or [\(html version\)](#)

[Back to top](#)

Questions Emerge on the Trans-Pacific Partnership

On labour mobility:

“The underlying market dynamics of population aging should mean that young workers are poised to finally see some advantages in the world of work: more job opportunities, and higher wages or benefits to attract and retain employees in a context of widespread labour shortages. But as trade deals and immigration policies favour temporary foreign workers over

homegrown workers, more churn is added to labour markets. The shorter the term of employment, the more competition for every opening.”

“Although the TPP creates some new job opportunities for Canadians in Pacific Rim countries, these will be short-term and sector-specific, whereas the impact of this deal on most Canadian workers could be long-term and diffuse.”

“With 15 side deals still being negotiated, its scope is yet to be defined. We need to pay careful attention to these details before either the TPP, or the CETA, is ratified. Their impact on Canadians will be more subtle and profound than anything we’ve dealt with before; we will need to be vigilant if these deals are to avoid fostering a growing class of the permanently temporary and erode the meaning of citizenship.”

[The Globe and Mail, October 16, 2015](#): “Canada can’t let labour mobility create an underclass of TFWs,” by Armine Yalinzyan

On copyright:

“The final Trans Pacific Partnership intellectual property chapter leaked [on October 9th] confirming what many had feared. While the Canadian government has focused on issues like dairy and the auto sector, it caved on key copyright issues in the agreement. As a result, works will be locked out of the public domain for decades at a cost to the public of hundreds of millions of dollars. Moreover, the government will 'induce' Internet providers to engage in content blocking even where Canadian courts have not ruled on whether the content infringes copyright. As a result (and as expected -- this was raised years ago), the government's 'made in Canada' approach to copyright -- which it has frequently touted as representing a balanced approach -- faces a U.S. demanded overhaul. In fact, even as other countries were able to negotiate phase-in periods on copyright changes, the Canadian negotiators simply caved.”

“There is much more to study, but the first reaction to the TPP intellectual property chapter is that Canadian negotiators have agreed to significant changes to Canadian copyright law without an opportunity for public comment or discussion. Given that there was a two-tier approach for the trade talks with insider access and that U.S. lobby groups identified the TPP as a mechanism to extend Canadian copyright term, the outcome is disappointing but not surprising. Unlike other countries that were able to negotiate delayed implementation, however, Canada simply caved to U.S. pressure, seemingly willing to trade away Canadian copyright policy.”

[Michael Geist, October 9, 2015](#): “Canada Caves on Copyright in TPP: Commits to Longer Term, Urge ISPs to Block Content,” by Micheal Geist

[Back to top](#)

The Global Age Bomb

“For the past several decades, the world has been awash in workers. First came the baby-boomer wave of the 1970s. Then, Eastern Europe and China’s economic opening in the 1990s more than doubled the global workforce. Over the same period, wages, inflation and interest rates all fell, and economic inequality climbed.”

“That tide is now receding.”

“Over the next three decades, as the global workforce shrinks, amid the steady decrease in average fertility rates, labor could ironically find greater strength in its fewer numbers, parlaying growing competition for talent into higher wages; since cost of labor contributes to how companies price goods and services, we can also expect inflation to rebound, followed by higher interest rates.”

“So argues a recent Morgan Stanley Research report, ‘Can Demographics Reverse Three Multi-Decade Trends?’ The authors -- Charles Goodhart, a professor at the London School of Economics and senior consultant to the firm, and Manoj Pradhan, global economist at Morgan Stanley -- peer through the lens of demographics and see a monumental shift that could ultimately close the economic gap between the haves and have-nots.”

[Morgan Stanley, October 21, 2015](#): The World Is Running Low on Workers and Why That May Be a Good Thing"

[MacLean's, October 8, 2015](#): "The global age bomb that's about to change everything," by Jason Kirby

[The Economist, September 26, 2015](#): "Greys' elegy: Demographic change will have big economic impacts"

and in Great Britain...

"With both Labour and the Conservatives locked in a rhetorical battle over who does most for working people, the real test will be what they do for precarious workers. If power in the world economy really is about to tilt from capital towards labour, getting the milk of human kindness into your business model early might -- as the Italian factory bosses found out 50 years ago -- be a good idea."

[The Guardian, September 27, 2015](#): "The era of cheap labour is over," by Paul Mason

[Back to top](#)

How Does Declining Unionism Affect the American Middle Class and Intergenerational Mobility?

