Alternative Work Arrangements: Two Images of the New World of Work

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Abstract

Alternative work arrangements continue to increase in number and variety. We review the literature on alternative work arrangements published since the most recent major review of nonstandard work by Ashford et al. (2007). We look across the research findings to identify three dimensions of flexibility that undergird alternative work arrangements: (*a*) flexibility in the employment relationship, (*b*) flexibility in the scheduling of work, and (*c*) flexibility in where work is accomplished. We identify two images of the new world of work—one for high-skill workers who choose alternative work arrangements and the other for low-skill workers who struggle to make a living and are beholden to the needs of the organization. We close with future directions for research and practice for tending to the first image and moving away from the second image of the new world of work.

INTRODUCTION

For much of the past century, work typically was portrayed in terms of a full-time, regular employment model [defined as "jobs where work is performed on a fixed schedule, at the firm's place of business under the firm's control and with mutual expectation of continued employment" (Kalleberg et al. 2000, p. 257)]. Today, the greatest job growth is in jobs that move work beyond the boundary of the firm; work increasingly occurs in an "organization with a more permeable boundary, where work—and people—move inside and outside more freely" (Boudreau et al. 2015, p. 11). Thus there is ever more need for a nonorganizational work psychology to understand people's work lives outside of organizational settings (Barley & Kunda 2001). Ashford et al. (2007) reviewed the literature on nonstandard work with the goal of enticing more micro organizational behavior (OB) scholars to study this now growing phenomenon that had largely been the purview of economists and sociologists studying the economics and structure of labor markets. Now almost a full decade later, we review research that has been published since then, with a special focus on work conducted by micro-OB scholars and the experience of the worker in the new world of work. We searched for relevant articles from 2007 to 2016 in a wide variety of journals that publish micro-OB-related research including *Academy of Management Journal, Administrative Science Quarterly, Human Relations, Journal of Applied Psychology, Journal of Management, Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology, Journal of Organizational Behavior, Organization Science, Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes, and Personnel Psychology*, as well as relevant research in the sociology of work and occupations. We first document the growth of alternative work arrangements. We then identify three dimensions of flexibility inherent in these different types of alternative work arrangements and review the literature relevant to each dimension: (*a*) flexibility in the employment relationship, (*b*) flexibility in the scheduling of work, and (*c*) flexibility about where work is accomplished. In looking across these studies, we find that workers' experience in the new world of work depends on whether the flexibility is created by the organization to reduce labor costs/increase agility, sought by workers to help them manage their work lives, or some combination of the two. We close by suggesting future directions for research and practice.

In this review, we have chosen to use the term alternative work arrangements rather than the term nonstandard used in the earlier review, or other labels such as contingent, temporary, and externalized. Cappelli & Keller (2013, p. 575) concluded that in the new economy "distinctions that appeared to make sense for classifying work in the past, such as how long a job lasts, no longer appear useful, hindering our ability to build knowledge about these new arrangements." Indeed, today even full-time workers with employment contracts are contingent to some extent given that lifetime employment is largely obsolete outside of academic tenure. Full-time workers may also be working remotely away from the firm for some or all of their time and with work schedules that are increasingly flexible. As such, we use the term alternative work arrangements to capture the variety of different manifestations of work seen in today's workplace—from high-skill freelancers who chose not to be employed in order to have greater work-life flexibility, to low-wage service workers who are on call for unpredictable work hours and barely able to make a living, to workers with long-term employment contracts but who work where they want when they want. All of these different kinds of work arrangements—and more—can be better captured with our term alternative work arrangements.[1]

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[1]Similar to earlier researchers, we do not include entrepreneurs in our review because their goals and aspirations are quite different than those in alternative work arrangements, even though they have considerable flexibility in when, how, and where they work. Entrepreneurs often have their own employees and their goal is to build a business.
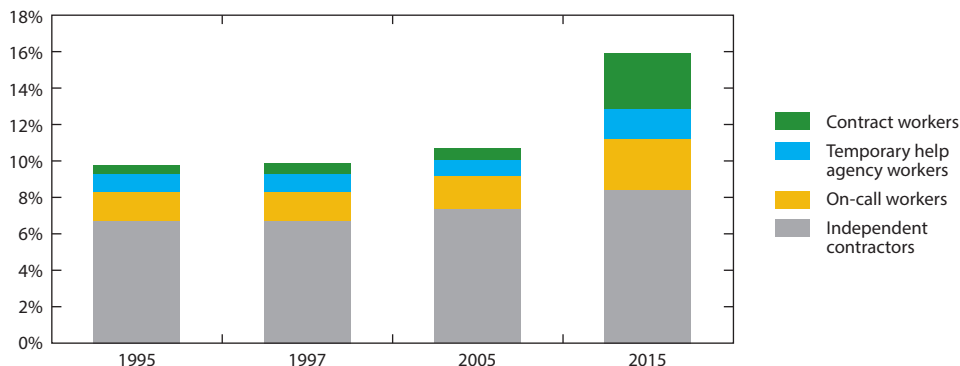
Figure 1

Numbers of US workers in alternative work arrangements. Percentages are out of total number of employed workers. Data from Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) Reports 1995, 1997, and 2005; Rand-Princeton Contingent Work Survey (Katz & Krueger 2016); and BLS (2005).

GROWTH OF ALTERNATIVE WORK ARRANGEMENTS

Ashford et al. (2007) concluded that alternative work "appears" to be here to stay. In 2017, alternative work arrangements are firmly rooted in the new world of work, not a temporary deviation linked to economic decline. As shown in **Figure 1**, a smaller percentage of the US labor force works in full-time jobs for an employer in a setting that allows for upward progression on job ladders within internal labor markets (Cappelli & Keller 2013).[2] Although the US Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) has not collected data on those in nonstandard jobs since 2005, other credible sources suggest growing numbers. Katz & Krueger (2016) estimate the growth using data from the Rand-Princeton Contingent Worker Survey. They replicated the BLS's statistics reported in Ashford et al. (2007) and then estimated the same statistics for nonstandard workers in 2015. They found that the percentage of workers in alternative work arrangements[3] rose from 10.1% of all workers in 2005 to 15.8% in 2015 (Katz & Krueger 2016). They concluded that almost all of the net employment growth in the US occurred in nonstandard work arrangements.[4] And the percentages of workers in these categories are even higher in Europe, Canada, and Japan (Cappelli & Keller 2013). Facilitating these large gains is the fast growth of the staffing sector, now a $300 billion industry worldwide with 72,000 private staffing agencies that match workers to jobs (Cappelli & Keller 2013). Given the rapid growth in alternative work arrangements, the BLS will conduct a contingent worker supplement later this year.

Although still small at 0.5% of workers, the fastest growing segment of alternative work comprises those working for an online platform or intermediary such as Uber or Mturk (Katz &

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[2]Many statistics we provide in this review are US based. In most cases, this is due to the limited available data. Where we can, we address how these trends may play out in other parts of the world as well.

[3]They define alternative workers as (*a*) temporary help agency workers (paid by a staffing agency such as Manpower), (*b*) on-call workers (having certain days or hours in which they are not at work but are on standby until called to work), (*c*) contract company workers, and (*d*) independent contractors or freelancers (who obtain customers on their own to provide a product or service).

[4]Statistics from the US Government Accountability Office (GAO) indicate similar high growth in nonstandard work (GAO 2015); using data from the General Social Survey, the GAO estimated that the proportion of the labor force in alternative work arrangements (they include part-time workers as well) grew from 34.3% in 2006 to 40.4% in 2010.

