Career Volunteering as Good Work in Do-it-Yourself Heritage Institutions: A Serious Leisure Perspective

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Abstract

In recent decades, the heritage sector has become increasingly precarious amid the rise of austerity neoliberalism, impacting both the efficacy of heritage institutions and the labour experiences of those who run them. While scholarly literature has regularly examined these impacts for mainstream heritage institutions, little work considers volunteer-run, do-it-yourself (DIY) community heritage organisations. This article takes a serious leisure perspective to explore what constitutes 'good work' for volunteers in a DIY heritage institution, the Australian Jazz Museum (AJM). Drawing on interviews with 26 AJM volunteers, we discuss some of the 'rewards' and 'costs' of career volunteering in this institution. Our research suggests that the conditions for good work are contingent on the efforts of volunteers in management roles, while the conditions for bad work are heightened by austerity policies affecting funding opportunities. The case study also highlights the need to consider the value of work beyond remuneration.

Introduction

In recent decades, the vitality of the heritage sector has become increasingly precarious amid the rise of what de Benedictis and Gill (2016) term 'austerity neoliberalism', the entanglement of the cultural politics of austerity with the neoliberal agenda. It has been well-documented in Australia and across Europe that funding cuts have impeded the basic functions (collection, preservation, public access and education) of mainstream heritage institutions (e.g. Fredheim 2018; van Barneveld and Chiu 2017; Lagerqvist 2016). Heritage institutions have, consequently, become more focused on securing non-government funding from private and philanthropic sources. However, van Barneveld and Chiu (2017) observe that, in Australia at least, these alternatives have failed to bridge the gap. These circumstances of 'austerity-compelled precarity' (Cunningham et al. 2016: 455) have influenced not only the efficacy of heritage institutions, but also the labour experiences of those who sustain them. In the UK, for example, funding cuts to the museum sector have resulted in higher proportions of volunteer workers (Museums Association 2011; Orr 2006) and greater reliance on unpaid labour via crowdsourcing and participatory heritage strategies (Fredheim 2018).

While scholarly work on the implications of austerity for the heritage sector have tended to focus on mainstream, authorised institutions – those that are largely government-funded and sponsored – it is also crucial to consider how the neoliberal project has shaped community heritage organisations. Unlike their mainstream counterparts, which may have a number of paid staff in addition to ongoing government funding (however austere), community heritage

organisations – galleries, libraries, archives, museums, halls of fame and historical societies – are predominantly run by volunteers and funded through a combination of one-off grants, membership fees, donations, fundraising events and, for some, merchandise sales (Baker 2017). The community heritage sector has emerged in part due to heritage enthusiasts identifying gaps (amplified by limited funding and resources) in the collecting practices of mainstream institutions and speaks to the 'attendant "endangerment sensibility(s)"' of late modernity (Harrison 2018: 1368). Taking a 'do-it-yourself' (DIY) approach to heritage (Baker 2017), these institutions aim to collect, document, preserve and display heritage which might otherwise be beyond the remit of the mainstream heritage sector. Such activity may be considered a form of 'the privatized do-it-yourself society engendered by neoliberalism and globalization in late modernity' (Rosenberg 2011: 174). However, the DIY ethos of the community heritage sector is more akin to the politicised practices associated with anti-establishment punk and post-punk cultures (Dale 2008), in heritage underpinned by principles of democratisation and archival activism (Zinn 1997). As Bennett and Guerra (2018: 14) point out, 'the appropriation of DIY principles and practices by many individuals in late modernity bespeaks their opposition – both personal and in many cases collective – to the tightening grip of neoliberalism in a global context'. DIY heritage institutions play an important role in shaping public history (see Baker and Cantillon 2019) through documenting marginalised groups and narratives, niche interests, local histories, or cultures and phenomena that may not typically be viewed as 'legitimate' forms of heritage or progressing neoliberal agendas. Volunteers are central to this process, acting as custodians of the past as well as managing the day-to-day tasks of running a heritage institution.