"This paper examines unionism's relationship to the size of the middle class and its relationship to intergenerational mobility. We also ... investigate the correlation between parents' union status and the incomes of their children. Additionally, we use federal income tax data to examine the geographical correlation between union density and intergenerational mobility."

"We find:

1. union workers are disproportionately in the middle-income group or above, and some reach middle-income status due to the union wage premium;
2. the offspring of union parents have higher incomes than the offspring of otherwise comparable non-union parents, especially when the parents are low-skilled;
3. offspring from communities with higher union density have higher average incomes relative to their parents compared to offspring from communities with lower union density."

"These findings show a strong, though not necessarily causal, link between unions, the middle class, and intergenerational mobility."

[The National Bureau of Economic Research, Working Paper, October 2015](#): "How Does Declining Unionism Affect the American Middle Class and Intergenerational Mobility?," by Richard Freeman, Eunice Han, David Madland, and Brendan V. Duke

CollegeNET's 2015 Social Mobility Index

"The higher education degree has become the new high school diploma, an essential requisite for obtaining reasonable employment and achieving economic mobility in the 21st century. [However, the] upward ratchet in tuition since the 1980's has progressively limited affordability and access to college education."

"The new [SMI rankings](#) show that through wise policy-making, colleges and universities can be part of improving both economic opportunity and social stability in our country. Let's recast the chase for 'prestige' to include lowering tuition, recruiting more economically disadvantaged students, and ensuring that enrolled students graduate into good paying jobs."

[2015 Social Mobility Index](#) [website]

[Back to top](#)

#AskMe

"When transgender students fill out college applications, they often run into trouble right out of the box -- or, rather, in the box that students typically must check to indicate their biological gender."

“The gender identities of some people may not conform to a binary of biological male or female, much less align with what’s listed on their birth certificates. Colleges also expect potential students to enroll under the legal name that matches their government-issued ID and school records, not the name they may have chosen to represent their gender identity. As more openly transgender students apply to colleges, many of those students and institutions are wrestling with inflexible data systems and entrenched attitudes in an effort to make the admissions and enrollment processes more trans-friendly.”

Key Transgender Terms

Gender Identity: An internal sense of one’s own gender.

Transgender: A broad term used to describe people whose gender identity differs from that associated with their assigned sex at birth. 'Trans' is a shortened version of the term.

Nonbinary / GenderQueer: Identity adopted by people who see themselves as neither entirely male nor entirely female, or who embrace gender fluidity.

Gender Nonconforming: Those whose gender expression does not conform to society’s expectations of 'male' and 'female' gender categories. Gender-nonconforming people are not necessarily transgender.

Cisgender: People who are not transgender and identify with the gender assigned to them at birth.

[Chronicle of Higher Education, October 18, 2015:](#) “Dilemmas From Day 1: Transgender students face entrenched attitudes and inflexible systems,” by Lee Gardner

[Campus Pride, September 3, 2015:](#) “Campus Pride collaborates with Chronicle of Higher Education with #AskMe Video Doc released today highlighting voices of LGBTQ College Students”

[Chronicle of Higher Education, October 18, 2015:](#) “Special Report: Diversity in Academe: Transgender on Campus” (for subscribers only - please contact the CIRHR Library if you are interested and are part of the University of Toronto community)

[Back to top](#)

More and More MOOCs

“When one of the first massive open online courses appeared at Stanford University, 160,000 students enrolled. It was 2011, and fewer than 10 MOOCs existed worldwide.”

“It has been four years since then, and according to a new report, the cumulative number of MOOCs has reached nearly 4,000.”

“Compiled earlier this month by Dhawal Shah, founder of the MOOC aggregator Class Central, the report summarizes data on MOOCs from the past four years. And the data show that even as the MOOC hype has started to die down, interest hasn’t tapered off.”

“Mr. Shah has his own theory for why the big MOOC providers are so successful: the growth of credentials in online education.”

“Credentials are what will be more sustainable. That’s what the big providers feel. A lot of the new courses that are coming up are part of a credential. They’re not just random courses; they are part of something bigger.”

[The Chronicle of Higher Education, October 19, 2015:](#) “MOOCs Are Still Rising, at Least in Numbers,” by Ellen Wexler

[Class Central, October 18, 2015:](#) “MOOCs biggest Month: Choose From 1,100 MOOCs In October,” by Dhawal Shah

[Back to top](#)

Working from Home is the Worst

“A major review of past research on the topic published this month in *Psychological Science in the Public Interest* found that working from home can be beneficial to employees and employers -- but only in small doses. People who telecommute sparingly are happier with their jobs and perform better. But on average, people who telecommute 15.1 hours a week or more (or roughly two days per week) actually report decreased job satisfaction.”