Krueger 2016). Here work is enabled by a technology "platform" that connects workers directly with customers for a specific "gig" (defined as a short-term job coordinated through a mobile app) (Farrell & Greig 2016). "Gig work" is a type of contract work wherein the link to the client tends to be very short—minutes, hours, or days. For example, the online talent platform Upwork connects independent professionals (e.g., web developers, writers, designers, accountants) and clients around the world. In 2015, it had 9.7 million workers registered to apply for such gigs from 4 million clients across more than 180 countries (Boudreau et al. 2015). Clients and workers never meet face to face as all work is done virtually. It is complicated to accurately estimate the number of workers in the gig economy because some moonlight in addition to holding a full-time job or work for more than one talent platform at a time.

The virtuality of many gigs involves another dimension of alternative work arrangements—the location where work is accomplished. Increasingly, we see full-time employees also accomplishing their work virtually, for the workplace is decreasingly an office or factory floor (Barley 2016). Telecommuting—remote work that uses computer technology to work from home or another location away from the office—continues to increase. In 2015, 37% of US workers reported that they have telecommuted, up slightly from 30% in 2005, but four times greater than the 9% found in 1995 [see the 2015 Gallup's Work and Education poll (**http://www.gallup.com/poll/184649/telecommuting-work-climbs.aspx**)]. These remote workers may or may not be in a standard employment relationship, but because this reflects another kind of alternative work arrangement, we also include it in our review. In addition, alternative work arrangements also often provide flexibility in the timing and duration of work hours including flextime and compressed work weeks. Although gig and contract workers often have flexibility in work schedules, full-time employees increasingly have schedule flexibility. Some suggest that only half of employees work a standard fixed daytime work schedule five days a week (Kossek & Michel 2011). Professionals and those higher in the organizational hierarchy are more likely to have some control over their work scheduling than lower level employees (Kossek & Michel 2011). Freelance workers have more control over their work schedule due to the independent nature of their work. Thus, we include flexibility in scheduling as another dimension of alternative work arrangements.

WHAT FORCES ARE FUELING THE GROWTH IN ALTERNATIVE WORK ARRANGEMENTS?

In a global economy where short-term financial results drive decision making, firms seek flexibility through employment at will to meet changing demand—sometimes referred to as a workforce on demand or an open talent economy (Bidwell 2013, Kalleberg 2012). This financialization of the economy has led to a stakeholder model of corporate governance being replaced by a shareholder model that privileges the interests of investors and where corporations are much less likely to hire workers into traditional full-time jobs with job security (Davis 2016). Firms increasingly hire contract workers who receive no long-term job security, benefits, or often even training (Bidwell 2009, Bidwell & Briscoe 2009). Related trends include less opportunity for upward mobility (Bidwell & Mollick 2015), fewer institutional protections such as health and retirement benefits (Cobb 2015), and declining union membership (Bidwell et al. 2013). The result is what Kalleberg (2009) refers to as precarious work, in which the power differentials between workers and employers are amplified. Although precarious work is not new, it has dramatically increased in the past decade.

In addition to the changing macroeconomic environment, innovations in technology allow work to be done anytime, anywhere. This trend affects full-time employees as well as contract and gig workers. Cloud technology makes it possible for people to work in any location, log into their organization's server, access shared documents, or respond to emails. And with collaborative

software, workers can easily collaborate across distances; in fact, virtual collaboration is becoming common even among workers who are colocated. According to a 2013 McKinsey study, more than 50% of surveyed firms have adopted some knowledge sharing tool (e.g., instant messaging software, online discussion boards, Q&A forums, or other community websites), compared with only 28% in 2009. And technology enables firms to monitor worker behavior even when they are not colocated. Finally, technology is enabling work to be disaggregated to the level of the task, making it easier to outsource specific tasks. Workers increasingly must compete to be hired to complete these tasks (Boudreau et al. 2015). Technological innovations have enabled the rise of online talent platforms, which instantaneously link workers with employers across countries and time zones.

Other factors fueling the growth in alternative work arrangements are driven by the preferences of workers in the new economy. Although economic decline often leads to more self-employment (Rodrigues & Guest 2010, Newman 2013), self-employment has continued to grow postrecovery, indicating that more people are choosing self-employment. Lincoln & Raftery (2011) find that 56% of contract workers choose independent work for the freedom and flexibility, compared to 20% who feel forced into contract work because they cannot find employment. In addition, today there are more dual-career families and single parents in the workforce lacking a stay-at-home partner to take care of the domestic responsibilities. These individuals may value flexibility with regard to where and when they do work so that they can manage home considerations. In addition, more workers seek work that is personally meaningful and aligned with their values, passions, and strengths, making independent work attractive (Kelly 2015).

CLASSIFYING ALTERNATIVE WORK ARRANGEMENTS

We know that, as Okhuysen et al. (2013, p. 492) contend, "work and workplaces are constantly reorganized, reformed, and reconstituted such that the people doing the work, the arrangements around the work, the technology used in the performance of the work, and even the purpose of the work may change." As a result, classifications that made sense in the past may be less useful today. Pfeffer & Baron (1988) categorized nonstandard workers into three broad groups: those with limited temporal attachment to organizations (e.g., part-time workers), those with limited physical attachment to the organization (e.g., teleworkers), and those with limited administrative attachment to the organization (e.g., independent contractors). Cappelli & Keller (2013) suggest that the Pfeffer & Baron classification is now less useful because many alternative work arrangements cut across, or even fall outside of, the three categories. They suggest an alternative classification system based on the theoretical construct of "control over the work process which governs the relationship between the worker and the organization that benefits from the worker's efforts" (Cappelli & Keller 2013, p. 576). They suggest the most important distinction must be between (*a*) employment (where the organization has directive control over what a worker does and how they do it) and (*b*) contract work (where the worker has control to decide how the work is accomplished). Although we like Cappelli & Keller's classification scheme for capturing important distinctions between employment and contracting, it neglects other important dimensions relating to alternative work arrangements, namely flexibility about the location and timing of work.

To capture the increasing variety of alternative work arrangements that we identify in our review, we integrate the two earlier classification schemes. We use the theoretical concept of flexibility to organize the literature on alternative work arrangements (Osnowitz 2010). We identify three dimensions of flexibility that capture the range of alternative work arrangements: (*a*) flexibility in the employment relationship, (*b*) flexibility in the scheduling of work, and (*c*) flexibility in the location of where work is accomplished. When the flexibility is introduced by the firm to meet its own needs to be more agile, the worker experiences significant challenges. When the flexibility is

introduced to address the needs of the worker, the worker's experience is more positive. Although these dimensions of flexibility are particularly relevant for those in alternative work arrangements, they also have growing applicability for full-time employees.

THREE DIMENSIONS OF FLEXIBILITY INHERENT IN ALTERNATIVE WORK ARRANGEMENTS

Flexibility in the Employment Relationship

Created to enable firm agility in labor markets, this dimension of flexibility shifts work from standard employment to shorter-term work assignments (Johnson & Ashforth 2008), often leading to feelings of job insecurity (Lam et al. 2015). We focus on three specific categories in the Cappelli & Keller (2013) classification scheme where research has been conducted in the past decade: direct employment beyond the standard employment relationship, co-employment/agency work, and contracting.

Direct employment beyond the standard employment relationship. Direct employment is defined as an employment relationship between the employer and employee. Firms screen and hire employees, socialize them into the firm's culture, train them, and evaluate them in order to reward and promote. There is an expectation of continued employment. The largest type of direct employment is full-time employees. These are the "standard" employees to whom we are comparing those workers with alternative work arrangements. Much of micro-OB research over many decades has been conducted on full-time regular employees. Although their work experience is also changing given the macroeconomic forces and worker preferences noted above, we know less about other direct employment work classifications including (*a*) part-time workers, (*b*) on-call workers with less predictable schedules (e.g., substitute teachers), and (*c*) seasonal employees (e.g., agricultural workers, retail clerks during busy holiday periods).

