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# Work Relations and the Multiple Dimensions of the Work-Life Boundary: Hairstyling at Home

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# 1. Introduction

The workers discussed in this chapter – hairstylists – appear to lack a work-life boundary. On the one hand 'life' regularly intrudes into the world of work, with owners' friends and family assuming 'employee' roles (paid or unpaid); stylists' friends and family taking customer roles; others (children needing care; family or friends in search of a chat) spending time in the work-space for non-work reasons; additionally 'friendships' may grow from, impinging upon, work-relationships. On the other hand, work may be taken outside of work-time and space, with stylists pursuing work-tasks for people with whom they have social or business relationships; in their or others' homes, hospitals or care-homes; for pay or gratis. Alternately, work can exceed given temporal schedules or work-hours disrupt 'normal' social temporality. Lastly, affectations of 'cool' constructed as part of work-based aesthetic labour may spill over into workers' extra-work social and sartorial practices.

While the above suggests a relative absence of boundaries, most hairstylists desire, and feel they achieve, a work-life boundary. This anomaly is only explicable when the work-life boundary is understood as multidimensional, including (in a non-exhaustive list) dimensions of spatiality (dedicated workplaces vs. non-work places), temporality (working times vs. non-work times), rationality (instrumental vs. value), task (job related tasks vs. processes demanded by extra-work tasks), and personnel (workplace social relations vs. extra-work relationships), as well perhaps as aesthetics (commodified vs. uncommodified self-presentation). The work-life boundary's multidimensionality means that when breaching appears to occur along one or more dimension, symbolic restoration is possible through emphasis on alternate dimensions' significance. This chapter focuses on a specific type of multidimensional breaching – instances when work-tasks are performed outside the work-site (spatial breaching) and outside work-time (temporal breaching).

### Sociology of the Work-Life Boundary

While classical sociology says little about "work-life boundary" per-se, the separation of work from home-life is central to most theories of modernity, albeit with varying foci: Marx's interest is the temporal and physical dimensions of the boundary (workers moving into factories and under capitalist control for specified time periods); whereas bounded budgets and rationales are critical for Weber (the increasing separation of the household budget, and rationale, from that of the enterprise); and for Parsons role separation is central (different personnel, tasks and affect, belonging in each sphere). This range of foci suggests the possibility of theoretical and commonsense conceptualizations of the work-life boundary as multi-dimensional (which is not to suggest that all dimensions are equal). Meanwhile, after a century of acceptance, the proposition that modernity necessitates work-life separation has been challenged both by empirical research (especially on workplace temporalities, homeworking, and informal work), and by an emergent concern with conceptualizing the work-life boundary.

Increased awareness of work's temporal encroachment upon (and consequent disruption of) family life underpins growing interest, among academics and policy makers, in fostering 'work-life balance' (Presser, 2003:, Hochschild, 1997:, Jacobs and Gerson, 2004:, Schor, 1991:, Hogarth et al., 2000), but this research generally focuses on a single dimension (temporality) of the work-life relationship. In contrast space is central to conceptualizations of homeworking or teleworking. Telework's early advocates (for instance Toffler, 1980) predicted that workers' movement from spatially demarcated workplaces to the home would be liberating; with workers' controlling their labour becoming less alienated. However empirical studies have found that, instead of relishing their lack of boundaries, home-based workers constantly struggle to demarcate non-working time, spaces, and relations (Boris and Daniels, 1989:, Felstead and Jewson, 2000:, Phizcklea and Wolkowitz, 1995).

Where they fail the consequence is colonization of the social realm by workplace tasks and rationalities. Homeworking research nicely reveals workers' desire for bounded spheres, concomitantly highlighting the extent of paid work-at-home, which threatens these. Another form of work that breaches boundaries is 'informal work' (also often performed in extra-'work' settings). Informal work may be done for friends or family; and may be paid, unpaid, exchanged for favours, or used to meet non-pecuniary needs (Nelson and Smith, 1999:, Pahl, 1984). In the latter cases the rationales for and relationships within which the work is organized are intertwined with workers' home lives – or, as Glucksmann suggests, there is an 'interconnectedness across boundaries between paid and unpaid work, market and non-market, formal and informal sectors' (Glucksmann, 2005:29). While much informal work is performed by peripheral workers with few economic alternatives (Portes and Castells, 1989:, Williams and Windebank, 1998), it is also performed by workers who additionally hold a formal job (Williams and Windebank, 1998) for whom it may sometimes be used to express identity (Snyder, 2004) perhaps re-imposing 'life' (or value) rationales on 'work'.

Although the above research describes instances of porosity in work-life boundaries, it is mostly not framed this way. In contrast Nippert-Eng's (1996) study of the ways that individuals construct home-work boundaries directly addresses the task of conceptualizing work-life boundary (re)creation. She claims that everybody's sense of self is either continuous or realm-specific (creating an integration/segmentation continuum). Segmentation is produced by using 'different spatio-temporal places to support different ways of being' and is maintained by '[t]he ways we manage calendars, keys, clothes and appearances, eating and drinking, money and people' (Nippert-Eng, 1996:99). She argues that particular occupations, organizations, work groups, family ties, and national contexts encourage the development of more 'integrated' or more 'segregated' lives. It is this argument that is developed here, with specific attention given to the role of work relations, but also socio-demographic factors, in determining which workers allow, or do not allow, their work life to spill over into (or merge with) the time, space, relations and rationalities of their home lives. This chapter also explores variation across workers in the dimension(s) of the work-life boundary that are salient.

