Shaking out the red carpet:

Toward a labour-based analysis of cultural policy

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From perception...

- Discourses of the creative economy, creative class, creative cities – a “Floridian oasis” of work & labour markets
To reality…

- The “dark side” of creative labour
  - Individualized risk assumption,
  - Self-exploitation
  - Excessive hours
  - Low income levels
  - Physically demanding, dangerous
  - Chronic employment & income insecurity
  - Exclusionary networks
  - Insecure legal foundations for collective bargaining

“The show must go on”

as one of the most powerful management tools ever invented
What is: Labour-based analysis

Key features

- To understand how (cultural) policy shapes labour markets, working conditions and quality of life for (cultural) workers;
- To understand how (cultural) workers & worker organizations participate in (cultural) policy development processes
- To connect the two in an interactive relationship
The interviews
Labour-based analysis, part one

- How does cultural policy operate as a form of labour market regulation?
  - Federal – CRTC 1999 Broadcasting Policy
  - Provincial – Tax credits in ON & NS
- Key finding: Cultural policy shapes the quantity and quality of work in the film and television industry.
Labour-based analysis, part two

3. What role (if any) do unions play as policy actors in cultural policy networks?

- Key finding: Associational and discursive policy strategies of unions shape whether/how cultural labour problems are understood as cultural policy problems
So what?

- Shakes out the “red carpet” notion
- Links the decisions that states and governments make to the daily lived experiences of cultural workers
- Exposes the role that cultural workers play in supporting, contesting and reimagining the concept of the creative economy