Part-time workers often do the same work as full-time employees but typically stay in the same job over time with little career advancement. Typically firms hire part-time workers for two reasons. The first reason is to retain high-performing employees who prefer a part-time schedule to accommodate family responsibilities/educational commitments or to remain mentally engaged while retired (Dingemans & Henkens 2014). Part-timers negotiate these idiosyncratic work arrangements with their supervisors and often include hourly pay and job security comparable to full-time employees. Broschak et al. (2008) label these employees as retention part-timers because the firm seeks to retain them over time. They found that retention part-timers had similar affective commitment, supervisor satisfaction and social integration as full-time employees. They were as satisfied with their jobs and pay as full-time employees and just as committed. They received higher performance evaluations than full-time employees. Similarly, Martin & Sinclair (2007) found that part-time employees reported higher levels of affective commitment and job satisfaction.

A second reason firms hire part-time workers is for scheduling flexibility and to reduce wage/benefits costs because part-time employees tend to receive fewer benefits than full-time employees (Wittmer & Martin 2010). For those who work part time because they cannot find full-time work, the outcomes are considerably worse. In contrast to the retention part-time workers who have a positive work experience, these part-time workers are part of a secondary labor market who moonlight to supplement a low wage job or who are unable to find full-time work and are forced to take on multiple part-time jobs (Sliter & Boyd 2014). For part-time workers who prefer full-time work, job stress increases and life satisfaction decreases compared to those who prefer

their part-time arrangement (Sturman & Walsh 2014). Recent sociological studies also highlight the precarity of those working multiple low-income part-time jobs (e.g., Standing 2011, Edin & Shaefer 2015). Clearly, when workers are forced into part-time status because they cannot obtain full-time employment, the work experience is more negative. We revisit the importance of having some choice about alternative work arrangements in the summary.

We were unable to identify studies of on-call or seasonal employees. Although these workers may be small in numbers, on-call and seasonal employees are important because they have little power over the conditions under which they are hired. Although they may have the freedom to accept or reject the request to work, they have little influence over the conditions under which the work is done. They often have considerable tenure with the hiring firm as they come back season after season or remain in the ranks of substitute teachers until their own children have grown.

Co-employment/agency work. A growing alternative to direct employment is co-employment or agency work. Here the employment relationship is between three parties: a client organization, a staffing agency, and the worker. Co-employment includes agency temporary workers who are assigned work through an agency on a short-term contract (often clerical) or leased workers who are assigned work on a longer-term contract (like IT specialists) (Barley & Kunda 2006). The agency is the employer of record and is responsible for all regulatory requirements such as payroll and employment taxes. Co-employment allows firms to reduce administrative costs and makes it easier to hire employees with specialized skills. Longer-term agency workers are leased to the client firm (and are sometimes former employees of the client firm or an entire unit such as payroll that has been outsourced to a professional employment organization).

Workers choose to work for an agency for different reasons. Some seek out agency work after they find no options for employment after being laid off. Some want flexibility and seek agency work for the long term. Others work for a staffing agency to help them find long-term employment with a client firm. In this way, the agency work may be a "tryout" for gaining full-time employment. In situations where a client firm uses agency workers to identify who they will hire for more permanent positions, the potential for mobility into standard employment offsets some of the negative implications of lower job security. Broschak et al. (2008) found that agency workers with potential for mobility into full-time employment were found to have similar levels of affective commitment to full-time employees and higher levels of supervisor and coworker satisfaction. These agency workers also exhibited higher individual in-role job performance (Broschak et al. 2008). Agency workers whose initial reason for signing on was to find a permanent job quickly were more likely to exhibit client-oriented behavior than those who intended to stay in temporary jobs through the help of their staffing agency (George et al. 2010).

However, agency workers face challenges as well, especially when they see little probability of moving into full-time employment. DeCuyper et al. (2009b) found that temporary agency workers had lower levels of job satisfaction and affective organizational commitment compared to permanent employees due to increased feelings of job insecurity and lower perceived employability. Investment in skill development is found to mitigate agency workers' feelings of job insecurity (Håkansson & Isidorsson 2015). Agency workers are less satisfied with their pay, exhibit lower continuance commitment toward the client, and are less likely to engage in extra-role behavior than employees (Broschak et al. 2008). Because extra-role behaviors may be less visible to supervisors than in-role behavior, those who are hoping to be selected for future permanent positions may focus on in-role behavior. A meta-analysis concluded that agency workers experienced the least job satisfaction, in comparison to both contract workers and permanent employees (Wilkin 2013). Those who see potential for good outcomes such as full-time employment through their agency work are more positive about their work experience than those who see little potential for mobility.

How does their experience compare to those in Cappelli & Keller's (2013) other main work classification—contracting?

Contract work. Contractors are hired to apply their knowledge and skills to a specific, usually short-term, project. Rather than a salary, they are paid by the hour or project that a client specifies in a contract written before the work is begun (Cappelli & Keller 2013). High-skilled contractors are often referred to as freelancers and include not only writers and editors but also computer programmers, engineers, or even film producers; they sell their skill directly to the client and are often higher skilled than the agency temps described in the section above (Osnowitz 2010). Low-skilled contractors include day laborers who negotiate a contract on the spot for a specific day. Contract work typically lacks job security or employer-sponsored training because the short-term nature of the relationship does not recoup such an investment (Bidwell 2009). Organizations have turned increasingly to contract workers for flexible staffing needs and reduced costs of benefits [estimated to be approximately 12% of payroll costs in 2013 (as reported by Boudreau et al. 2015)].

Bidwell & Briscoe (2009) found that workers with less need for employment security and training were more likely to choose contracting. Single men were more likely to contract than were married men (especially with children). Other workers contract because they lack resources to persuade employers to employ them. In this regard, those with strong skills, but not necessarily more education, were more likely to contract because they have less need for employer-provided training. Bidwell & Briscoe (2009) also found that individuals who had been laid off from their last job were more likely to contract than those who had not been previously laid off. Experience had a curvilinear effect on the probability of contracting, with contracting associated with high and low levels of experience (Osnowitz 2010). These findings suggest that those with less need for job security and job training are more likely to choose to contract. In a study of highly skilled IT contractors, Bidwell (2009) found that managers were more likely to use employees than contractors in positions that were core to the firm or that required knowledge of the business.

How do contract workers experience their work? A meta-analysis found that contract workers have a similar level of job satisfaction as permanent employees (Wilkin 2013). But much of the research on contract workers has documented costs to the worker and to the firm. DeCuyper et al. (2009a) found that direct contractors had lower levels of affective organizational commitment compared to employees due to lower levels of perceived employability. Research has also found poorer customer service associated with contract service workers. In a study of service workers, compared to permanent status employees, workers on a two-year contract were found to be less customer-oriented, due to their lower levels of organizational identity and customer identification (Johnson & Ashforth 2008). Contractors with family constraints around working time were less successful than those without constraints (Vincent 2016). Interestingly, although it is a fast growing segment of work, virtually no research has been published on gig workers to date. Given the brevity of their employment contract, we expect that their work experience may be quite different than other contract workers.