The chapter develops three general claims:

1) the work-life boundary is multidimensional;
2) this multidimensionality enables workers' ideological reconstruction of boundaries where breaching occurs;
3) work relations need to be considered to understand work-life boundary(ies).

## 2. Empirical Study

Hairstyling is a common occupation in Britiain, with 171,347 people formally employed in hairdressing as their main job[1] (Office for National Statistics, 2005b). Over 40 per cent of hairstylists are self-employed (Berry-Lound et al., 2000:, H.A.B.I.A., 2001). Of these approximately 40 per cent employ other workers; the remainder working alone (Berry-Lound et al., 2000). Chair-renting (a form of sub-contracting) is common; A 2000 survey found 14 per cent of salons 'renting out chairs' (Berry-Lound et al., 2000:17-8). Women dominate the sector; the workforce is 83 per cent female (Office for National Statistics, 2005a). National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs) in hairdressing have existed since 1987 (E.C.O.T.E.C., 2000:38) requiring upwards of two years to complete, with training usually undertaken as an in-salon apprenticeship. Despite their training employees in hairstyling are poorly paid, ranking 335$^{th}$ out of 342 occupational groups in a 2004.

### Research Methods

Primary research was conducted in 'Northerncity', a city in the North of England. It took two forms: 1) semi-structured interviews with hairdressers and barbers in a sample of the city's salons and

barbershops; and 2) a mail-survey distributed to every salon/barbershop in the city. Salons were systematically sampled for interview from a geographically organized list. Supplementary interviews were conducted with stylists in salons with specified characteristics (barbershops; chains; salons with a primarily ethnic clientele; salons with 'chair-renting'). Interviews, ranging from 30 minutes to two hours, were carried out with at least one person in each selected salon. These were taped. In total 71 workers in 52 salons or barbershops were interviewed. The mail survey included both open- and close-ended questions about the salon and the respondent. The survey was hand-delivered and research aims explained. The response rate was 40 per cent (G.M.B., 2005).

## 3. Findings

### a) Desire for boundaries

Most stylists express a preference for a bounded work-life: 82 per cent of respondents agreed or agreed strongly with the statement 'I like to leave work behind when I leave the salon' (Table 1). Gender and work relations affect the strength of this preference. Neither male nor female stylists were likely to disagree, but male stylists were significantly ($p<0.1$) more likely to agree strongly. This suggests that men see a work-life boundary as more essential than women, perhaps as a result of traditional gender roles wherein the 'home' constituted a workplace for women but a haven for men.

**Table 1: Opinions about statement: 'I like to leave work behind when I leave the salon,' by sex, and work relation.**

| | Disagree or Disagree Strongly | Agree | Agree Strongly | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Men | 14.7$^{+}$ | 35.3 | 50.0 | 100% (34) |
| Women | 18.8 | 54.1 | 27.1 | 100% (85) |
| | | | | |
| Owners | 16.1* | 54.0 | 29.9 | 100% (87) |
| Trainees | 50.0 | 37.5 | 12.5 | 100% (8) |
| Other stylists | 12.0 | 36.0 | 52.0 | 100% (25) |
| | | | | |
| All | 17.6 | 48.7 | 33.6 | 100% (119) |

Chi-square test for association: * ($p<.05$); $^{+}$($p<.1$).

Stylists in different work relations also vary significantly ($p<0.05$). Half of trainees disagreed with the statement, suggesting a much weaker desire for a work-life boundary during the training period (although the low number of trainees surveyed requires this finding be read cautiously). Owners and other qualified stylists overwhelmingly like to leave their work behind when they leave the salon, but over half of stylists expressed strong agreement in contrast to under a third of owners. Perhaps stylists who achieve most inner reward from hairstyling become owners, and this same inner reward accounts for their lesser desire to leave work behind at the end of the day, or perhaps owners' less alienated labour process relationships transform hairstyling from 'job' to 'identity,' reducing their desire to shed it at. Or perhaps because (as we shall see) owners' do less extra-work styling their desire for boundaries is less burning. Anyhow, except for trainees, variation is in the *degree* (not existence) of a desire to relegate work to the workplace: just 16 per cent of owners and 12 per cent of other stylists stated that they did *not* want to leave work at work. [2]

Nonetheless, only a third of stylists introduced work-life boundaries as a concern during interviews. Most often the topic was broached in justifying a decision to restrict their extra-salon hairstyling. Emily, employed in an international hairstyling chain, is typical:

> Q Do you cut friends' and family's hair?
>
> Emily: Family, close family, like my mum, dad and brothers. But I tend not to. I try to keep it separate. Otherwise you feel like all you're doing is hairdressing all the time. I like to, when I leave, switch off from it. And that's it. It's alright if you do family and stuff, but you're not going to charge them for doing it, so you're just doing it in your own free time, and a lot of time people who work full-time, don't get a lot of free time anyway...

