so many others) that the miners' strike could become a general strike.

The solidarity efforts become steadily more intense, but the Irish Republican Army (IRA) plants a bomb at the Brighton Hotel where Margret Thatcher is staying, and the Iron Lady manages to turn public opinion against the so-called revolutionary danger. Meanwhile, the Labour Party and union officials ruled out any wider industrial action. Soon, the great coal miners' struggle ends in bitter defeat, among the worst in British working-class history.

Richardson throws himself into the desperate backstairs defence of miners jailed for solidarity actions. Meanwhile, a scandal around Gerry Healey's assault upon women in the party brings an end to Healey's prestige and, in the not-very-long run, to the WRP generally. Meanwhile, he is on the way to getting sacked for shop steward activity, with precious little support from the leadership of the union he had spent years building.

In 1988, he stopped fighting for his job. Going to college, he worked at Bristol United Press in a "causal," hard, and dirty printing job. It was his last outside of the classroom.

He could see closely, like few others, what Marxist sociologist Harry Braverman and Marxist historian David Montgomery, among others, had written about the theory and practice of labour's degradation within the production process itself. One chief purpose of this book is to explain how much has been lost in job dignity and labour solidarity and to educate readers for future struggles. "The past can jolt a new awareness" (178), he says: the very point of a noble effort.

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Alan Hall, *The Subjectivities and Politics of Occupational Risk: Mines, Farms and Auto-Factories* (Philadelphia: Routledge, 2021)

As anyone who has studied the regulation and management of work health and safety will know, over the past fifty years, there has been an international trend, especially evident in advanced market economies in Europe, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand (as well as at global levels, such as in the Conventions of the International Labour Organization), in which principle and process-based regulation has replaced more traditional prescriptive forms and prompted the development of systematic approaches to managing health and safety risks at work. A significant element of the regulatory reforms that helped establish this international trend were measures advocating widespread adoption of arrangements to consult with workers and their representatives on making and delivering the arrangements to manage risks to their health and safety. These changes originated in the 1970s (or even earlier if it is accepted that Scandinavian practice was a strong influence) in a period in which organized labour had reached the peak of its power and influence. However, they have been operationalised during a time in which the power and influence of labour have been in sharp decline and in which neoliberalism has given rise to a very different dominant discourse on the governance of work than that imagined by many of the architects of the regulatory reforms. This discourse extends to the management of the risks to the health and safety of workers and has had a strong influence on the operation of the regulatory reforms in the decades since their introduction.

The reforms have, from their origins, prompted a body of research literature on health and safety management and on

the operation of the institutions' worker representation and consultation. Over the years, Alan Hall has made a significant contribution to this literature, especially with understandings based on research findings concerning *how* worker representatives act in order to deliver their roles effectively. Through the use of a mixture of theoretically informed, qualitative and quantitative methods, he, along with others, helped to establish a robust understanding of the ways in which representation and consultation on work health and safety risks and the arrangements to manage them can operate to give workers some chance that their voice may be heard. His ideas concerning "knowledge activism," for example, have been especially central to this understanding and useful in their application to a host of work situations beyond the Canadian contexts in which they were originally developed. But at the same time, this and other research has increasingly acknowledged the challenges to these approaches presented by neoliberal occupational heath and safety (OHS) management. In particular, it has drawn attention to the important distinction that is all too often lost between worker involvement that incorporates them into employer controlled OHS management systems and autonomous worker representation that provides workers with a meaningful opportunity to influence decisions affecting their health and safety.

Alan Hall's new book speaks to this emergent critical discourse concerning the political determinants of work health and safety regulation and its practice under the neoliberalism that has dominated political economies globally during the past half-century. In this respect, it sits alongside the work of radical Canadian scholars like Eric Tucker, Wayne Lewchuk, Robert Story, Gary Gray, and others who have questioned the basis and practice of the Internal Responsibility System (IRS)

in Canada and which has resonated more widely internationally, with similar sociologically informed critique applied to other principle and process-based systems in Australia and Europe too (see for example the work of Michael Quinlan, Michael Rawling, Richard Johnstone, and others in Australia; Phil James, Steve Tombs; Laurent Vogel, myself, and others in Europe).