In summary, we see progress over the past decade in understanding the work experience of those with flexible employment contracts, specifically part-time, agency and contract workers. Although most research has been conducted within a single employment classification, we found studies to be particularly beneficial when they included workers in multiple categories, allowing comparisons across permanent, part-time, agency workers, and/or contractors who often work side by side (Boudreau et al. 2015, Broschak & Davis-Blake 2006). For example, research has found that permanent full-time employees working alongside temporary employees may feel less loyal

to the firm (Broschak et al. 2008, Davis-Blake et al. 2003), perhaps because they feel threatened by the temporary workers (Von Hippel & Kalokerinos 2012).

Flexibility in the Scheduling of Work

Some work schedules are made flexible to meet the needs of the firm, particularly to meet fluctuations in customer demands (Wood 2016). Americans in particular are working more "strange hours"—nights and weekend hours—than most of the developed world (Hamermesh & Stancanelli 2015). Not all flexible schedules are predictable, as is the case of on-call employees who, in accommodating changes in customer demands, may have a shift cancelled or added at the last minute with little advance notice. Contract and gig workers often have considerable schedule flexibility, particularly about when they choose to accept new work assignments (perhaps taking time off between assignments). Once assigned to a client, however, agency workers often have little scheduling flexibility.

Other work schedules are made flexible to meet the needs of workers, typically full-time employees. With more than 80% of US families being dual-career or single parent, more workers are juggling work and family demands, resulting in the need for more flexible work schedules (Kossek & Michel 2011). A recent study by McKinsey found that millennials were more likely to accept a job offer from a company that offers flexible work schedules. Flextime results in less absenteeism because employees can schedule personal appointments during normal business hours but make up the missed work time later in the day (Kossek & Michel 2011). Control over the timing and content of breaks during the work day also has important implications for work recovery. Usually, these flexible schedules are negotiated as a kind of I-deals involving a negotiation between an employee and his or her manager (Liao et al. 2016). Flexibility I-deals have been found to reduce work-family conflict and unpaid overtime (Hornung et al. 2008). However, because I-deals are negotiated between an individual employee and his or her employer, they can be easily denied or violated, which can lead to more negative assessments of, and less initiative and engagement with, work (Hornung et al. 2010). Yet, when organizations allow flexible work schedules, they may garner a competitive advantage as they are more likely to attract and retain high-skill workers who reciprocate with more engagement, productivity, or quality work and less absenteeism, turnover, or accidents (Kossek & Michel 2011).

Although flexible work practices may provide benefits to full-time employees in juggling work and home, they also come with costs. The use of mobile devices allowing workers to work anywhere and anytime leads to a tendency to work everywhere all the time, which is referred to as the autonomy paradox (Mazmanian et al. 2013). Workers may need to be in touch through electronic communication during nonwork hours even when it is outside of the flexible work hours, resulting in work-to-nonwork conflict (Allen et al. 2013, Butts et al. 2015) and the increased stress of being always "on" (Barley et al. 2011, Perlow 2008). Because firms may see flexible schedules as burdensome, workers with flexible schedules may feel pressure to intensify their work effort (Kelliher & Anderson 2010).

For full-time employees who use it, flexibility often comes with a stigma (Leslie et al. 2012) because it may conflict with the image of the ideal worker (Dumas & Sanchez-Burks 2015) who is always available. Research studies consistently report "professionals with flexible work arrangements are viewed as time deviants who are marginalized" (Williams et al. 2016, p. 525). Organizations often (incorrectly) attribute the lack of women's advancement in the workplace to an unwillingness to work the long hours required for high-level jobs (Padavic et al. 2016). Those who take advantage of flexible work have lower wage growth (Coltrane et al. 2013), receive poorer performance reviews (Judiesch & Lyness 1999), and are seen as less motivated (Rogier &

Padgett 2004). Parenting identities may be more public (Ladge et al. 2015), which may create bias, especially against women with families.

For flexible work to overcome these costs and meet the needs of both workers and their work organizations, it must move beyond individual negotiations that require a sympathetic manager to approve a flexible schedule. Perlow & Kelly (2014) developed a system-wide intervention with Boston Consulting Group (BCG) teams where each team member was scheduled one night off per week with the expectation that the consultant would not be available to work or be contacted by phone or email. They found this flexible work practice led to less work-family conflict and burnout while still keeping clients satisfied. A related system-wide intervention for flexible work, referred to as a results-only work environment (ROWE), allows employees to choose when and where[5] they work on any given day based on individual needs and job responsibilities, without seeking permission from a manager. ROWE interventions have been found to lead to a more positive work-family interface (Kelly et al. 2011) and reduced turnover (Moen et al. 2011) by increasing employees' schedule control (Kelly et al. 2014). What is significant about the BCG and ROWE interventions is that they were system-wide practices for making flexibility available to all rather than to just a few through individually negotiated I-deals.

The institutionalization of flexible work schedules is important for improving their legitimacy for all kinds of work. It is also noteworthy that virtually all of the research cited in this section has been on full-time employees, with little understanding of how these findings on flexible schedules may generalize to workers in other alternative work categories.

Flexibility in Where Work Is Accomplished

Whether one works independently or is employed by an organization, more work today can be performed away from the employer or client, and more workers than ever (triple the number 30 years ago) (Mateyka et al. 2012) are working primarily from home, coffee shops, or some other location outside of their place of employment. When workers telecommute, away from their managers, more self-management is required, and organizations increasingly engage in surveillance and monitoring through technology (Okhuysen et al. 2013, Watson et al. 2013). This rise in working remotely has spurred continued research interest in the benefits and challenges of virtual work. In almost all cases, this research is focused on those in standard full-time employment situations rather than those in other categories of alternative work arrangements.

Numerous benefits have been associated with working remotely, especially for those in standard jobs. Virtual work can reduce work stress (Raghuram & Wiesenfeld 2004) and increase feelings of autonomy (Kelliher & Anderson 2008), organizational commitment (Hunton & Norman 2010), job satisfaction (Virick et al. 2010), and job performance (including extrarole behaviors) (Bloom et al. 2015, Gajendran et al. 2015, Gajendran & Harrison 2007). One meta-analysis found that telecommuting reduces work-family conflict by helping workers juggle professional and personal work (Gajendran & Harrison 2007). It can also reduce commute times, and firms can save real estate costs with a smaller office footprint. For workers who feel they have any sort of social stigma, remote work arrangements may be attractive (Tislick et al. 2015). For example, work accomplished remotely may make a Muslim headscarf less salient and hence create less potential for stigmatization (Ghumman & Jackson 2010). Distributed work groups (in comparison to colocated work groups) may make employee demographic characteristics such as gender less salient as well (Chattopadhyay et al. 2008).

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[5]The ROWE intervention actually combines two dimensions of flexibility, scheduling and location.

However, working remotely can also bring challenges. Remote workers can feel lonely (Allen et al. 2015, Bloom et al. 2015, Callier 2012) and less engaged (e.g., Sardeshmukh et al. 2012). And as more employees work remotely, there is less face time, reduced potential for work community/relationships in the traditional workplace (Golden 2007, Rockman & Pratt 2015), and reduced knowledge sharing (Golden & Raghuram 2010), although this can be partially offset by good technology support and more face-to-face interactions, especially for new employees (Allen et al. 2015). Some remote workers experience fewer opportunities for development and promotion (Kelliher & Anderson 2008). High-intensity teleworking (more than 2.5 days/week) for full-time workers weakened relationships with coworkers (Gajendran & Harrison 2007). And subordinates with managers who worked remotely reported more negative work experiences compared to those with colocated managers (Golden & Fromen 2011). The physical isolation that can come with working remotely is correlated with feeling less respected by the organization, which weakens organizational identification (Bartel et al. 2012). A meta-analysis found that telecommuting can increase work-family conflict due to longer hours (Allen et al. 2015) and because it blurs the boundaries between work and family roles (e.g., Schieman & Young 2010, Allen & Shockley 2009, Kossek & Michel 2011). However, paradoxically, telecommuters who are encouraged to create stronger work-life boundaries are less likely to extend themselves in crunch times, possibly increasing the workload of non-telecommuting coworkers (Lautsch et al. 2009).