This article examines the experiences of volunteers in DIY institutions of popular music heritage. Specifically, we discuss what constitutes 'good work' for volunteers who gift their

labour to DIY heritage institutions at a time when the heritage sector is struggling with the mutually reinforcing projects of austerity politics and neoliberal governmentality (de Benedictis and Gill 2016). In their study of creative labour, Hesmondhalgh and Baker (2011) posit that the notion of 'good work' is preferable to 'meaningful work'. They observe that conceptualisations of meaningful work tend to focus primarily on matters of autonomy and interest – work that is 'interesting, that calls for intelligence and initiative, and that is attached to a job that gives the worker considerable freedom to decide how the work is to be done' (Arneson 1987: 522). Hesmondhalgh and Baker (2011) suggest that other factors should also be considered. With a focus on subjective experience, Hesmondhalgh and Baker (2011: 36) define good work as 'involving autonomy, interest and involvement, sociality, self-esteem, self-realisation, work–life balance and security' and bad work as 'involving control by or dependence on others; boredom; isolation; low self-esteem or shame; frustrated self-realisation, overwork and risk'. In addition to conceptualising good and bad work in terms of process, these authors also emphasise that the subjective experience of work is linked to the social and cultural value of the products that emerge from their labour. Bad work involves 'the production and dissemination of (a) *inferior* goods and services, and (b) *products that diminish the well-being of others* in society' whereas 'good work involves producing goods or services that are *excellent* and that *promote aspects of the common good*' (Hesmondhalgh and Baker 2011: 36, original emphasis). While they note that 'these elements relate mainly to the process of paid work' (Hesmondhalgh and Baker 2011: 36), in this article we explore the extent to which characteristics of good and bad work are also applicable to the subjective experience of volunteer labour.

To investigate good work in the context of the community heritage sector, we take a serious leisure perspective (Elkington and Stebbins 2014) to analyse the experiences of volunteers at

a particular DIY heritage institution. This article draws on interviews with 26 volunteers from the Australian Jazz Museum (AJM), located in Wantirna, Victoria, approximately 25 kilometres from Melbourne's CBD. Founded in 1996 as the Victorian Jazz Archive, the institution was established by a group of jazz enthusiasts seeking to create a repository that would collect and preserve the state's jazz ephemera (see also Sutton 2015; Baker and Huber 2012). The institution changed its name in 2014 to better reflect its collection of archival material from other states (including the collection of the New South Wales Jazz Archive after its closure) and to capture a growing interest in the curation and display of Australia's jazz heritage (Sutton 2015). The AJM is run entirely by volunteers, almost all of whom are retirees, and is open to the public three days per week and for special events. The institution's activities are sustained by various income streams including membership levies, museum shop sales, tour group fees, donations, fundraising activities and project grants, as well as low-cost rent courtesy of Parks Victoria, who own the property (Sutton 2015). Many, but not all, volunteers are jazz enthusiasts, and there are a range of factors that motivate them to start and continue their volunteer work. In this article, we discuss some of the 'rewards' and 'costs' experienced by career volunteers (Elkington and Stebbins 2014; Stebbins 2014) through a case study of the AJM. First, however, we outline how volunteering has been conceptualised in the literature as a form of serious leisure, and how scholars have dealt with the experiences of heritage volunteers specifically.

Literature Review

Volunteering and Serious Leisure

Volunteer work can broadly be defined as 'acts of active citizenship that provide some form of benefit to the community without reciprocal financial reward being the primary motivator' (Graham 2004: 18). Dekker and Halman (2003: 1) outline the key elements of volunteering

as follows: 'It is non-obligatory; it is carried out (among other things) for the benefit of others, society as a whole or a specific organization; it is unpaid; and, somewhat less common, it takes place in an organised context.' Keleman et al. (2017: 1240) observe that volunteering 'remains under-theorised by academia, being almost completely overlooked by the sociology of work' (see also Taylor 2004). For instance, volunteering has been conceptualised as the 'unpaid opposite of paid labour' (Overgaard 2019: 129). In the sociology of work, 'unpaid labour' connotes inequality and injustice – a deficit model that does not always recognise 'that a great deal of the labour that goes into sustaining and enhancing life in modern societies is unpaid' (Hesmondhalgh 2010: 276).

In the context of DIY heritage institutions focused on popular music preservation, volunteering is a distinct form of labour deeply connected to leisure. In the sociology of leisure, the serious leisure perspective (SLP) designates leisure as either casual, project-based or serious (Stebbins 2014), or occurring on a continuum of seriousness (Veal 2017). The kind of volunteering we examine in this article is on the more serious end of the spectrum, also known as 'career volunteering' (Stebbins 1996). Serious leisure can be defined as the 'systematic pursuit of an amateur, hobbyist or volunteer activity' in such a way that involves 'acquiring and expressing a combination of … special skills, knowledge and experience' (Elkington and Stebbins 2014: 4). This activity is *serious* in that it is characterised by 'earnestness, sincerity, importance, and carefulness' (Stebbins 2014: 5), and usually necessitates a commitment to performing certain tasks and being at certain places at particular times (Stebbins 1996). As *leisure*, however, this activity is performed not for remuneration, but instead for the personal rewards and benefits it yields (Stebbins 1996).