Later, notwithstanding her admission that she styles some family members' hair, Emily is more emphatic: "I just don't cut hair at home. No. Not at all. I'd rather not." Emily's focus on temporality in the separation – free and work time – was reiterated by other stylists:

> I think I just do enough. I wouldn't want to spend all my time… of course I love doing it, I wouldn't want to spend all my time outside of work still doing it. [Jenny]

Emily and Jenny are commission-based stylists, so formally their incomes are less temporally dependent than stylists on hourly wages. Yet commission-based stylists were most likely to define the boundaries of their work, and to do so temporally. This is because commission-based stylists work longer daily and weekly hours than workers in other work relations, with little ability to vary this (Cohen, 2005). This gives their formal work rigid temporal boundaries, while leaving them little free-time. Here work relations impact workers' at-work temporality, which in turn affects their desire to guard non-working time from further temporal encroachments, leading to temporal expression of the work-life boundary.

In contrast, where salon owners stated a preference for bounded home and work lives they expressed this spatially, emphasizing the salon/barbershop door as physical marker:

> I do live quite a way away, so it's like, when I do shut the shop it is shut and forgot about, so I'm not on the doorstep. [Tina]
>
> When I need to shut this door at night I don't even think about work. I come here, I do me job. Away from work I don't want to think. And I can't even believe I cut hair for a living. [Simon]

For neither Tina nor Simon does salon ownership diminish the desire for bounded spheres, but control over a physical space transforms understanding of the work-life boundary from temporal to spatial. Expression of boundaries in spatial, rather than temporal, terms makes the flexibility and unpredictability (or unboundedness) of owners' at-work schedules commensurate with the desire (and understanding of) a bounded work-life (something especially salient for owners working alone, whose in-salon hours vary greatly).

**b) Extra-salon styling**

Despite stylists' overwhelming preference for leaving work at the workplace, half of those surveyed did some (paid or unpaid) extra-salon hairstyling (Table 2), either in their own homes (43 per cent) or in others' homes (28 per cent). A quarter receive payment; a rate of paid informal work much higher than the 2.9 per cent Williams and Windebank (1998) found in their study of an urban workforce. Thus hairstyling is an occupation in which boundaries – spatial, temporal, task and perhaps rationale – between work and home are remarkably frequently breached *despite* stylists' preferences for them to be maintained. This highlights the importance of occupation; hairstyling skills are informally exchangeable and widely demanded, something true of many other occupations, especially craft and

professional (such as masseur; doctor; plumber), but not all (policemen; production-line worker; receptionist).

**Table 2: Involvement of formally employed stylists in extra-salon styling.**

| | Any styling | Any **paid** styling |
|---|---|---|
| **Do hairstyling outside salon/barbershop** | **49.6%** | **26.6%** |
| *In other people's homes only* | 6.4 | 13.6 |
| *In my home only* | 21.6 | 4.0 |
| *In both my and others' homes* | 21.6 | 8.0 |
| Total (N) | 100% (125) | 100% (125) |

Interviews with stylists bore out survey findings; approximately half did hairstyling outside of the salon. Notably, many who initially denied cutting hair at home, after prompting, admitted that there were particular people whose hair they did (or that they did some styling, 'but not for pay'). Like Emily (above), they simultaneously understand that they do not do extra-work styling while allowing regular exceptions. The multidimensionality of the work-life boundary makes this possible. Stylists fail to immediately recognize certain acts of extra-salon styling work *as* styling work because they have constructed alternate boundaries in place of spatial-temporal or task boundaries. For instance, by defining styling work not just as a set of tasks, but those tasks performed for pay for people outside of social and/or reciprocal relationships, and to the extent that stylists limit the people whose hair they cut outside of the salon to immediate friends and family (those involved in ongoing reciprocal relationships), charging at most a nominal sum, the work-life boundary remains intact and stylists may assert they do not do work at home.

The characteristics of stylists who do (paid or unpaid) extra-salon styling are explored in Table 3. Firstly we see that the relationship between stylists' desire to leave work behind at the salon and the achievement of this end is complex. The most successful at aligning desire and practice are respondents who disagreed with the statement that they like to leave work behind when they leave the salon (implying desire to continue styling outside of the work-time/place); 83 per cent of this group did hairstyling outside the salon. Less successfully, 40 per cent of those who agreed that they like to leave work behind when they leave the salon, did hairstyling at home (failing to achieve their preference), while a huge 60 per cent of those who agreed strongly with the statement (and who might be expected to be the most determined to achieve strong boundaries) failed to align preference and practice, and styled hair outside of the workplace/time. Thus while those who want to continue styling outside of the salon are able to do this, many others who would rather not do extra-salon work, nevertheless also end up doing it. It may be that the act of doing styling outside the salon reinforces a desire for bounded spheres, accounting for why a larger proportion of stylists who 'strongly agree' that they would like to leave work behind when they leave the salon (than those who 'agree') do work out of the salon.