Studies have also found several important moderators that increase the benefits and reduce the challenges inherent in remote work (e.g., Kossek et al. 2008, Kossek & Lautsch 2012). These include getting to choose whether (i.e., having a choice) and when (i.e., scheduling flexibility) to work remotely (Allen et al. 2015) as well as having good relationships with bosses/coworkers (Gajendran et al. 2015, Gajendran & Harrison 2007) and working virtually in moderation (Allen et al. 2015). Remote workers are able to do more in less time because they have higher levels of work intensity (Kelliher & Anderson 2010). Managers also play a role in telecommuters' experience of work (Peters & Heusinkveld 2010). Workers whose managers stay in close contact by sharing information (as opposed to monitoring) experience less work conflict, have better performance, and exhibit more citizenship behavior (Lautsch et al. 2009).

Another set of benefits and challenges confront those who work in virtual teams where members often work in different time zones and across countries, with few opportunities to interact face to face. Electronic dependence and the lack of copresence in virtual work can reduce feelings of work meaningfulness and responsibility as virtual work may reduce intimacy and identification among coworkers (Gibson et al. 2011). Additionally, geographically dispersed work teams can activate "faultlines" (hypothetical dividing lines that split a group into subgroups) and impair group functioning (Polzer et al. 2006), especially when there are geographically dispersed subgroups (multiple people at different sites) (O'Leary & Mortensen 2010). Global virtual team effectiveness can be enhanced through various strategies, such as limiting the number of teams that workers are part of, developing cultural sensitivity, and increasing comfort with communication technologies (Cummings & Haas 2012, Maynard et al. 2012, MacDuffie 2007).

Summary

We organized our review across the three dimensions of flexibility. **Table 1** provides a summary of the different types of alternative work arrangements across the three dimensions as well as across the earlier two classifications. One important finding from the table is that different combinations of the three flexibility dimensions help us capture the many different kinds of alternative work arrangements. The table also demonstrates that the three dimensions are not always independent from each other. For example, many of the types of alternative work share two

Table 1   Categories of alternative work arrangements

Categories of workers	Standard workers	Standard workers with flexible schedules	Standard workers with flexible location	Part-time workers	On-call workers	Agency workers	Direct contracting	Platform mediated contracting
Description	Full-time employees, fixed schedule (e.g., 8–5), on-site	Full-time employees, flexible schedule, on-site	Full-time employees, fixed schedule (e.g., 8–5), off-site for some/all of work week	Less than 35 hours per week, fixed schedule, on-site	No regular schedule, required to be available during on-call periods, less than full-time, on-site	Employed by agency who assigns to client work, usually full-time and on-site at client, returns to agency for next assignment	Work for self, contract for a project directly with client(s); may be on- or off-site	Work for self, contract with consumer for a specific short-term task or assignment, may be virtual or at client location
Examples	Many occupations	Those with flextime work schedules	Telecommuters, consultants who travel	Those wanting reduced hours for child care/school, seasonal retail workers	Substitute teachers	Agency temporary or leased workers (e.g., temporary secretarial or legal help provided by an agency)	Freelancers, independent contractors, day laborers	Gig workers who find work via online platforms such as Uber, Upwork, and Care.com
Relevant dimension(s) of flexibility	Not applicable	Schedule	Location	Employment relationship and schedule	Employment relationship and schedule	Employment relationship	Employment relationship and possible schedule and/or location	Employment relationship, schedule, and/or location
Pfeffer & Baron (1988) classification	Physical, temporal, and administrative attachment	Physical, temporal, and administrative attachment	Limited physical attachment	Limited temporal attachment	Limited temporal attachment	Limited administrative attachment	Limited administrative and possibly temporal and physical attachment	Limited administrative, temporal, and physical attachment
Cappelli & Keller (2013) classification	Direct employment	Direct employment	Direct employment	Direct employment	Direct employment	Co-employment	Direct contracting	Not included, but is a mediated form of direct contracting

or more dimensions of flexibility. The fastest growing type of alternative work, platform-mediated gig contracting, often embodies all three dimensions of flexibility. Ironically, most of the research published on flexibility in scheduling and location has been conducted almost exclusively on full-time employees with little regard to whether and how the findings may generalize to agency or contract workers who have more precarious employment. Future research must examine the implications of alternative work arrangements across all three dimensions of flexibility.

Workers appear to have a more positive experience when they enter into alternative work arrangements by choice to enable a more flexible working life in terms of what, where, and when work is accomplished. Indeed, recent research suggests that job status congruence (i.e., the extent to which people are working full time, in contract positions, or part time, by choice) rivals psychological predictors of workers' personal and organizational functioning (Loughlin & Murray 2013). Choice suggests that being in an alternative work arrangement is volitional or perhaps even self-determined. With choice, workers feel some semblance of control over their work conditions. Workers have less positive responses when the flexibility is created primarily to enable organizations to manage labor and human resource cost and capacity. Flexibility in employment contracts benefits the firm but also creates uncertainty about the amount and timing of workers' pay. Workers can mitigate some of the uncertainty by having high skill levels, especially in skills that are in short supply and/or high demand in the marketplace. And those with greater human and social capital are more likely to thrive in alternative arrangements (Vincent 2016).

In summary, we see two images of the new world of work developing (Autor 2010, Bidwell et al. 2013). The first is more positive and reflects the experience of high-end workers with specialized knowledge in demand by firms who compete for their talent. The term war for talent captures the notion that these kinds of highly skilled workers, especially those doing knowledge or professional service work, are difficult to recruit and retain over the long term. Their high skill is a source of power that allows them to shape the work conditions they desire. This includes having some level of choice about when, where, and how to work, including rejecting jobs when their schedule is heavy or when the work fails to be interesting or developmental. For these workers, a contract may be preferable to regular full-time employment because it gives workers maximum control over their schedule and the content of their work. Clearly, some forms of alternative work arrangements are not experienced as precarious by workers.

However, a second, more ominous image of the new world of work is evolving for low-skilled workers who have more difficulty earning a living wage with job security. Flexibility that primarily benefits the firm transfers risk to low-skilled workers (Hacker 2006) and increases the likelihood of exploitation because the power differential is magnified. Increasingly, these are the working poor who prefer regular full-time employment but work multiple part-time jobs and still do not earn enough to maintain a living wage. [In the United States, the working poor are estimated to be 15% of the working population and 25% of families with children (Meuris & Leana 2015).] Workers in the gig economy are especially vulnerable as the supply of workers often outstrips demand, leading to lowered wages (Bidwell et al. 2013). The possibility for more discrimination increases as hiring decisions are made by individuals as opposed to corporate entities with (presumably) more oversight and regulation (Edelman et al. 2016). Alamgir & Cairns (2015) find that long-term temporary work perpetuates discrimination and exacerbates economic inequality among Bangladeshi mill workers. Creating a pantomime of the words precarious and proletariat, Standing (2011) refers to these workers as the precariat—a new, potentially dangerous, social class united by the sense that their labor is instrumental to their livelihood and employment is insecure. Workers in this second world of work often do not choose alternative work arrangements; rather, they default to it because they have no other good options available. In the final section, we offer

recommendations on directions for future research and practice to help evolve the new world of work more toward the first image and away from the second.