According to the SLP, serious leisure volunteering constitutes a career aimed at 'achieving self-fulfillment' (Lamont et al. 2015: 648). The term 'career' is used to capture how the activities of a volunteer or hobbyist may unfold over time – the 'temporal continuity of the activities associated with it', including 'career retrogression', shifts between leisure and work roles, and changes within and between the organisations in which this activity takes place (Elkington and Stebbins 2014: 23). Further, career volunteering in the context of late modernity can be understood as part of the reflexive cultivation of self-identity via practices perceived as enhancing self-development (Cohen 2013; Giddens 1991).

Stebbins suggests that career volunteering is characterised by both upsides and downsides, or rewards and costs. Rewards can be categorised into three broad types: personal rewards, social rewards, and thrills (Stebbins 2014). Elkington and Stebbins (2014: 19) suggest that rewards underpin the motivations for undertaking career volunteering, functioning to 'attract and hold … enthusiasts', and that the satisfaction these rewards yield can take months or years to attain. In addition to rewards, there are also a number of potential 'costs' involved in career volunteering. Stebbins (2014: 11) observes that costs are more difficult to list as they are 'highly specific to each activity', but notes that they can nonetheless be classified into three broad types: tensions, dislikes, and disappointments (Elkington and Stebbins 2014). Elkington and Stebbins (2014) posit that costs tend to be outweighed by the rewards, and that career volunteers will persevere through costs in pursuit of accruing rewards. Although Stebbins (2014) asserts that costs and rewards should be considered in relation to one another, Lamont et al. (2015) point out that costs have often been neglected in conceptual and empirical explorations within the SLP. In this article, we consider both the rewards *and* costs of career volunteering at the AJM, and how the dynamics between them shape good work and bad work in the community heritage sector.

Heritage Volunteers

Scholarly literature on heritage volunteers has focused largely on their motivations and demographics (e.g. Rhoden et al. 2009; Edwards 2005; Graham 2004) from a volunteer management perspective and, importantly, in the context of *mainstream* heritage institutions. Edwards (2005: 30) outlines eight key dimensions driving the motivation to volunteer at museums: 'personal needs, relationship network, self-expression, available time, social, purposive, free time, and personal interest'. Rhoden et al. (2009: 19), on the other hand, suggest six key motivating factors: 'altruism, for me (work substitute), social/affiliative, instrumental (hobbies), for me (relaxation/change) and instrumental (skills)'. Deery et al. (2011), drawing on the case study of Museum Victoria in Australia, found that participants' key motivations were learning, contributing to the museum and helping others, but that for older volunteers, altruism ranked lower in importance than other age groups.

Much of the literature emphasises that volunteers are more akin to visitors than to staff, with Holmes (2003: 254) suggesting that volunteering is 'an extension of visiting'. Among studies that take a serious leisure perspective, it is observed that heritage volunteers are driven primarily by their own self-interest rather than by altruism (Stamer et al. 2008; Orr 2006; Edwards 2005). In her exploration of the power dynamics between volunteers and professionals in mainstream UK museums, Orr (2006) posits that career volunteers are motivated by a 'desire to engage in self-mediated heritage' (197), 'using the museum space to make their own culture and contribute to the construction of their own identities' (203). She argues that these benefits for volunteers might also 'negate the financial benefits to museums' when time and resources, including the paid labour of museum professionals, are expended to train those volunteers (Orr 2006: 206). Stamer et al. (2008: 212) take a similar perspective,

outlining strategies for volunteer management that 'create a win–win between museums and volunteers' by 'offer[ing] the best leisure experiences' possible.

As all of these studies were based on the mainstream heritage sector, volunteers were clearly distinguished from both the heritage institution in question and its paid staff. The community heritage sector, however, has some key differences. Firstly, volunteer-run institutions tend to have no paid heritage professionals, and thus a different set of power dynamics and use of resources. Volunteers are managed by other volunteers, and without these volunteers DIY heritage institutions cannot run at all, let alone produce the financial returns that Orr (2006) refers to. Secondly, the motivations for volunteers are intrinsically linked to the everyday functions of a DIY institution, and any benefits to volunteers inevitably impact on their contributions to the institution and its efficacy. In the community heritage sector, distinctions between visitor/staff, leisure/work and amateur/professional become blurred. Although not paid or trained like professional heritage staff, volunteers in DIY institutions can strive for professional standards through their serious leisure.