**Table 3: Whether stylists do extra-salon styling, by opinions on work-life separation, socio-demographic characteristics, work relations and workplace characteristics**

| | **Do extra-salon styling** | **Do NO extra-salon styling** | **Total (N)** |
|---|---|---|---|
| 'I like to leave work behind when I leave the salon.' | | | |
| Agree Strongly | 60.0%* | 40.0% | 100% (40) |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Agree | 39.7 | 60.3 | 100% (58) |
| Disagree | 83.3 | 16.7 | 100% (18) |
| Gender | | | |
| Men | 50.0 | 50.0 | 100% (32) |
| Women | 52.2 | 47.8 | 100% (92) |
| Main earner in family? | | | |
| No. Someone else is. | 61.7* | 38.3 | 100% (47) |
| Hard to say; it's quite even. | 34.5 | 65.5 | 100% (29) |
| Yes. | 52.4 | 47.6 | 100% (42) |
| Work Relations | | | |
| Owners | 39.8*** | 60.2 | 100% (88) |
| Other qualified stylists | 73.1 | 26.9 | 100% (26) |
| Trainees | 88.9 | 11.1 | 100% (9) |
| Price of women's wash, cut and blow dry (in-salon): Mean (SD) | 14.87 (5.75) | 14.34 (5.44) | 14.61 (5.58) |
| Price of men's trim (in-salon): Mean (SD) | 7.00 (4.27) | 6.99 (3.91) | 7.00 (4.08) |
| Usual weekly (in-salon) hours: Mean (SD) | 38.94 (8.39) | 38.40 (7.80) | 38.67 (8.07) |

Chi-square tests for association of categorical variables; T-tests for equality of means: ***($p<0.001$); **($p<0.01$); *($p<0.05$).

Contrary to studies of the informal economy that have shown greater male than female participation (Williams and Windebank, 1998), there is no significant gender difference in extra-salon styling. Fifty per cent of male stylists, as compared to 52 per cent of female stylists do hairstyling outside of the salon (a similarity in gender practices that occurs *irrespective* of men's more strongly stated desire for a work-life boundary). This intra-occupational similarity highlights the importance of occupation; that different labour-force rates of male and female participation in the informal economy may be rooted in occupational sex segregation in the formal economy (and men's development of those occupational skills most demanded by informal networks).

Individual time pressure appears to be unrelated to the likelihood of extra-salon styling: mean in-salon work hours are virtually identical for workers who do hairstyling outside of the salon and those who do not (39.0 and 38.3 hours, respectively). However stylists' structural economic role vis-à-vis their household is consequential. Respondents who claimed that it was 'hard to say' whether they or another member of their family was the primary earner (and so in the most economically egalitarian household relationships) are least likely to do extra-salon hairstyling: only 35 per cent did this as compared to 52 per cent of main earners and 62 per cent of secondary earners. They were also least likely to do extra-salon styling for pay: ten per cent, versus 36 per cent (main earners) and 26 per cent (secondary earners). There was no significant gender variation in these proportions. Stylists stating that it is 'hard to say' if they or someone else is the primary earner are likely to be in households containing (at least) two full-time workers. This suggests that time-poverty at the household level affects participation in extra-work hairstyling – a reminder of the need to consider workers within the totality of their relationships and compromises rather than as isolated individuals.

A direct measure of income was not available because of seasonal variation in stylists' earnings and complexities produced by including workers in different work relations. Instead, the price of

haircuts at the salon/barbershop where stylists work is taken as an (admittedly imperfect) proxy to investigate the relationship between income and extra-salon styling. Table 3 indicates there is no significant difference in the mean prices of a woman's wash, cut, and blow dry or a man's trim (the most widely available services) in workplaces where stylists are involved in extra-salon styling (£14.87: women's cut wash and blow dry; £7.00: men's trim) and where they are not (£14.34 and £6.99). Therefore workers in low-cost salons/barbers are no more likely than workers in high-cost salons/barbershops to engage in extra-work styling. On the other hand, stylists' work relations are important determinants of the likelihood of doing hairstyling outside the workplace. While only 41 per cent of salon owners do extra-work hairstyling, 73 per cent of other qualified stylists and 89 per cent of trainees do it. These differences are striking (and significant ($p<0.05$)).

Logistic regression analysis with the dependent variable 'engagement in hairstyling outside of the salon'[3] was used to test the robustness of these bivariate relationships. Findings confirm that workers who do not seek a bounded working life are less likely to have one: although there was no significant difference between those who agreed (the reference category) and agreed strongly with the statement 'I like to leave work behind when I leave the salon', disagreeing (and thereby indicating a willingness to continue work outside of the salon) multiplies the odds of doing hairstyling outside the salon by a factor of nearly eight ($p<0.05$). Socio-demographic variables had no effect: neither gender, age, nor family composition variables (marital status; household including school-age or pre-school children) were significant. However, membership of an equal-earner household reduces the odds of doing hairstyling outside of the salon by 70 per cent ($p<0.1$). The distance of the salon from the stylist's home is also significant ($p<0.05$): for every extra minute the stylist takes getting to work his or her odds of doing hairstyling at home increase by 4.7 per cent. Other workplace characteristics were insignificant. However the effect of work relations, found in bivariate analysis, persisted. Trainees were omitted since all but one did extra-salon styling (and so almost perfectly predicted the dependent variable). The analysis therefore considered qualified stylists only. Owners' odds of doing styling work outside of the salon are 84 per cent lower than non-owners' ($p<0.1$). This is not a by-product of career stage since a variable measuring the years respondents had worked in hairstyling was included in the model and had no significant effect.