“Ben Waber, the CEO of Sociometric Solutions, a consulting firm that studies remote working, said that the companies he's working with saw reduced productivity among remote workers, especially on tasks that involve collaboration.”

“Remote working has an even more negative impact on innovation and new ideas. According to Waber, you're more likely to come up with something brilliant if you're interacting spontaneously with people who have different ideas and areas of expertise, rather than just seeing their avatars in an app.”

“Waber found that employees who frequently interacted with each other reported being happier and were more likely to keep their jobs. 'People in tight-knit, face-to-face groups had job satisfaction that was 30% higher,' he said. 'When you have a really tight-knit group of co-workers, those people tend to be a lot happier.' On the other hand, the amount of digital communication they did with co-workers had no effect on their job satisfaction.”

[Fusion, October 20, 2015](#): “It's official: Working from home is the worst,” by Casey Tolan.

[Psychological Science in the Public Interest, October 2015](#): “How Effective Is Telecommuting? Assessing the Status of Our Scientific Findings,” by Tammy D. Allen, Timothy D. Golden, and Kristen M. Shockley (29 pages, PDF)

[Back to top](#)

Is the Gig Up for the Gig Economy?

“Micro-gigging via the various labor platforms in the sharing economy leaves already vulnerable workers no better off, and in some ways worse off. The pay is low, the safety net eviscerated, job security nonexistent.”

“But here's where the share-the-crumbs economy becomes even more sinister, raising an ongoing labor tragedy into a profound existential crisis. In a regular, full-time job, a worker gets paid ‘on the clock’ for an agreed-upon number of hours per day, week, month, year. Rest and bathroom breaks, staff meetings, time at the water cooler with fellow workers, all of those are paid time in a regular job.”

“But the freelance society -- the gig economy, the 1099 economy -- is massively overturning this universal order. In the name of hyper (market) efficiency, suddenly the ‘extraneous’ parts of a worker's day are being eliminated. Micro-gigs with job brokerages like TaskRabbit and Elance-Upwork are reducing workers' value to only those exact minutes someone is ... engaged in a specific task. The new digital platforms can chop up an array of traditional jobs into discrete tasks, and you will be paid only for those exact productive moments.”

“This ‘nanoization’ of work into ever-smaller gigs is what the sharing and peer-to-peer visionaries are demanding of U.S. workers. They want to turn people into, not just micropreneurs, but nanopreneurs ... as if they are machines.”

“In short, the gurus of the sharing economy have ... forge[d] an economic system in which individuals and businesses with ‘more money than time’ are able to use faceless interactions via brokerage websites and apps to force an online bidding war among lower-income people to see who will charge the least for their labor.... If everyone is consigned to doing piecemeal, and no one knows when the next job will come, or how much it will pay, what kind of private lives can we have, and what kind of relationships or families?”

[Co.Exist, October 20, 2015](#): “Welcome To The Share The Crumbs Economy,” by Steven Hill

[Fast Company, March 18, 2014](#): “Pixel and Dime: On (Not) Getting By in the Gig Economy,” by Sarah Kessler

[Back to top](#)

An Artist's Approach to the Daily Grind

“Everyone has a routine. Wake up, get dressed, grab a coffee, go to work, go home, sleep. The next day? Do it all again. When filmmaker and photographer Julien Douvier realized he’d been doing the same thing every morning for three years, did something about it.”

“Douvier enjoyed a two-hour lunch each day, so he started bringing a camera to work to pass the time. Inevitably, this too became a part of his daily routine. So, in December of 2013, Douvier decided to capture the day-to-day monotony by spending two weeks turning his camera on strangers.”

“Once he finished gathering footage, Douvier imported the images into video editing software. From here, he would multiply a person several times, loop their movements, and make small adjustments to correct the light and color. The results are mesmerizing GIFs of tiny figures marching against the daily grind.”

[Routine](#) by Julien Douvier.

[WIRED, October 19, 2015](#): “Existential GIFs That’ll Make You Question Your Daily Grind,” by Taylor Glascock

[Back to top](#)

What Happened to Working Women?

“... [W]omen falling out of the work force is ... a huge deal. It reduces family standards of living and puts a crimp in the economy.”

“And why do you think this is happening? One of the reasons is clearly, positively, absolutely the cost of child care. It’s incredible that we’ve built a society that relies on women in the labor force yet makes no discernible effort to deal with this problem.”