A very small body of literature exists that discusses the experiences of workers in volunteer-run heritage institutions. For example, Cantillon and Baker (2019) discuss the affective dimensions of creative labour in DIY popular music heritage institutions. They note that volunteers enjoy the positive social and affective dimensions of heritage work – 'uncovering materials to preserve, curating them in interesting ways, sharing their vernacular knowledge with others, and forming emotional bonds with like-minded colleagues' – but that anxieties arise around the institution's limited resources and precarious long-term sustainability (Cantillon and Baker 2019: 292; see also Baker and Cantillon 2019). Volunteer work in DIY heritage institutions can therefore be understood as a 'labour of love' (Baker 2017). In terms

of serious leisure, only a couple of articles use this conceptual framework to understand community heritage initiatives. Moncunill-Piñas (2015: 21) explores amateur museums as (serious) 'leisure projects' that are 'parallel and comparable to professional museum-making' but with their 'own validity, processes, structure and motivations'. In terms of the experiences of volunteers, Moncunill-Piñas (2015) notes that workers are required to fulfil multiple roles, as simultaneously archivist, curator, educator and security guard. In a case study of the AJM, Cantillon and Baker (2019) investigate how the serious leisure of volunteers worked to create a sense of community and promote wellbeing. The present article extends this work by investigating how serious leisure manifests for career volunteers at the AJM in regard to the rewards and costs associated with their work.

Methodology

This article draws on data from two Australian Research Council (ARC) funded projects which explored the preservation of popular music's material culture and the emergence of DIY heritage institutions devoted to this task. Over the course of these two qualitative projects, which ran from 2010 to 2015, 125 semi-structured ethnographic interviews were conducted with founders, volunteers and other heritage workers in 23 DIY archives, museums and halls of fame in ten countries (see Baker 2017). Interviews included questions about the founding of DIY heritage institutions, practices and processes of collection, preservation and display, and the pleasures and pressures of volunteering.

In this article, we use a case study approach to analyse specific issues reflected in the larger comparative dataset. The pleasures and pressures of volunteering were strongly evident in the data collected at the AJM due to the level of access the researchers had to the institution and its volunteers over an extended period. The AJM participated in both ARC projects, with

fieldwork conducted at the organisation on six occasions between May 2011 and November 2015, including a two-week period of participant observation in October 2013. Interviews were conducted on site at the AJM with founding members, established volunteers and newcomers. During the period of data collection, the institution had 50–60 volunteers and no paid staff. In 2010, volunteers were estimated to have contributed 'over 14,000 hours', calculated by the institution to be 'in excess of $300,000 a year of volunteer labour' (Mel, 31 May 2011). Twenty-six volunteers were interviewed, comprising eight women and eighteen men. Volunteers with key positions in the institution (two former general managers and the collections manager) were interviewed more than once. Most volunteers were middle-class Anglo-Australians over the age of 65, and although most volunteers were men, there has been an increase over the years in women volunteers. Volunteers came to be involved in the AJM for numerous reasons, including an interest in jazz, but also some who needed to undertake fifteen hours of volunteering per week in order to receive the Australian government's unemployment benefits (referred to below as Centrelink payments) for older Australians.

The interviews were audio recorded and transcribed verbatim. The resulting transcripts were imported into NVivo and coded according to the cultural, social and affective dimensions of DIY heritage institutions identified by Baker and Huber (2013), which captured the pleasures and pressures experienced by volunteers and challenges for the institution. The data was subsequently re-coded for different purposes, including to assess the extent to which the experiences of volunteers at the AJM resonated with the characteristics of rewards and costs identified by Stebbins (2014). That is, the two ARC projects did not set out to apply the serious leisure perspective to DIY heritage practices undertaken by popular music enthusiasts. However, data coding revealed the presence of rewards and costs – initially

framed as pleasures and pressures – in volunteers' characterisations of their activities as offering the opportunity to undertake good work after retirement or redundancy.

The Rewards and Costs of Career Volunteering in a DIY Heritage Institution

Below, we draw on our interview data to discuss some of the rewards and costs of volunteering at the AJM in terms of the three broad categories of each described by Elkington and Stebbins (2014): personal rewards, social rewards and thrills; and tensions, dislikes and disappointments.

