

Week 4

This week I wanted to situate “Taking Back Work” in terms of what other people are saying about work and wellbeing.

1. We started a quick overview of last week’s class, then moved onto a summary of Colin Williams’ research on the prevalence of different forms of work (using his 2005 book, [A Commodified World?](#) and his chapter on non-commodified labour in [The Routledge Companion to Alternative Organization](#) (2014)) ([slides 1 to 12](#)). If we had more time I would have asked the students to replicate Williams’ examples of identifying the diverse labour practices in a task; in someone’s daily life; in an organisation; and in a locality ([slide 11](#)). This section finished by raising the diverse/community economy issue—it’s one thing to identify a diversity of work practices but in a community economy which of these work practices do we want to support and see more of.
2. In the next part of the lecture we moved on to look at indicators of wellbeing (building on last week’s exercise in which they explored their own 24-hour clock, and individual and planetary wellbeing). I got the students to work in pairs and research what they could about four different indicators of wellbeing produced by different agencies—Gross National Happiness (Government of Bhutan); World Happiness Report (UN); Happy Planet Index (New Economics Foundation); and one other (up to this pair to find something themselves – they found the OECD’s Better Life Index). Students did this in-class research using their mobile devices (which I had asked them to bring along). And they looked at their allocated example in terms of three questions ([slide 17](#)). When the students presented what they found, we had lots of discussion of the different aspects of wellbeing that the different indicators feature, but the link between work and wellbeing only came out through lots of prompting (this is a hard one).
3. In the last section of the class we then opened up the pages of TBTE to look at the collective actions in this section. There was really only time to do a quick overview of the different types of work and the connection to different types of wellbeing (as we needed time for the students to let me know which chapter they were thinking of focusing on for their case study—their major [assessment task](#)).