FUTURE DIRECTIONS FOR RESEARCH AND PRACTICE

There is much on the agenda for future research as there has been limited empirical research studying how work, occupations, and careers are changing (see **Table 2** for a list of potential future directions). As the employment relationship continues to evolve, we need more theorizing on how these changes affect how work is done, how people feel about their work, what their orientation toward work is, and the role of work in their lives. Echoing Cappelli & Keller (2013), we recommend the careful use of labels in research on alternative work arrangements, avoiding terms such as temporary, contingent, or externalized because these terms lump together many different categories of alternative work arrangements. Ashford et al. (2007) made this recommendation in their review a decade ago, but it is an issue that continues to plague research today. Researchers continue to invest a lot of energy in categorizing workers into different classifications without a lot of agreement. One reason for this is there can be no "grand theory" for all workers in alternative arrangements, let alone all workers. Given that workers across several different work categories are often working at the same work site, it is important to not lump workers together as contingent workers or as employees more generally. For example, full-time employees may be doing precisely the same work as part-timers, contractors, and free agents yet may experience the work differently (Broschak & Davis-Blake 2006). The inability to distinguish theoretically the effects of different work arrangements constrains our ability to build a research program on alternative work arrangements. Researchers need to be clear about the kind of workers being studied and to whom the research generalizes. The three dimensions of flexibility will be particularly useful for making sense of different manifestations of alternative work arrangements. Below, we outline some of the most compelling next steps for both research and practice along the three dimensions of flexibility used above in our review. We end with some directions for how to mitigate the effects of the ominous second image of the new world of work.

Future Directions on Flexibility in the Employment Relationships

In our review, we noted that we found no management or organizational psychology research published on on-call, seasonal, or gig workers to date. In particular, because the number of these workers is growing globally, this is a critical direction for future research. Many of the findings we reviewed on alternative work may not be generalizable to workers who have shorter time frames of connection to the hiring firm. A good starting point may be qualitative work, akin to Barley & Kunda's (2006) or Osnowitz's (2010) ethnographies on contract work, which can help us understand the everyday experiences of these workers. What gives them joy? What creates frustration? How do they spend their time in a given day or over a week or month? How much of their work is solitary? How much is interdependent with others? What is their professional identity? How do they think about career development? How do they sell their expertise in the marketplace again and again to remain employable over time? How do they self-motivate without a boss or performance review? In a related vein, new incentives may need to be developed to motivate gig workers and ensure quality performance. This raises the interesting question, What does organizational control look like outside the realm of a traditional organization? Ratings are important indicators of quality for gig workers (Leung 2014, Rosenblat & Stark 2015). In particular, the nature of gig work suggests that organizations are likely to resort to more indirect and insidious methods to control and incentivize workers.

Table 2   Directions for future research

Alternative work in general	**We need clarity in how we label and categorize different types of work.**
	What is the role of work in the lives of alternative workers?
	How does alternative work shape group and organizational dynamics?
	How does a broader array of flexibility dimensions (e.g., flexibility in decision making and work methods) affect workers in alternative arrangements?
Flexibility in employment relationships	**We need insight about how gig workers experience their work.**
	How much of their work is solitary versus interdependent with others? How do they think about career development? How do they sell their expertise and remain employable in the marketplace?
	How do gig workers self-motivate without a manager or performance review? What types of incentives motivate gig workers? What does organizational control look like outside the realm of an organization?
	How and when do contract workers organize in opposition to overly controlling organizations? How do they develop belongingness and organizational identification?
	What are the differences between permanent employees and long-term temps in their work experience and identification with the organization?
	How do mixed-employment environments affect interpersonal dynamics?
Flexibility in work scheduling	**We need research on effects of scheduling flexibility for those in alternative work arrangements; most research is conducted on full-time employees.**
	Given the pressure to be always available, how do alternative workers experience scheduling flexibility?
	How can employers effectively meet changing demands while also enabling workers to manage their schedules to increase feelings of control for part-time workers?
	What are the consequences of surveillance usage to monitor workers? What are the conditions under which workers interpret monitoring technology as good or bad?
	What are the possible roles of technology for workers in alternative work arrangements? Can it be used to design more desirable work schedules, or does it exacerbate job insecurity by taking over more work roles?
Flexibility in where work is accomplished	**We need to understand how findings on full-time employees generalize to those in alternative work arrangements.**
	How can organizations create accountability for virtual work while minimizing the potential for privacy concerns?
	How do the dynamics of virtual work change when peripheral employees become the core, or when everyone works remotely?
	How does virtual work influence socialization and the maintenance of organizational culture?
	How do workers use and experience relatively new types of computer-mediated communication?
Toward a more positive future	**We must create a world where both low-skill and high-skill workers thrive.**
	How can flexicurity become a reality? What kind of corporate investments and public policy changes are needed to prepare workers for good jobs?
	How can workers create more feelings of income security even when they lack employment security?
	How might organizations work to strengthen employee identification without threatening their desired flexibility and autonomy?
	How might organizations support diverse career orientations and definitions of career success, and how do workers experience emerging sources of career support?

A related issue involves confusion about the demarcation between contract work and direct employment. Increasingly, the distinction between the two kinds of work arrangements is blurred as client firms impose more constraints on contract workers (e.g., work hours, dress codes), which in some cases results in contract workers organizing against the contracting firm. Microsoft was sued by their contract workers—or permatemps—and was required to pay out $97 million. Additional research should examine the dynamics of contract workers organizing in opposition to the contracting organization and how it may fuel a sense of belonging and identification with other contract workers. The two-tier employment structure of permanent employees and long-term temps working side by side, with the only obvious difference being their title, is also an interesting direction for future research regarding how the two groups experience their work and identify with the organization, and how this mixed-employment environment affects interpersonal dynamics.

As more people work outside the safety nets provided for full-time employees, it is important to create alternative mechanisms for replacing traditional benefits such as healthcare and retirement funds. Although some advocate for an unconditional basic income to ensure everyone can meet their basic needs (e.g., Standing 2011), many countries provide basic welfare benefits, making a freelance lifestyle easier to sustain. Denmark, for example, has one of the highest rates of entrepreneurship due, in part, to welfare benefits and supportive government regulations (OECD 2009). Other nongovernmental agencies such as the Freelancers Union (which currently has 200,000 members) help independent workers find the resources and benefits they need to sustain a freelance career. For agency workers, staffing agencies are being called on to provide more of these safety nets for their employees.

Future Directions on Flexibility in the Scheduling of Work

Much of the research on flexibility in the scheduling of work has been conducted on full-time employees. Future research should also examine scheduling flexibility in other categories of alternative work. For example, although the assumption is that agency and contract workers have significant schedule flexibility in that they can accept and decline work to meet their needs, they may feel the need to always be available for new (and current) clients to increase their chances of being hired for the next project. Freelance workers, in particular, may be expected to complete work immediately upon signing a contract. Especially when the evaluation of their work product is publicly available to future clients, they may feel substantial pressure to perform the work quickly or off the clock, leading to a form of time theft. Even though the assumption is that contract and agency workers have significant scheduling flexibility, future research should examine the extent to which that flexibility is real.

Those in part-time, low-wage retail jobs may also have little control over their work schedules (Wood 2016), as seen in the practice of "clopenings" (where one employee closes a store late at night and is then scheduled to open early the next morning with just a few hours of rest in between). Schedules of part-timers often change depending on organizational needs and customer fluctuations, making it more challenging for workers to predict their work schedule and income week to week, and creating difficulty in scheduling childcare or holding supplemental part-time jobs. We need to identify and examine the potential effectiveness of practices that would simultaneously allow employers to meet changing demands while also enabling workers to manage their schedules.