Rewards

Personal Rewards

Seven types of personal rewards have been identified in the SLP literature: (1) personal enrichment; (2) self-actualisation; (3) self-expression; (4) self-image; (5) self-gratification; (6) re-creation/regeneration of self; and (7) financial return (see Elkington and Stebbins 2014: 19). For AJM volunteers, self-expression and self-actualisation emerged as the most prominent personal rewards discussed in interviews. In regard to self-expression, many volunteers come to the AJM with a broad range of skills, abilities and knowledge that can be applied in the context of a DIY heritage institution. As Ralph (1 October 2013) stated, 'just having people come with skills means that they can get pleasure and satisfaction out of using them', and that 'it's much more satisfying to be here doing something constructive than sitting at home looking at the walls'. For some volunteers, self-expression emerged through using skills that were developed during their paid working lives. Ralph spoke of how his library technician skills aided him in putting a new cataloguing system in place, Ray (31 May 2011) explained that he used his computer skills to overhaul the IT systems and streamline

backups, and David (1 October 2013) said he enjoyed putting to use his accounting skills in his role as treasurer.

The reward of self-expression was also linked to using skills developed beyond the world of paid employment – Maria (1 October 2013), for instance, spoke of how her baking skills helped her integrate into the social world of the AJM. Since her participation in the AJM was initiated by requirements to receive her unemployment benefits (rather than motivated by an interest in jazz), Maria baked cakes, scones and biscuits to 'br[eak] down a few barriers'. Maria recognised there is a lot of time and money that goes into her baking, but she greatly values the recognition she receives from the other volunteers who enjoy her baked goods.

Opportunities for self-actualisation were also a key aspect of volunteers' enjoyment of the AJM. Mavis (8 October 2013), when asked if she sees herself being a volunteer at the AJM into the future, said:

> I'm still enjoying it … I was a long time out of business and at home, even though I was involved in things, you sort of lose a lot of skills. Since I've come back here, I'm starting to get more involved and learning things. … you're learning something every day. … We all do a job and it's good for us, … it's keeping us young. I think it's a wonderful thing.

Here, self-actualisation emerges from gaining new skills and knowledge through participation – a reward that Mavis observes was also experienced when she undertook paid work in the past, and which she missed in the period between retirement and the commencement of volunteering.

Other volunteers were more specific in their identification of moments of self-actualisation. Mel (8 October 2013), for example, went from a lifetime in the pharmacy business to being the collections manager at the AJM. Preservation skills were not a component of his previous employment, and in his interviews he talked at length about how over time he gained the abilities needed to effectively manage the AJM's collection. Mel reached out to specialists in the mainstream heritage sector for advice, attended seminars and read relevant literature to learn the required skills. As a result, Mel and his collections team have developed an advanced understanding of preservation processes and practices, to the extent that they are 'now at the stage where people [from other institutions in the community heritage sector] come out to us and ask us how do they do it'.

Self-actualisation also extends to volunteers who joined the AJM without prior jazz knowledge, such as those who came to the institution to fulfil their requirements for their Centrelink payments. In these circumstances, such volunteers learn about jazz through their duties in the museum and from volunteers who are jazz enthusiasts. In this respect, Maria (1 October 2013) said: 'it's constant learning and I reckon I have developed knowledge I did not have four years ago, which … I'm rapt about'.

Social Rewards

In the SLP literature, three categories of social rewards are identified: (1) social attraction; (2) group accomplishment; and (3) contribution to the maintenance and development of the group (Elkington and Stebbins 2014: 19). Social rewards relate to spending time with other volunteers and engaging with clients through participation in the social world of the institution, as well as to the sense of helping and being needed, completing joint projects and assisting the group to thrive (Elkington and Stebbins 2014: 19). As highlighted elsewhere, the

AJM plays an important social function in the lives of volunteers (Baker 2017). It is no surprise, then, to find an emphasis on social rewards in the accounts of the interviewees. Volunteers reported the friendly, home-like atmosphere of the AJM as one of the key factors that kept them motivated to continue volunteering and to feeling a sense of commitment to the organisation.

Volunteers emphasised the extent of their contributions to the maintenance of the AJM by talking about their willingness to help out with even the most mundane tasks:

> Robyn: Well, money's always a problem [for the AJM], and Ray [the general manager] was in a dilemma about the cleaning people who'd left, and we volunteered to save $50 a week, so it's – every little bit helps towards–
>
> Allan: We just try to keep the costs down. We understand how much it costs to operate this place – over $30,000 – and we just try to save money. We're fit enough and able enough and willing enough to assist, so we thought we'd do it …
>
> Robyn: I think also we saw the desperate need here. There are years and years and years of work to be done without any more coming in, so we really saw the need. (19 July 2011)

In this account, Allan and Robyn emphasise the sense of being needed and of helping. This was a common feeling among volunteers, with Linda (2 October 2013) summarising it as 'a great sense of contributing to someone else's benefit' in ways that also support 'your own wellbeing'. In Linda's view, the social rewards are a significant part of what make the volunteers have 'a reason to get up each day, … [knowing] someone is depending on them' and having the 'feel[ing] that you're making some sort of – well, not impact as such, but contribution'.