Following sections draw out these findings, using qualitative data to explore workers' rationales for doing hairstyling outside of the salon.

### c) Rationales for extra-salon styling

Four rationales for styling at home are identified. Each rationale is differently important for workers in different work relations. This means that *although workers in different work relations may act on the basis of similar rationales, the combination of rationales held by workers in one work relation tends to vary from that held by workers in another.* Additionally the connection between each rationale and the construction of particular types of boundaries between home and the work is drawn out.

#### *i) Extra income*

Since hairdressing is poorly paid, and since stylists possess marketable skills, it is unsurprising that stylists frequently commented that 'others' (other stylists in their salon, or stylists generally) did styling at home 'for that bit extra'. A couple of interviewees offered an economic rationale for their own extra-salon hairstyling:

> I mean, between you and not [the] taxman, you have to really, you have to do some at home because to make your money... 'Cos relatives gives you so much for doing it and that. Because if you don't…[shakes head] …You probably know somebody who's doing haircutting on the

> side or something like that. The money [earned in-salon] is never ever, for the hours what hairdressers do, is not really good. [Tom]

Yet, despite the frequency of after hours hairstyling, very few interviewees mentioned extra income as a rationale for their own extra-salon styling. All who did worked in small salons earning an hourly-wage for in-salon styling. Hourly-paid stylists are detached from the value produced by their in-salon styling, and may therefore be less perturbed by receiving lower rates for extra-salon work and more willing to sell their labour informally (stylists who charged for extra-salon styling generally agreed that it is 'impossible' to charge the same rates as in-salon). Conversely some owners' rationale for not doing extra-salon styling was economic:

> It's not economically viable. For me to go out of the salon for two hours I would have to charge a hundred pounds at least. I mean, it's for weddings… But it's just not worth it to me. [Martina].

As an owner Martina receives the total price for her in-salon work and so gains no advantage from out of salon work, which may be cash-in-hand but will not enable her to multi-task as is possible in the salon, and will involve set-up and perhaps travel time on top of the styling itself. The 'hundred pounds' Martina quotes is over five times her rate for an in-salon haircut (and therefore an unrealistic amount to expect), but reflects a consideration of these issues.

**Table 4: Extra-salon styling, by work relation, form of compensation, and relationship to client.**

| **Extra-Salon Styling for…** | **Styling work done by:** | | | **All** |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | **Owner** | **Qualified Stylist** | **Trainees** | |
| **… pay:** | **18.2%**** | **42.3%** | **55.6%** | **26.0%** |
| Immediate Family | 1.1 | 3.8 | 0.0 | 1.6 |
| Wider Family | 0.0 | 19.2 | 11.1 | 4.9 |
| Best Friend(s) | 2.3 | 7.7 | 22.2 | 4.9 |
| Other Friends | 4.5 | 23.1 | 22.2 | 9.8 |
| Other People | 12.5 | 30.8 | 55.6 | 19.5 |
| **…favour/gift (no pay):** | **9.1** | **15.4** | **22.2** | **11.4** |
| Immediate Family | 1.1 | 11.5 | 11.1 | 4.1 |
| Wider Family | 2.3 | 0.0 | 11.1 | 2.4 |
| Best Friend(s) | 4.5 | 11.5 | 11.1 | 6.5 |
| Other Friends | 3.4 | 0.0 | 11.1 | 3.3 |
| Other People | 1.1 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.8 |
| **…nothing (not pay, nor favour/gift):** | **30.7**** | **61.5** | **66.7** | **39.8** |
| Immediate Family | 26.1 | 53.8 | 66.7 | 35.0 |
| Wider Family | 6.8 | 3.8 | 0.0 | 5.7 |
| Best Friend(s) | 6.8 | 19.2 | 11.1 | 9.8 |
| Other Friends | 1.1 | 3.8 | 0.0 | 1.6 |
| Other People | 3.4 | 3.8 | 0.0 | 3.3 |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **…for pay OR not:** | **39.8*** ** | **73.1** | **88.9** | **50.4** |
| Totals (N) | 100% (88) | 100% (26) | 100% (9) | 100% (123) |

Chi-square test of association: *** ($p<0.001$); ** ($p<0.01$).

Note: percentages cannot be summed as, for example, stylists may do paid extra-salon styling for people in more than one type of relationship or for pay *and* for free.

