



[Subscribe to the newsletter](#)



Dear Friends and Colleagues,

As we celebrate Labor Day, we would like to share some of our recent and ongoing projects from the summer.

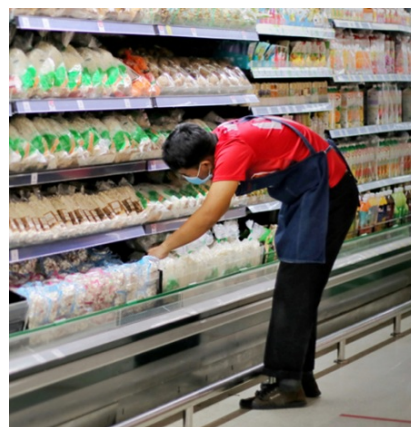
This newsletter features our recent publications on labor violations, self-checkout and understaffing, and job quality mobility, as well as team members' presentations at the American Sociological Association Annual Meeting in August. We are also excited to share new grants focused on labor standards enforcement and the health and wellbeing of service sector workers during the COVID-19 pandemic. Finally, we welcome two new pre-docs who are joining us this fall.

Looking forward to the 2024-2025 academic year,  
The Shift Team

## NEW RESEARCH BRIEFS

### [Compliance and the Complaint Gap: Labor Standards Violations in the California Service Sector](#)

Although California has a robust set of labor standards laws, we find that over 90% of hourly service sector workers in California still experienced at least one labor standard violation in the past year, and that over 40% experienced a serious labor violation. But, workers reported rarely coming forward and significant fear of retaliation for doing so.



AXIOS

[Hourly workers in California report high levels of wage theft, new survey finds](#)



NOTICIAS  
TELEMUNDO

[Informe revela que trabajadores sufren de violaciones laborales de forma rutinaria en California](#)



LA  
Times

[California's strong labor laws aren't enough to protect workers, report says](#)



## Please Wait, Help is on the Way: Self-Checkout, Understaffing, and Customer Incivility in the Service Sector

Self-checkout machines, aimed at reducing labor costs and increasing customer satisfaction, are ubiquitous in the service sector. However, authors Eom and Schneider find that the deployment of self-checkout machines often leads to understaffed workplaces, resulting in more frequent occurrences of customer disrespect and bullying of workers.



'A customer got violent': Self-checkout  
proposal aims to help retail workers



Bill aims to reduce theft, protect  
employees at self-checkout kiosks

## NEW PAPER

Labor market pathways to job quality  
mobility in the service sector:  
Evidence from the “Great  
Resignation” Tyler Woods, Dylan  
Nguyen, Daniel Schneider, and Kristen  
Harknett (2024). *Research in Social  
Stratification and Mobility*.

Drawing on novel panel data from the Shift Project, we show that overall mobility into “good jobs” (jobs paying at least \$15/hour, having a stable work schedule, and offering paid sick leave, employer-sponsored health insurance, and retirement benefits) is low, but that rate of transition into “good jobs” is strongly conditioned by local labor market conditions. During the “Great Resignation” and in low unemployment environments, nearly twice the share of workers transitioned to “good jobs” as in less favorable contexts.



**Harvard  
Kennedy School**

AUGUST 12, 2024

**Are “bad jobs”  
dead ends or  
steppingstones to  
better things?**

Do you want to learn more about a specific topic or read more from a specific Shift contributor? Check out our new [website tool](#), which allows you to filter more than 65 articles and research briefs by research area and author.

## Publications

Publication type

Any

RESET

Research areas

Secure Scheduling

Author

✓ Any

Adam Storer

Allison Logan

Anna Haley-Lock

Annette Gailliot

Ben Zipperer

Carmen Brick

Celine McNicholas

Charlotte O'Herron

Clem Aeppli

Dani Carrillo

Daniel Schneider

David Weil

Dylan Nguyen

Elaine Zundl

Elizabeth Kuhlman

Elmer Portillo

Evelyn Bellew

Helen Ho

Jennifer Romich


Jeremy Mopsick

Joshua Chopper

Julia Goodman


Kristen Harknett

Leah Abrams



AUGUST 14, 2024

**Please Wait, Help is on the Way: Self-Checkout, Understaffing, and Customer Incivility in the Service Sector**



Research in **SOCIAL STRATIFICATION AND MOBILITY**

Editor: Margot Jackson

Paid Sick Leave, Secure Scheduling, Wages

AUGUST 8, 2024

**Labor market pathways to job quality mobility in the service sector:**

## THE SHIFT PROJECT AT ASA!



**119TH ASA ANNUAL MEETING**

**Intersectional Solidarities:  
Building Communities of  
Hope, Justice, and Joy**

**AUGUST 9-13, 2024**  
**MONTREAL, QUEBEC**

### Disguise, Dispute, or Disrupt: Negotiating Disability at Work

*Esperanza Padilla  
and Kristen S. Harknett*

This paper draws on in-depth interviews with 30 service sector workers navigating a disability and workplace demands. All but a lucky few with unusually supportive managers experienced barriers to accessing basic workplace