Thrills

In addition to identifying personal and social rewards, Stebbins (2014: 12) emphasises the importance of 'the sharply exciting events and occasions that stand out in the minds of those who pursue' a serious leisure career – the high points, or thrills, of career volunteering. Thrills are the concrete expression of some of the more abstract personal and social rewards (Stebbins 2014). For example, at the AJM, achieving accredited museum status by Museums Australia (Victoria) was a high point referred to by a number of volunteers. John (31 May 2011), who was heavily involved in the establishment of the AJM, explained that accreditation was a lengthy process involving hundreds of hours preparing the documentation, on top of the preceding years implementing policies and practices in line with national standards. Reaccreditation assessments also occur every five years. John reflected on this process as a high point:

> we've done very well with reaccreditation, and in fact in – a few years back …
> Museums Australia wrote to us and said, 'can the system you used to put together
> your accreditation, can we use this for other museums?', and we were very proud
> about that …

Stebbins (2014: 12) notes that thrills 'motivate the participant to stick with the pursuit in hope of finding similar experiences again and because they demonstrate that diligence and commitment can pay off'. Since the AJM is a DIY initiative that strives for professional standards, volunteers feel a sense of satisfaction from achieving accreditation and the subsequent recognition that the AJM is an exemplar of best practice in the community heritage sector.

Thrills can occur in more everyday situations as well, such as when volunteers have particularly meaningful interactions with visitors. Peter and Gretel (26 June 2012) described

how in dealing with client enquiries they sometimes provide information which is so revelatory for clients that it leaves the volunteers feeling their work is worthwhile. Gretel relayed a story about a woman who had contacted the AJM looking for information about her uncle, who was a jazz musician:

> she was in tears, because she'd never seen a picture of this uncle and I knew where there would be information about him and so we were able to photocopy out of books and sent her off [with these], and she was here for about four hours. And although we spent a lot of time doing it, it was really worth it to see the pleasure on her face … We feel it's a good job being satisfied by one person every now and again.

Baker and Huber (2013: 524) describe the interaction being referred to by Gretel as illustrative of the 'double sense of wonderment' available to volunteers in DIY heritage institutions. The thrill here relates to the wonder expressed by the client and the wonder the volunteer feels in recognising the impact of their volunteering on clients. In this example, thrills are memorable moments of heightened affect.

Costs

Tensions

For Stebbins (2004: 208–209), tensions centre on the impact volunteering has on 'the volunteer's family life', including taking time away from 'family-related activities' and taking priority over domestic duties – and the subsequent friction between spouses and family members that this causes – as well as leaving 'little time … for other leisure activities'. None of these tensions were present in the AJM data, which reflects the demographic characteristics of these volunteers. For many of the volunteers in our sample, volunteering at the AJM was a means to ward off feelings of loneliness, particularly when there was no immediate family and the volunteer was widowed. Describing another volunteer, Gretel (26

June 2012) noted, 'he's absolutely lost – he's got no children, no family', and then later in the interview went on to express 'I think we feel [the AJM's] a family'.

Rather than an emphasis on the costs of volunteering on family life, when tensions were raised in the interviews they tended to focus on interpersonal issues (Stebbins 2014) between different types of volunteers – those with jazz knowledge and those without, and those receiving Centrelink payments and those without. These two aspects were interlinked, with one volunteer (8 October 2013) noting that he had observed 'a little bit of resentment amongst some people' that there are 'several [volunteers] being financed by Centrelink' and so while 'we're all doing the same work' some volunteers are effectively 'being paid' whereas others 'don't get money'. This volunteer did not express that he himself felt any resentment, but he did recognise that the volunteers receiving Centrelink often arrived at the institution with no jazz knowledge and, like other people interviewed, he wondered about the impact of that on a jazz archive: 'a lot of the people that are doing a lot of this work know nothing about jazz', speculating that this might contribute to some people experiencing feelings of resentment. As noted above, however, while some volunteers arrive at the AJM without a pre-existing interest in jazz, their jazz knowledge can increase through their ongoing volunteer work (which can become increasingly 'serious') at the institution.