Hall's thesis is also something more than this. This goes beyond the critical but pragmatic analysis that generally frames this discourse within industrial relations or regulatory studies. It seeks to establish a more fundamental sociological understanding of both the "manufacture of consent" and the manipulation of control in relation to dealing with work risks to safety and health. At the same time, it attempts to situate this understanding in relation to the effects of change in the structure, organization, and control of work that have taken place during the same period that the neoliberal project has been rolled out globally. It further seeks to make a useful contribution to understanding ways forward in relation to the amelioration of the consequences of these effects of the social relations and politics of accumulation for workers.

The book-length treatment allows Hall the opportunity to explore, at some length, many of the contradictions and paradoxes evident in managerialist strategies to exert control over health and safety while they attempt to achieve consistency between these approaches and more fundamental corporate concerns in the pursuit of efficiencies in maximizing productivity and profitability. Doing so alongside unitarist notions that assume an identity of interest between managers and their workers in achieving corporate goals. It is generally in the space created by these contradictions that he identifies ways in which workers and their

representatives have been able to mount some resistance to the managerialist capture of "worker participation" and to exercise some influence in voicing different, autonomous, and worker-centred health and safety interests. It is also within such a space that he concludes that workers, their advocates, and activists have opportunities to gain greater power and influence within workplaces. He suggests that while the regulatory system has largely operated in the furtherance of the interests of neoliberal managerialism, it is a system that is not devoid of workers' rights and that organizing around the greater use of such rights (as well as their expansion) remains possible, as the examples of such actions in his research show. He further concludes that labour-power within the labour process remains a significant source of workers' capacity for resistance and for winning concessions from their managers. But he suggests that the key message for effective resistance is the need to focus greater attention on cultural and political opportunities present within workplaces to achieve a more meaningful reduction in OSH risks. That is, to find ways of "in effect, flipping the neoliberal rules of the risk management game to worker advantage."

If these glimpses of optimism about the power of workers' voices to resist the exploitation of their health and safety in neoliberal contexts sound a little fanciful, they need to be viewed within the framework of Hall's book-length account. This ranges across a host of his research studies undertaken in three different sectors over a period of nearly thirty years. A rigorous and theoretically informed analysis is strongly evident throughout the detailed presentation of these studies. In effect, Hall constructs a *tour de force* of research into the effects of the politics and practices that determine workers' health and safety experiences in a period

of intense change and restructuring of work under the influence of the neoliberal precepts he seeks to understand. He presents a nuanced and sustained sociological analysis informed and underpinned by an original theoretical construction that brings together insights from labour process theory, social field theory, risk theory, and governance theory to address the conflict of ideas underlying questions of power and control at work. He juxtaposes the struggle for control over the labour process in managing risks with the rise of safety management during a period of change and how this played out in Canadian regulatory contexts behind the emergence of the IRS. He uses the same theoretical construct to discuss why managers and workers continue to accept and take risks to their health and safety as part of their employment relationships and roles, despite the development of safety management systems that have become emblematic of larger enterprises in most sectors.

The book is structured into two parts, the first of which presents the theoretical framework that informs its analysis, while the second is based on the extensive set of qualitative and quantitative empirical investigations into health and safety practice in mining, agriculture, and automotive parts manufacturing, undertaken by Hall and his colleagues between 1985 and 2013. A final chapter draws together the conclusions from this analysis and explores their implications, especially for workers, activists, and their advocates, in turning the limitations and contradictions of neoliberal systems of governance to their advantage.