While stylists may not do extra-salon styling 'for' income, many nonetheless receive an income from it (as mentioned above, a quarter of survey respondents did paid extra-work hairstyling). Table 4 breaks down extra-salon styling, focusing on its recipients and stylists' work relations. Only 18 per cent of owners do paid work and they predominantly do it for 'other people' (i.e. people they class as neither friends nor family). On the other hand 42 per cent of non-owner stylists receive payment for extra-salon hairstyling[4] and although 30 per cent are paid by 'other people,' four per cent receive payments from immediate family members (partner; children; parents), a fifth are paid by wider family members, eight per cent by their 'best friend(s)' and nearly a quarter by 'other friends.' Therefore, non-owner stylists are not only more likely to be paid for extra-work styling than owners, but they are also in closer relationships to the people from whom they receive payments. The small number of trainees in the sample makes it difficult to assess their responses, but notably trainees' extra-salon paid work goes beyond styling friends and family. Unqualified trainees do not have in-salon clients, therefore their extra-salon clients, who both pay for services and are not in proximate social relations, are their first encounters with 'real' clients. Thus for some trainees it is in extra-salon styling that they first fully embody the occupational identity of stylist.

### *ii) Becoming a stylist – training and identity*

A striking survey finding, reiterated in interviews, is that trainees almost universally do extra-salon hairstyling. Crystal makes a general point: "that's how you learn, isn't it", while Jenny describes how doing her family's hair profited her at least as much as her family:

> It was a way of practicing. Which sounds bad, but I mean I never did anything on anybody if I didn't know what I was doing. I used to do it on me sister and she used to have a few unusual haircuts, but she didn't mind. But no, I did used to do a few people, a few more of me aunties.

Since extra-salon practice is a normal (albeit informal) requirement of apprenticeships, senior stylists expect juniors to do this alongside full-time commitments to the salon and/or college.

In addition, after-hours hairstyling facilitates trainees' construction of adult-worker identities. Hairstylist is an embodied identity; you cannot simply buy a hair salon (as you could a dry-cleaner's) and claim to be a stylist. Affiliation depends on the passage of tests and on the knowledge, experience and training embodied in the person of the stylist. It is underpinned by fellow stylists' positive assessments and by clients (including friends and family taking client roles). Clients are an especially important source of status legitimation for early-career stylists, still *becoming* hairstylists. Trainees' with their minimal desire for work-life boundaries and enthusiastic involvement in paid and unpaid extra-salon styling, demonstrate the way that a work identity may be constructed, inside *and outside* the workplace by increasing the number of interactions wherein this identity is central. To the extent that trainees' work identities are constructed outside of the wage-labour relation they are perhaps non-alienated. However, to the extent that trainees' extra-salon styling is performed *purely* for practice (rather than to express an identity), and to the extent that this is necessitated by inadequate in-salon training, it represents a 'colonization of home by work' like that found in homeworking (Felstead and Jewson, 2000).

With training complete, and hairstylist identity cemented, trainees' enthusiasm for extra-salon styling declines. Unfortunately, patterns of behavior established while training are difficult to break and many stylists describe ongoing extra-work clients whom they would now prefer not to 'do', but from whom they find it hard to extricate themselves. This exacerbates the demands made by relationships of social-reciprocity.

***iii) Inter-personal reciprocity – rooted in social relations***

The most frequent rationale interviewees offered for styling outside the workplace was that they were doing 'a favour.' This language was used, irrespective of whether payment was received, and it was used to describe two different types of reciprocal relationships. The first, interpersonal reciprocity rooted in extra-work social relations, is discussed here. The second, reciprocity rooted in workplace relationships, will be discussed in the following section.

When explaining extra-work styling as 'favours' rooted in social relationships stylists focused on the closeness of particular relationships (friends and family). May a young stylist, responds to a question about whether she cut friends' hair by first emphasizing that she only does it as a favour. She then offers a 'checklist' of people whose hair she cuts: 'I do, like, my mum and dad, [x]'s boyfriend and that. But I don't really, do… I've done my nana and I've done a couple, but…' While the components of May's checklist are peculiar to her its character is not. Firstly the list is organized by social (and familial) relationships. Secondly it is limited. And thirdly, interspersed with a list of people whose hair May styles, is a denial that she 'really' does extra-salon hairstyling. These three features are connected: by listing, and employing recognizable extra-work social relations, denial is made to sit with the reality of extra-work styling; a work-life boundary is maintained by reference to personnel (and rationale) at a point at which it is breached spatially, temporally, and in terms of task.

Janet's list contains the same three features:

> Mum and dad; boyfriend; one of me aunties; her daughter; my cousin, and her. No [I don't do it], not really. My best friend, I'll do her hair.

For Janet and May specific relationships (friends/family) underpin decisions to do extra-salon styling despite a more general 'decision' not to do this. For other stylists circumstances delimit those for whom they do this, for example Denise insists 'I don't' do extra-salon styling, and then admits that 'I do some of me friends who have… you know, kids and that… at school, but I choose.' Yet interviewees made it clear that that 'choice' is difficult to exercise. Stylists find themselves pressed into work they prefer not to do by cajoling friends. Shana suggests that the only escape is to 'never let anyone know you're a hairdresser that doesn't need to know' as this is the only way to avoid the (irresistible) pressure to do styling out of the workplace. Even the closest of family make demands that can generate resentment:

> You know what I do hate - when my husband asks me to cut his hair. I get home and he's always wanting me to do that. He's got hardly any hair, but still he always wants it cut. [Laura]

> Sometimes it's a pain in the backside… I've got my son now, been on at me last two days, saying, 'Will you cut my hair, will you cut my hair?' and I get home and sorta… you don't want to do it. [Tom]

Tom and Laura echo something recounted more widely: male family members' inconsideration of a desired work-life boundary. However, inconsideration from friends was not gendered.