Dislikes
According to Stebbins (2004: 209), dislikes are 'problems requiring the volunteer to adjust significantly, possibly even to leave the volunteer role', such as the 'behaviour of difficult persons and shortage of reliable volunteers'. Dislikes also relate to aspects of the serious leisure environment that can disrupt the personal and social rewards of volunteering, including 'ineffective group leadership, [and] power struggles/politics' (Lamont et al. 2015:

649). In our study of the AJM, dislikes were articulated primarily by volunteers holding management positions. Reflecting on their previous employment experiences, interviewees compared the management of volunteers unfavourably to the management of paid staff outside the volunteer sector. For example, Terry (18 September 2015) noted that the varied and unreliable schedules of volunteers impacted negatively on timelines for project completion. Similarly, Ray (31 May 2011) highlighted the issue of having to devote time to training younger volunteers only to have them leave shortly after in favour of undertaking paid work.

For Mel (8 October 2013), the challenge was managing volunteers without the right combination of skills required for accurate cataloguing. For example, while volunteers with jazz knowledge 'can identify stuff and so people's names are spelt correctly, the tunes are spelt correctly, [and] you know whether they're Australian or overseas artists', they also need a certain level of computer skills for data entry. With approximately twelve volunteers working under him in the collections team, Mel finds it 'almost impossible' to keep track of the individual errors that have a cumulative effect on the accuracy of archival records. He said: 'You get people come in and they'll say, "I've done it all", and I'll say, "Have you really?" I'll go and look through it and they haven't really done what I've asked them to do'. Mel went on to explain that these would not be issues 'in a paid workforce' where, if people show they are not capable of the task, they could be dismissed or assigned to other positions.

These dislikes can lead to feelings of fatigue, characterised by Stebbins (2004: 210) as 'a dispiriting weariness' that signals 'impending burnout'. At the AJM, there is a delicate balance needed in the management of volunteer performance because the organisation is committed to ensuring a positive experience for volunteers: 'you've got to go home at the end

of a day and say, "I've had fun today", because you're not getting paid, so you're wasting your time if you didn't have fun' (Mel, 26 June 2012). Mel acknowledged that sometimes volunteers end their day 'quite frustrated' and this affects his own feelings of self-gratification, with fatigue setting in: 'Sometimes I have days where I go home and I say not only didn't I achieve anything, but I actually went backwards' (8 October 2013). In Mel's account, we see that the costs of career volunteering relate to the subjective experience of this work as 'bad' in terms of both the labour process (frustrated development, powerlessness) and product (a threat to the accuracy of the archive).

Disappointments

In the SLP, disappointments are characterised as the experience of receiving 'poor results' or 'being let down by others' (Lamont et al. 2015: 649). For the volunteers at the AJM, disappointments often focused on efforts to fund the organisation, and in particular the struggle to win grants. As Jeff (19 July 2011) noted, 'we get no regular funding, and we scrabble for every cent that we can get', with Margaret (19 July 2011) acknowledging that there is a continual worry for volunteers as to where the next tranche of funding will come from. Ray (30 November 2015) observed that getting access to 'public money' is increasingly competitive, due in part to austerity measures affecting the nonprofit sector as a whole:

> the grants have dried up somewhat for a number of reasons, principally because the amount of money shrunk but the number of organisations seeking this is increasing … Before it was much broader and you stood a pretty good chance of getting one. But today it's very narrow, very tight criteria …

Grant application processes were described as unnecessarily complicated, and funding, if granted, is usually for specific projects and cannot be used for ongoing operational costs. Mel (26 June 2012) explained his frustration with these 'restrictive' funding rules and onerous applications:

> They won't pay for staff … and they won't pay for this and they won't pay for that … they'll ask you the same question about three different ways … I'd like to write 'just shut your face and give me the money', you know what I mean?

This frustration is compounded by the fact that the 'amount of work that goes into [funding applications] is enormous' (Ray, 30 November 2015) and 'you put a lot of work into them and a lot of time and you don't get many of them' (Terry, 18 September 2015). Mel (26 June 2012) expressed that it's particularly 'disappointing' when there is 'no feedback, you got no reason about it, but you didn't get it. And you think to yourself, "well, why bother?", because there's so much effort goes into them … And then you miss out'.

Discussion

Serious leisure volunteering at the AJM involves an array of rewards and costs. Personal rewards relate primarily to self-expression and self-actualisation, with volunteers taking pleasure in deploying pre-existing skills and knowledges as well as developing new ones through their work in the museum. Being part of the AJM yields social rewards for volunteers, who enjoy feeling part of something bigger, contributing to the institution and helping others. Rewards are also evident in thrills or high points, such as receiving recognition from authorised accreditation bodies or through meaningful interactions with visitors. At the same time, however, career volunteers can experience costs like tensions arising from interpersonal differences, which can lead to feelings of resentment. Volunteers report disliking some aspects of their work, particularly the frustration and fatigue associated

with managing others. Disappointments are also common, with funding applications becoming increasingly onerous and successes increasingly scarce.