“The Economic Policy Institute, a liberal think tank, recently divided the country into 618 ‘family budget areas’ [and determined](#) that in more than 500 of them, the cost of child care for a family with a 4-year-old and an 8-year old would exceed housing costs. Also, if you’re a working single mother with those same two children in, say, Buffalo, child care probably eats up a third of your income. And infant care is impossible. In most states infant care is more expensive than college tuition.”

“There’s also paid family leave. In this week’s Democratic debate, Bernie Sanders said he was embarrassed that the United States was the only ‘country on earth’ that did not guarantee workers paid maternity leave. This was inaccurate, since Sanders completely overlooked the situation in Papua New Guinea.”

“Our current government policy requires that employers give new mothers 12 weeks of unpaid leave. This was based on a bill passed early in the Clinton administration. I remember well the combination of joy (parental leave!) and despair (three months with no pay?).”

[The New York Times, October 16, 2015](#): “What Happened to Working Women?,” by Gail Collins

[Economic Policy Institute, October 6, 2015](#): “High Quality Child Care Is Out of Reach for Working Families,” by Elise Gould and Tanyell Cooke

[Back to top](#)

2015 Millennial Impact Report Update -- A Geographical & Gender Lens

“The 2015 Millennial Impact Report Three-Month Update expands on the research debuted in the 2015 report through a geographical and gender lens, as well as further validates past findings.”

[The Millennial Impact, October 19, 2015](#): “2015 Millennial Impact Report Three-Month Update: Geographical and Gender Trends” (29 pages, PDF)

[Back to top](#)

Right-to-Work Pay Penalty

"The U.S. Supreme Court will [soon consider a case](#) that may require all states to have public-sector open-shop laws."

"This report focuses on the effects of collective bargaining and union security on public employees' wages and compensation and consequently the ability of public-employee unions to close the gap between private-sector and state- and local-government pay."

"Following are the main findings of the report:

- State and local government employees earn less than similar private-sector workers, even though their education level (the most important predictor of earnings) is higher; however, they receive better health benefits and pensions.
- Public-sector unions raise wages of public employees compared with similar nonunion public employees, which helps to narrow the private-public wage gap in those unionized sectors.
- However, public-employee unions in full collective-bargaining states that permit union security (i.e., agency shop clauses) do raise total compensation to competitive market standards set by the private sector. In other words, only public employees in states with full collective bargaining make as much as their private-sector peers.
- If the Supreme Court renders agency shop clauses unenforceable for public employees, it will shrink union membership because more people will try to gain services without paying for them (the 'free-rider' problem).
- If the court renders agency-shop clauses unenforceable for public employees, it will reduce public-employee compensation by increasing the pay penalty for working in state and local government."

[Economic Policy Institute, October 13, 2015](#): "Eliminating Fair Share Fees and Making Public Employment "Right-to-Work" Would Increase the Pay Penalty for Working in State and Local Government," by Jeffrey Keefe [[Download PDF](#) (16 pages)]

[Back to top](#)

Book of the Week



[Bad Time Stories: Government-Union Conflicts and the Rhetoric of Legitimation Strategies](#), by Yonatan Reshef and Charles Keim. Toronto : University of Toronto Press, 2014. 222 p. ISBN 9781442648821 (hardcover)

From the publisher: "The 1990s and 2000s were especially difficult decades for government -- public sector union relations in Canada. Rising costs and growing debts meant that governments were on the lookout for savings, and public sector unions and employees were easy targets for government actions. Bitter conflicts between unions and governments erupted and each labour dispute involved numerous rounds of public rhetoric in which both sides attempted to justify their actions and stigmatize their opponents."

"In *Bad Time Stories*, Yonatan Reshef and Charles Keim analyse the language of both parties in order to identify the legitimation strategies at work during government-union conflict. The authors use evidence drawn from newspapers, speeches, parliamentary transcripts, and

legal statements in presenting a new framework for understanding the discursive strategies employed by governments and unions in labour disputes."

"Using a case study and linguistic approach, *Bad Time Stories* offers a unique perspective on industrial relations and will be of interest to scholars in the areas of business, public policy, and communications, as well to those directly involved in union-management negotiations."

[Back to top](#)

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Questions or comments: cirhr.library@utoronto.ca

For past issues see our [Archives](#) (there is a three month embargo on available issues).

Editors: [Vicki Skelton](#) and [Melissa Wawrzekiewicz](#)

Designer: [Nick Strupat](#)

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