Some companies, such as Uber, offer higher pay temporarily during holidays or periods of inclement weather to attract workers during busy times. Future research should consider how workers experience this and other forms of flexibility allowances and incentives. For example, are some workers enticed by surge incentives to overwork themselves to the point of burnout and fatigue, leading to errors and lapses in judgment? Other firms cross-train employees so that they

can move into different jobs during a single shift, as customer traffic rises or falls. Research should examine how cross-training for flexibility might be experienced as job enrichment/enlargement or as exploitation.

Firms are also investing in technologies to observe and monitor worker behavior. Monitoring tools may be interpreted by workers as "good" (legitimate and impartial) or "bad" (intrusive and oppressive) (Sewell & Barker 2006, Sewell et al. 2012). Today managers in corporate headquarters can monitor store associates' behavior in real-time (i.e., upselling customers) and subsequently adjust workers' schedules to reward or punish. What are the consequences of this type of surveillance? What are the conditions under which workers interpret monitoring technology as good or bad? Firms are also using technology, such as self-checkouts, to better manage fluctuation in customer demand (Colvin 2015). Again, future research must examine if and how this use of technology may support workers by protecting them from undesirable schedules or whether it may create even more job insecurity as technology takes over more work roles.

Finally, flexible work scheduling often comes with stigma. More research on how to challenge the stigma and increase the legitimacy of flexible work is important. As more companies offer flexible scheduling, and when employees in higher levels of the hierarchy use it themselves, flexible scheduling practices are likely to become more legitimate for others to use. Research should examine how this process unfolds and under what conditions flextime is effectively and legitimately implemented for employees at all levels.

Future Directions on Flexibility in Where Work Is Accomplished

Like the literature on flexible scheduling, research on remote work has also been conducted mostly on full-time employees with little understanding of how those findings may or may not generalize to those in other alternative work categories. One particularly important direction for research and practice is about how to create accountability for virtual work. Clients worry about workers engaging in nonwork activities (such as childcare or housework) when they are not in visual proximity. Having regular check-ins by phone and email about deliverables and milestones can help alleviate worries. More ominous is technology that has been developed to monitor worker behavior through recording information such as mouse movements, keyboard activity, and screenshots in ten minute intervals. Upwork, the online talent platform, retains contract workers' data in a "work diary" that is viewable by current and prospective clients. Although the use of monitoring technology may reduce clients' fears of worker loafing, it may impair trust and mitigate the flexibility that has been found to be a key benefit of remote work in prior research. Research should examine how different forms of monitoring can create necessary accountability while minimizing the potential for privacy concerns. This may be one of the most worrisome possibilities for exploitation for workers in the new economy. No one wants Big Brother looking over one's shoulder.

In many firms today, virtual work is becoming the norm rather than the exception. Some companies (e.g., Basecamp and Upworthy) are completely virtual—all employees work remotely, and all interaction is virtual. Davis (2016) documents the increasing prominence of networked organizations with no vertical integration, where most work is outsourced to contractors or small firms for tasks outside the business core, including cleaning, security, catering, and maintenance, and also increasingly HR and IT. How do the dynamics of virtual work change in these contexts where everyone works remotely? Do the dynamics of work change when the peripheral employees become the core? As more work is virtual, how do work relationships change as people share less or no face-to-face interaction? What is the impact on organizational attachment, commitment, and identification? How does virtual work influence socialization and the transmission, reinforcement, and maintenance of a strong culture? How is trust built?

The concept of virtuality, characterized by dimensions of geographic dispersion and technology usage, is a particularly promising avenue for future research (e.g., Foster et al. 2015, Gilson et al. 2015, Gibson et al. 2014). Virtuality commonly refers to the percentage of communication that occurs via various computer-mediated communication tools (CMCs). The millennial generation is especially receptive to the use of CMCs at work, perceiving virtual connectivity, such as via social media, as a way to decrease boundaries and increase collaboration (Myers & Sadaghiani 2010). Indeed, this form of online collaboration has been found to cause the weakening of categorical boundaries [such as location or hierarchical status (Hwang et al. 2015)]. Most research on virtuality continues to focus on traditional options, such as email, chat, and discussion boards, although new CMCs, such as social networking and meeting tools, have received limited research attention (Gilson et al. 2015). One particularly intriguing phenomenon is an emerging trend toward virtualization technologies that provide organizational interactivity in virtual worlds where people are represented by avatars that can interact with each other in 3D digital environments (e.g., IBM) (Dodgson et al. 2013, Bailey et al. 2012, Nevo et al. 2011). This form of virtualization technology is often associated with games and play but is increasingly being used to facilitate collaboration and learning. Bailey et al. (2012) acknowledge that virtual simulations have been the least studied form of virtual work, but have great potential to change the future of work. Applying this concept of virtuality to alternative work arrangements is an important direction for future research.

Lastly, other dimensions of flexibility may be relevant to workers in alternative work arrangements. For example, research on autonomy in the work design domain (e.g., Morgeson & Humphrey 2006, Humphrey et al. 2007) identifies additional dimensions of flexibility beyond work scheduling, including flexibility/freedom in decision making and flexibility/freedom in work methods (e.g., physical demands, ergonomics). Future research should explore how a broader array of flexibility dimensions related to work design affects workers in alternative arrangements.

Creating a More Positive New World of Work

We concluded our review with two images of the new world of work. In this final section, we offer some ideas about how to increase the potential for the first, more positive image of the new world of work. O'Toole & Lawler (2006) define a positive world of work as satisfying three fundamental needs: economic security, meaningful work, and supportive social relationships. To the extent that alternative work arrangements can fulfill all three needs, work is likely to be productive, satisfying, and sustained over time. For each need below, we offer both organizational and individual strategies.

Economic security. In terms of economic security, more academics and policymakers are discussing how we can mitigate the ominous second image of the new world of work where employees do not earn a living wage, by creating more jobs with benefits, opportunities for empowerment, flexible scheduling, and some control over the termination of the job (Kalleberg 2011) to avoid the detrimental consequences of economic insecurity (Meuris & Leana 2015). Ton (2014) makes the business case that an investment in a "good jobs" strategy results counterintuitively in lower costs, higher profits, and customer satisfaction. Kalleberg (2012) goes further to suggest the need for "flexicurity" to enable employers and labor markets to have greater flexibility while workers are protected from the insecurity created by employers' search for such flexibility. Future research should investigate how to make flexicurity a reality rather than a dream. What kind of corporate investments and public policy changes are needed to facilitate training and preparing workers for good jobs across economic cycles?

What can individual workers do to increase the probability of having economic security? The most important strategy for individuals is to have and maintain skills that are in demand. Today, with so many educational opportunities available at very low cost (through community colleges) or online [through massive open online courses (MOOCs)], individuals must be proactive in learning skills that are in high demand. Precarious income affects one's ability to meet recurring financial obligations as well as make decisions and ensure well-being (Meuris & Leana 2015). Individuals also need to learn how to manage precarious income streams where they might have a good paycheck for several months and then a month with no income. New technology, such as *Even* (a financial stability app), helps workers to smooth income flows so they receive a steadier stream of income. Future research should examine how workers can create more feelings of income security even when they lack employment security.

Purposeful work. As workers in alternative work arrangements have weakened organizational identity, meaningful work can be a partial antidote (Pratt et al. 2013). Organizations and workers have begun to identify a variety of practices to infuse or activate work meaningfulness. Some enhance meaning through contact with the beneficiaries of their work (Grant et al. 2007). Others encourage employees to create self-reflective job titles that reflect the unique capabilities employees bring to their work (Grant et al. 2014).