One way to avoid the obligation of styling friends and family at home was to style them in-salon. Work relations affect this strategy. Owners (who we saw are the least likely to work at home) emphasize that salon possession bestows the ability to choose not to do extra-salon styling:

> When we got the shop I was… that was it. Got a salon: I'm not working on somebody's kitchen chair and breaking me back, am I? [Simon]

Salon possession means that owners are easily able to give friends and family free or discounted services in-salon. But perhaps more importantly, others are aware that the small business owners' earnings depend on in-salon take. This recognition may discourage friends and family from 'taking advantage' by demanding (usually discounted) out-of-salon services. Further, to the extent that ownership creates more identity between the salon and the stylist, the spatial demarcation of their place of work is reinforced. Lastly, the very fact that the salon is their own may mean it is understood by those in social relations with owners as a more welcoming environment.

In contrast stylists in corporate chains have little control over their workplaces and are unlikely to construct socializing spaces therein. These stylists assume that friends and family coming to the work-site *must* pay standard prices; an assumption not simply enforced from above, but reinforced by pay systems based on personal take:

> Because you can't have friends coming in and doing them for nothing… because at the end of the day you have figures to achieve. [Carol]

If friends and family have to pay full price (which they may resist) and if any discounts will reduce stylists' 'figures' and therefore income, incentives exist to fulfill socially-rooted styling obligations outside the salon.

Logistic regression analysis (above) showed that the further away from their workplaces stylists live the more likely they are to do extra-work styling. Where distance makes it more difficult for friends and family to get to the salon (and unlikely that the salon is part of their 'community'), and to the extent that hairstyling is understood as social obligation, it is one that may only be met by hairstyling at home. Thus, paradoxically, where spatial boundaries between home and work are greatest (where work and home are at a distance) consistent maintenance of a spatial boundary is increasingly difficult, with work tasks seeping into the life-world.

Social reciprocity is a rationale for paid as well as unpaid extra-salon hairstyling. Some stylists state frankly: 'you can't charge family [and/or friends]' and Table 4 shows that few stylists charge immediate family members while many style them gratis. However stylists generally receive payment from more distant relatives: nineteen per cent of non-owner stylists style their wider family's hair for pay, whereas only four per cent do this for free. Stylists' 'best friend(s)' are most likely (after immediate family) to be styled gratis (by 19 per cent of stylists and seven percent of owners). However they are also styled for pay (by eight per cent of non-owners and two per cent of owners) or for tangible reciprocal goods: 'a favour/gift in return' (12 per cent of non-owners and five per cent of owners). Acceptance of payment may be phrased in terms of succumbing to the demands of relatives (rather than economic requirement):

> My brother and his wife, they won't let me do their hair for nothing cos at the end of the day it's my time, so they always buy me a present or something. [Carol]

Where stylists receive money or gifts because friends/family insist on bestowing these (rather than as payment) their work remains unrecognized as work and their obligation to do it can be framed in terms of social rather than economic rationality.

Work relations influence whether payment is received for out-of-salon styling work performed in a context of social relationships. Chair renting and commission-based stylists (with income directly related to 'take') understand the value of their labour and consistently expressed the expectation that they be paid for extra-salon work. Furthermore, statistically, workers with in-salon employment in more expensive salons (where they may also earn more) are more likely to be paid if they do styling outside the salon (despite being no more likely to do it). The mean price of an in-salon wash, cut and blow dry

is significantly higher ($p<0.05$) where stylists are paid for extra-salon styling (£16.43) than where they do unpaid extra-salon styling (£13.10). This contrasts with findings (above) that stylists explicitly mentioning pay as a rationale work in less-expensive, wage-only salons. This suggests that well-paid chair-renting or commission-based stylists may not do extra-work hairstyling *for* pay but nevertheless valorize their work and are more likely to be paid when they do extra-salon hairstyling to meet social obligations.

We saw above that stylists who are secondary earners in their households do more extra-salon styling than 'main' earners but when *paid* out-of-salon work is examined this relationship is reversed: being paid for extra-salon work is most likely where stylists' incomes are more important to their family. Given that much extra-salon styling is for people in close social relationships, it is probable that the decision to compensate stylists (or not) sometimes reflects others' assessment of how critical stylists' income is to their household. This roots compensation in substantive, rather than formal, notions of value, implying that the sale of labour services may not mark such practices as 'work', nor constitute a fundamental breach of the work-life boundary.

***iv) Inter-personal reciprocity – rooted in the salon***

In addition to friends and family members, extra-salon styling may be a 'favour' for in-salon clients. This is most common where clients are injured; lose mobility with age; or when special occasions (namely weddings) necessitate out-of-hours styling. Most often stylists describe favours as reciprocation for long-standing clients' 'good' custom.