### Third Places, Precarious Spaces: The Role of Service Workers in Privatizing and Democratizing Public-Private Establishments

*Rebecca Wolfe  
and Dylan Nguyen*

Drawing on new Shift Project qualitative data, this paper shows that service workers act to make their stores financially and socially accessible to community members, often in the face of corporate

### Fissuring and Control: Surveillance and Franchising in Fast Food

*Jeremy Mopsick  
and Daniel Schneider*

Combining Shift Project data on workplace surveillance with data scraped from Franchise Disclosure Documents, this paper provides rare empirical evidence that corporate fissuring

## NEW RESEARCH GRANTS

### Strategic enforcement

We are happy to announce grants from [WorkRise](#) and the [James Irvine Foundation](#) to study labor violations and strategic enforcement. The Irvine grant funded data collection for our recent report on [California labor violations](#). Both grants support our larger and longer-term project focused on building new methodological tools to advance strategic enforcement in California, New Jersey, Maine, and the larger United States.

### COVID-19 and the Health and Wellbeing of Vulnerable Service Sector Workers Across the Life Course

We have recently received an R01 grant from the National Institute of Aging which will provide funding over the next five years to harmonize and link Shift Project data on service sector workers during the pandemic with external data sources and make this integrated dataset openly available for research. We will use this linked data to estimate how much the expanded safety net during the pandemic buffered effects of unemployment on health and examine the influence of paid sick leave and related policies on adherence to coronavirus mitigation practices.

## RELEVANT RESEARCH

### **Making a Fair Workweek: The Origins, Form, & Politics of Scheduling Regulation**

Peter Fugiel, Postdoctoral Research Fellow at the Rutgers School of Management and Labor Relations, presented his work on fair workweek scheduling practices at our monthly meeting in April.

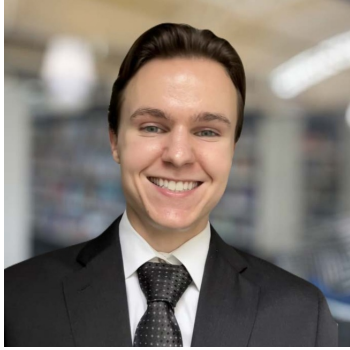
Since 2014, US cities and states have experimented with ambitious scheduling regulations, often called fair workweek laws, that target large retailers and food and beverage chains. Fugiel's new comparative and historical research suggests that a broader approach—building solidarity across sectoral divides—is needed to make good on the promise of a fair workweek.



## TEAM UPDATES

We are excited to welcome two new pre-doctoral fellows this fall.





**Kevin Bruey** received a B.A. in Public Policy from the University of Michigan in 2024. There, he contributed to research on low-income families and the impacts of COVID-era social programs. Kevin is particularly interested in the impacts of precarious work on child well-being and in the intersections of labor issues and the public safety net.



**Henri Jackson** received his B.A. from Sciences Po Paris, majoring in Economics and Sociology. After doing an exchange at MIT, he worked as a Technical Associate at MIT Sloan studying the challenges facing digital platforms that design labor markets. Henri is broadly interested in how social inequalities are mediated through the labor market and how different cultural assumptions and values work to shape their outcomes.

Please see our updated [Team page](#) to get to know our staff and fellows, graduate student researchers, collaborators, and growing network of over 30 Shift Project alumni.

### The Shift Project

The Malcom Wiener Center for Social Policy  
Harvard Kennedy School  
<https://shift.hks.harvard.edu/>

The Shift Project is grateful for the generous support of our sponsors.

**BILL & MELINDA  
GATES foundation**

Washington Center  
for **Equitable Growth**

  
Robert Wood Johnson Foundation

 **WorkRise**

 **National Institute  
on Aging**

 **RUSSELL SAGE  
FOUNDATION**

**William T. Grant  
FOUNDATION**



---

Shift Project | 79 John F. Kennedy St | Cambridge, MA 02138 US

[Unsubscribe](#) | [Update Profile](#) | [Constant Contact Data Notice](#)



Try email marketing for free today!