Individual workers can also craft their own sense of purposeful work. They can make small adjustments to incorporate more of their passions, strengths, and motives into their work (Leana et al. 2009, Niessen et al. 2016). They can also form what psychoanalysts refer to as holding environments through creating greater connections to the places, people, routines, and purposes that sustain their work (Petriglieri et al. 2016). These holding environments can enable those with alternative work arrangements to develop a sense of meaning and navigate the anxieties that accompany precarious work. Given that worker ties to organizations are weakening, future research should explore the role of meaningful work for those in alternative work arrangements particularly focusing on how workers self-generate and sustain flexible meaning systems.

Supportive work arrangements. Workers in alternative work arrangements may feel more disconnected from others (Turkle 2011), whether due to contracts that keep them moving from job to job or through feeling lonely and isolated when working virtually. Those in alternative work arrangements may experience more ambiguity around professional affiliations and identities (Dibble & Gibson 2012) and lack the ability to personalize their spaces with identity markers (Byron & Laurence 2015). Working remotely can also weaken one's organizational or communal identification with coworkers (Bartel et al. 2012). Future research should further explore how alternative work arrangements influence worker identification with their organizations and professions, and how organizations might work to strengthen employee identification without threatening their desired flexibility and autonomy. Although working from a home office or a coffee shop may seem appealing at first, many people miss the camaraderie of work colleagues. Organizations can encourage workers to seek membership in a work community, and working in a supportive social context is associated with increases in subjective performance and job satisfaction and decreases in turnover intention (Humphrey et al. 2007). Online communities are gaining popularity as an emerging organizational form where workers can collaborate and exchange ideas (e.g., Faraj et al. 2011).

In terms of individual strategies, independent workers can choose to join a coworking space to work as part of a community (Spreitzer et al. 2015). Coworking spaces are membership-based workplaces composed of a diverse group of people who do not necessarily work for the same company.

Aligned with the growing popularity of the sharing economy and collaborative consumption (Botsman & Rogers 2011), coworking spaces worldwide have exploded in the past ten years (Johns & Gratton 2013). As workers do their work in many different kinds of settings, more research needs to examine the effects of physical space on workers. Shared work spaces such as coworking spaces, coffee shops, or even open plan office configurations create new dynamics around personal space, privacy, and interruptions (Ashkanasy et al. 2014). That these new types of workplaces are being embraced by organizations and individuals as more people work independently demonstrates that human connectivity in a shared setting still matters in the realm of work (Garrett et al. 2016).

Career Success in the New World of Work

Our review also suggests some implications for careers—especially in helping workers enact careers consistent with the first, more positive, world of work. As work moves beyond the boundary of the firm, workers outside of a traditional corporate hierarchy increasingly must craft their own careers (Greenhaus & Kossek 2014), fund their own training and development, and identify appropriate developmental assignments (Bidwell & Mollick 2015). Even for full-time employees, careers tend to be more individually directed, often in response to organizations offering less formal career development and to workers not being formally employed in organizations or employed for short periods of time (Bidwell 2009). Individuals must be more entrepreneurial in the design of their careers (Van den Born & Van Witteloostuijn 2013). Today career progression is more strongly shaped by the external labor market (opportunities to find better jobs outside one's current organization) than the more traditional internal labor markets (opportunities to find better jobs within one's current organization) (O'Mahony & Bechky 2006). This movement toward external labor markets is particularly relevant for contract workers who face increased challenges associated with a career progression paradox, namely that they must have certain skills to get a job, but they must have a good job to develop those skills (O'Mahony & Bechky 2006). To maintain their employability, contract workers must be proactive in identifying new skills and capabilities necessary to be successful in the global marketplace (Strauss et al. 2012).

Literature suggests at least two new conceptualizations of careers in the new world of work: boundaryless careers and the protean career orientation. Sullivan & Baruch (2009) call these once radical concepts now the status quo, although critical theorists suggest a better label may be boundary-crossing careers (Inkson et al. 2012). Boundaryless careers involve movement across several employers over a person's career trajectory. Those with boundaryless careers often reject traditional career paths, for personal/family reasons (e.g., not wanting to displace children in a move for a promotion) or because of their own definition of success (e.g., choosing to remain an independent contributor rather than move into management because of the love of the work) (Lazarova & Taylor 2008). Those with successful boundaryless careers have been found to be more proactive and create more social capital (often outside of the work organization) than is the case for those with more traditional career trajectories (Tams & Arthur 2010). Some research, using the label of career customization, has found that boundaryless careers can improve work engagement, organizational commitment, and subsequent career success (Bal et al. 2015). Related to the boundaryless career is the notion of a protean career orientation that involves (*a*) a self-directed approach to career management through more individual initiative and (*b*) a values-driven orientation where the individuals pursue a career that is personally meaningful and purposeful. A protean career orientation has been found to be related to higher human, social, and psychological capital, more employability, and better work-life balance (Direnzo et al. 2015).

Research has shown that freelancers measure success through how they build their human, social, and psychological capital to generate revenues and enhance their work satisfaction (Van

den Born & Van Witteloostuijn 2013). Today, career researchers call for the design of smart jobs (Hall & Las Heras 2010)—jobs that have a strong developmental network, help create a calling, and encourage people to see new possible selves. Future research should examine the factors that enable and create challenges to smart jobs. One practice deserving future attention is the development of nongovernmental agencies to fill the need to create career pathways for lower-skilled workers in alternative arrangements. Additional research should explore how organizations might support diverse career orientations and diverse definitions of career success, and how workers experience emerging sources of career support. Future research might also explore the requisite individual capabilities for managing protean careers and their inherent benefits and costs. For example, introverts may prefer the more solitary nature of remote work, but extroverts may be more likely to build the social capital that may be necessary for a more protean career. Research can also examine the factors that enable and constrain how individuals may move from traditional to protean career trajectories and back again over their lifespan.

CONCLUSION

Our review suggests two images of the new world of work, one more ominous and the other more auspicious for those in alternative work arrangements. By embracing our directions for future research and practice, we hope to create a more positive new world of work where workers choose to engage all three dimensions of flexibility to craft a job and life that meet their own needs as well as the needs of work organizations. However, there are many forces enabling the more negative new world of work. Which one will become the dominant reality? We hope our review will spark new interest in research and applications on the new world of work. The time is ripe for work on how to move organizations and individuals toward a less precarious and more flexible set of alternative work arrangements to help individuals and the organizations they work for thrive.

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Find out more about the motivation to be a permanent temporary worker: **https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CGu5p_36Rug**

Learn more about the freelance economy and the new world of work in this video on "taskers" and the company TaskRabbit: **https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rM33wENmmd0**

Watch this video about how virtual work can help people manage stigma in their work: **https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zslXYxl5Trc**

See the following nongovernmental organizations who can provide resources and support to those struggling with tensions in alternative work arrangements, e.g., the Freelancers Union, which promotes the interests of independent workers through advocacy, education, and services (**https://www.freelancersunion.org/**); the SOURCE, a not-for-profit employee support organization designed to help employees keep their jobs, receive training to enhance their employment, and help employees move into better positions within or across companies (**http://grsource.org/**); and the 10,000 Opportunities Initiative, which helps youth (age 16–24) build skills and credentials, preparing them for high-skilled "good jobs" (**http://www.100kopportunities.org/**)

See this example of how employers are seeking to build more meaning into work: **http://zenithcleaners.com/about-us**