> I have been to people's houses who have had major operations. When clients have been: 'Oh I can't… can you come round? I've had hysterectomy or mastectomy, or whatever.' I will; I'll go to their house and do it. Because if they could come in they would; but they can't. [Jenny]

Jenny implies that a condition of her extra-salon styling is that the people for whom she does it 'would come in if they could.' As a chair-renting stylist dependent on maintaining a steady clientele regular clients are at a premium; acknowledging particular loyalty is worthwhile. Owners of small salons, especially owner-operators, are in an equivalent situation and Oona draws a similar line:

> It's only regular ones. I wouldn't do a mobile service for anybody who wasn't a regular customer, because it's their loyalty that makes you do it you see. So they've been here for a long time... Like last Christmas, I had a customer who broke her ankle between Christmas and New Year. And she was incapacitated for about six months and in that six months I used to go up and do her hair every couple of weeks. To keep her feeling happy with herself.

Although Oona initially focuses on her client's length of custom, and it is clear that her extra-work styling is a reward/inducement for repeat custom, at the end she reframes the relationship – taking responsibility for the client's happiness. As relationships are reframed in non-work terms, breaching of owners' strong spatially demarcated work-life boundaries can be accommodated by reconstituting styling as necessary for wellbeing; an extra-work social good.

## 4. Conclusions

Boundaries are used to conceptually demarcate our lives (Lamont and Molnár, 2002:168). The work-life boundary is both a product of the alienated nature of work and a potential defense against further alienation in our home lives. Therefore it is hardly surprising that unboundedness may represent either the re-socialising of productive labour (wherein the performance of work-tasks in extra-work surroundings produces an uncommodified or social identification with the work), or alternately the commodification of social relationships (wherein workers' awareness of the value of their own labour-power may mean that even labour performed as a favour for a sibling is given a price). Although the

existence and form of a workers' work-life boundary cannot be directly read off of his or her work relations, this chapter has shown that without knowledge of the latter it is difficult to understand the former, or its repercussions. Work relations affect both whether and how work-life boundaries are drawn, because they affect the rationales for drawing boundaries and the dimensions along which they can be drawn. Moreover they have this effect to an extent that workplace and social-demographic characteristics (gender, age, marital status, having children) do not.

Amongst hairstylists, trainees were found to have the most malleable work-life boundaries both in terms of intent and practice. Work identity is created outside the workplace and work-skills honed at home. However early-career unboundedness constructs or exacerbates social obligations that over time are decreasingly welcome. Owners' boundaries are more concrete and are conceptualized spatially. Breaches are rooted in long-term work-based economic interests (maintaining a clientele), and understood as occasional favours. To the extent this extra-salon styling is conceptualized using extra-economic language ('making someone happy' rather than 'keeping clients') it is made commensurate with strong spatial boundaries. Non-owner stylists have greater disjuncture between their desire for boundaries and practice. Usually conceived temporally, their boundaries are frequently transgressed under economic pressure (the need to keep clients; earn extra income) and social pressure (reciprocity demanded by extra-work relationships).

To account for transgressions stylists construct boundaries using alternate markers – social relations; tasks performed; receipt (or not) of financial compensation. Where work-tasks are performed for pay for people who are not otherwise socially related to the stylist these three markers correspond, marking activities (even performed after-hours and outside the salon) as work. However, only stylists who explicitly state that they do extra-work styling for pay find this correspondence. More often lines drawn around out-of-work styling are messy. For instance, where stylists do styling 'as a favour' for friends or family, even receipt of pay for work-tasks may not be enough to constitute the activities as work. However a boundary that differentiates between work and non-work activities on the basis of the 'closeness' of particular social relationships will be slippery over the long-run (as people move in and out of stylists' immediate social circle) and over the short-run (as friends-of-friends become increasingly hard to define as part of either the work- or home-sphere). Therefore despite the symbolic potential offered by the multi-dimensionality of the work-life boundary, increased extra-work-site work, in circumstances where different types of boundary cease to correspond may eventually present insurmountable obstacles to a coherently constructed work-life boundary. What the social and psychological implications of this are requires further exploration.

The man who left his suburban home and family, and went to work on the production line had separate and bounded temporality spatiality, personnel, task, and rationality. But most workers are (and indeed were) not like this man. Accountants, homeopaths, academics, bicycle repair mechanics, along with many others resemble hairstylists, possessing work-skills that they can and that many do employ outside of the time, space, rationality, and social relations of the workplace. To the extent that workers desire a bounded work-life, and this chapter has suggested that most do, their ability to achieve this will depend on their ability to consistently employ one or more dimension of the work-life boundary as a symbolic marker. In fulfilling this task not all boundaries are equal, nor equally stable. For instance, while spatiality is relatively time-invariant, social relations may be a more inconstant marker. Investigation of these differences, and of the ways in which different dimensions of the boundary are breached or symbolically and practically maintained, is a necessary ingredient of future conceptual and empirical analysis of the work-life boundary, as is consideration of the consequence of work relations.

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[1] More detailed discussion of secondary data available from the author.

[2] In exploratory multinomial logistic regression with this question as dependent variable both owner and gender were significant predictors.

[3] Analysis not shown. Available from author on request.

[4] Given a) higher rates of paid extra-salon styling among non-owner stylists, and b) a national hairstylist population with fewer owners than within this study survey, the actual proportion of salon-employed stylists engaged in paid extra-salon styling will be *greater* than found here.