When rewards outweigh costs, volunteer labour can be considered good work. This status is precarious, however, and a shift in the balance of rewards and costs can create the conditions for bad work. Such a shift can have serious consequences for the sustainability of community heritage organisations, which are also precarious in that they rely strongly on attracting and retaining serious leisure volunteers. There is a need to consider, therefore, 'how positive and emancipatory aspects' of volunteer's labour in the community heritage sector 'might be made more prevalent, and how negative aspects of work might be contained, controlled or even eliminated' (Hesmondhalgh and Baker 2011: 222). Volunteers at the AJM expressed a strong commitment to create a positive work environment and a rewarding volunteer experience. Providing opportunities for volunteers to have fun, use their existing expertise, learn new skills, help others and contribute to the organisation (and, subsequently, the common good) are all important aspects of good work in community heritage organisations.

While in the data volunteers emphasised the rewards that kept them motivated and committed to their serious leisure endeavour, they nonetheless needed to persevere through challenges. It is clear that the costs related to volunteer work in the AJM are largely due to limited resources (funding, time, skills, etc.). Although these issues have always been apparent in community heritage organisations, they are exacerbated by the conditions of austerity neoliberalism. With funding becoming increasingly competitive, volunteers at institutions like the AJM are devoting considerable time and energy into funding applications that often result in disappointment. These circumstances heighten the conditions for bad work.

Our data also revealed that the costs of career volunteering were most pronounced for participants in management positions, for whom their leisure is at the more 'serious' end of the spectrum. These volunteers bear the burden of ensuring that other volunteers have a rewarding experience and that the AJM provides the conditions for good work. The efforts of these volunteers in management roles is, however, constrained by broader political contexts. To minimise the costs associated with career volunteering in places like the AJM, it is crucial for there to be changes in the funding and policy settings associated with the community heritage sector so that DIY institutions can maintain sustainable, rewarding labour practices.

Conclusion

Without question, the mainstream heritage sector has been severely challenged by austerity neoliberalism, which has, for many institutions, led to reduced funding and an increasing reliance on volunteer labour alongside a decreasing paid workforce. This situation draws attention to potential inequalities and injustices between paid and unpaid workers in mainstream heritage institutions. However, any discussion of the community heritage sector, and in particular DIY heritage institutions, must account for the specificity of these organisations, where more often than not all labour is unpaid. While these institutions arise out of, are impacted by and engage with neobliberal agendas, they do not *reproduce* the logics of neoliberalism at work in late modern societies. DIY heritage institutions focused on popular music's past are founded on values of democratisation and self-determination; function to preserve supposedly disposable, ephemeral material cultures; have a collective orientation; and are underpinned by a desire to strengthen social and cultural vitality and contribute to the common good rather than yield economic gains.

The serious leisure perspective, with its focus on the rewards and costs of volunteering, draws attention to the importance of considering the value of work beyond remuneration. Hesmondhalgh (2010: 278), in rallying against the sociology of work's treatment of unpaid labour as always problematic, argues that:

> it seems dangerous to think of wages as the only meaningful form of reward, and it would surely be wrong to imply that any work done on the basis of social contribution or deferred reward represents the activities of people duped by capitalism. Actually, it seems to me that this would run the danger of internalising capitalism's own emphasis on commodification. We have to hold on to the value of work done for its own sake … and complaints about free labour – unless the normative basis for the complaints are spelt out very carefully – risk undermining that value.

Our analysis of the subjective experiences of volunteering in DIY heritage institutions highlights the need to conceptualise the value of work to the individual, to the collective and to society, beyond remuneration. This conceptualisation involves thinking about volunteering not as the unpaid equivalent of paid labour (cf. Overgaard 2019), but as an activity that is defined by complex relations between work and leisure. Although not paid for their labour, the volunteers of our study gain an array of personal and social rewards – developing skills and knowledges, forming social relationships, and so on – while also contributing to the common good through the preservation of cultural heritage that might otherwise be lost or forgotten. The model of good and bad work which has broadly been applied to experiences of creative labour also resonates with experiences of career volunteering in the community heritage sector, and can usefully augment the study of volunteering from the serious leisure perspective. Moving forward, we suggest that future studies draw together the sociology of work and the sociology of leisure to enrich understandings of the subjective experiences of volunteering.

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