The theoretical part of the book elaborates a framework for the categorization and analysis of the different kinds of risk subjectivities that Hall believes to underlie worker consent and resistance to work-related-based risks. At the risk of considerably oversimplifying his

argument, it understands consent, compliance, and resistance as social and political outcomes of ongoing relations among actors with overlapping but individual habitus. Following Bourdieu, he suggests this habitus to be itself constructed from experience of work as a politically structured environment, both in the present and historical contexts. Referring frequently to both Bourdieu and labour process theorists, such as Michael Burawoy, Hall's analytical frames further attempt to integrate control and power relations into their explanations, as well as the role of structural and organizational change and the transformation of the labour process. Without ignoring wider cultural, time, and gender-related influences, he suggests ways in which subjectivity, individual practices, and labour processes may all be linked to managerial restructuring. He shows how consent, compliance, and resistance to work-related risks can be seen to be grounded in workers' knowledge, perceptions, beliefs, and their understanding of their interest and control over them in the context of concrete social relations in production. Drawing on the literature as well as on experiences in the three sectors studied in Part 2 of the book, he further shows how these subjectivities and the politics accompanying them may develop in day-to-day practices, discourses, and interactions. Thus, providing a further element of the theoretical basis for detailed exploration of the links between them and the associated politics of consent or resistance in relation to risk in the restructuring of work that occurred in the three sectors that are the focus of Part 2 of the book.

As it should be apparent by now, a review of this length cannot do justice to the complexity and detail of the analysis and discussion of the experiences studied in the six chapters of Part 2. Devoting two chapters to each of the three sectors, it explores in considerable detail how the subjectivities of consent and resistance play out in relation to the management of change. In mining, for example, Chapter 4 shows how business concerns in nickel mining prompted corporate efforts to transform mining operations, which pressed management to achieve greater control over production while at the same time seeking greater flexibility and discipline from workers, thus impacting on miners' direct control and negotiating power in relation to several key OSH risks. In Chapter 5, the discussion of the management of change in supervisory, human resources, labour relations, health, and safety discourse and practice points to the ways in which management sought to re-establish consent within restructured workplaces through exploiting greater employment insecurity and how restructuring helped extend its control over workers in these situations, while the role of the state and trade unions contributed to both consent and resistance, by mediating and moderating changes in both worker and management control and power. The chapters further point out the strong link between economic performance and OSH goals that was extolled in the corporate rhetoric and the further link between this and the policies of the neoliberal state, which together helped promote the corporate capture of the agenda of the IRS.

Chapters 6 and 7 explore similar issues of risk, power, and health and safety arrangements during the restructuring of an industry in the context of the neoliberal political economy of recent decades, but in the very different setting of agriculture and among farmers and their workers – a scenario with very different features to that of the large enterprises and employment relations that dominate the other two sectors that are the focus of the book. Hall explains that his express purpose in focusing on farmers is to explore the "... evidentiary basis for arguing

that labour-process transformation and shifts in broader neoliberal cultural discourses on risk and production were cutting across industries, business types, and class positions." In short, in the wealth of detail presented on health and safety, risk, labour process, and change in farm-working in these two chapters, he finds much to support this thesis, indicating that the farmers he studied made risk-related decisions in many of the same ways as did both mine managers and miners, based on similar restructuring and cultural rationales and related in comparable ways to the restructuring of the agricultural labour process and the industry, and that the effects of neoliberal managerialism and the audit culture it promotes were further significant influences on how health and safety were understood and managed at the production level.

In the final two chapters of empirical evidence analysed in the book, before he reaches the conclusions I have already outlined, the auto-parts manufacturing industry provides further corroboration of Hall's thesis. Here, in a more conventional industrial setting, he is able to explore "the role of worker participation in mediating the politics of health and safety within the contexts of lean production and performance-based management." The analysis finds that even in unionised firms, while mechanisms for worker involvement might be linked to reducing industrial conflict, they have only a weak association with mediating or moderating the health and safety effects of production strategies. The reorganization of work and the use of corporate worker involvement schemes often combine to alter worker subjectivities and politics, leading to consent in relation to risk-taking. Nevertheless, the substantial variation of this experience indicated that, in some circumstances, workers and their representatives were not as disempowered

by their neoliberal contexts as might be assumed, and some still found ways to exercise influence on OSH even within highly automated or lean production managerial regimes. Also, while the state policies on IRS and corporate policies on worker involvement may mutually favour certain kinds of "participation", they nevertheless could sometimes be channelled into forms of participative discourse on OSH that "paradoxically afforded workers and workers' representatives some room in which they could achieve and negotiate measures if influence over working conditions might lead to gains for workers." In such circumstances, the efforts of representatives could lead to meaningful prevention outcomes.

In short, I found this book to offer a sustained and sophisticated analysis of many of the vexed questions, paradoxes, and contradictions that have been evident in the industrial relations of work health and safety in advanced market economies in the past fifty years. Although based on the Canadian experience, much of its analysis and discussion has a wider application in advanced market economies in which political and structural changes have occurred, similar to those the author identifies as underlying determinants of the research findings discussed in the book. It, therefore, makes an important contribution to the international literature, particularly in relation to the conditions that support or constrain the autonomy and effectiveness of workers' voices and their capacity to influence the ways in which workers' health and safety are determined amid the changing organization and control of work under neoliberalism. In this respect, it represents a significant contribution to both the industrial relations and occupational safety and health literature, and it deserves to be read and understood by researchers, practitioners, and policymakers in both disciplines. Its strength lies in its details

and in the theoretical framing of its argument, as well as its willingness to investigate, both empirically and theoretically, the means with which resistance can be effective in addressing the contradictions of the neoliberal project and its political support for corporate accumulation at the expense of workers' safety and health.

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Katie Hindmarch-Watson,
Serving a Wired World: London's Telecommunications Workers and the Making of an Information Capital
(Oakland: University of California Press, 2020)

Among the thousands who took part in the public celebrations of Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee in 1897 was a hand-picked corps of 100 teenage boys. Dressed in smart uniforms signifying they were in Her Majesty's service, carrying carbines on their shoulders, and marching in the close-order drill on the massive Horse Guards Parade, they looked like well-trained military cadets.

They were not. They were telegraph delivery boys, and they worked for the post office. Less than ten years earlier, in 1889, telegraph boys had attracted attention of a different sort. Police discovered that some of them were being given money for sex at a gay brothel on Cleveland Street frequented by aristocrats, including a personal assistant to the Prince of Wales. The ensuing scandal presented the boys as victims of corrupt aristocrats, but it also had the effect of cementing them in the 19th-century imagination as objects of homoerotic desire.

The General Post Office's (GPO) approach to managing the telegraph boys is one of the most fascinating aspects of Katie Hindmarch-Watson's 2020 book on Victorian-era British communications

workers. Covering the years between the nationalization of the telegraph in 1870 and the middle of World War I, and focusing mainly on telegraphy, the book explores how the prejudices and fears at the heart of Victorian society were reflected and refracted in the division of labour in the nascent telecommunications system.

Gender and class were the most significant fault lines in the telecommunications workforce, but others were at play too: rural versus urban; technical work versus work that relied on affect; the need for private communication versus the demands of communication over a public utility; age versus experience.

Hindmarch-Watson draws on a wide range of sources, but most heavily on the archives of BT (formerly British Telecom) and the Postal Museum (formerly the British Postal Museum and Archive). The book reflects the sources. It pays more attention to how the GPO managed its workforce than how its workforce resisted – or adapted to – being managed. It addresses trade unionization, but occasionally and sometimes even obliquely. Rather, her goal is to provide what she calls a "bodied labor" history, by which she means "the active negotiations between workers and the powers they are subject to." (4) Those powers range from the personal to the political, cultural, social, sexual, economic, and, of course, the bureaucratic.

A goodly number of the bodies she studied were female, and Hindmarch-Watson describes in detail the contested position women held in the telegraph and telephone systems. When the telegraph was nationalized, the men who had been working for private companies hoped they would become government clerks – civil servants with all the perks that went along with that position. The men saw the growing number of women telegraphers the GPO hired as getting in the way of that ambition. They also saw women as objects