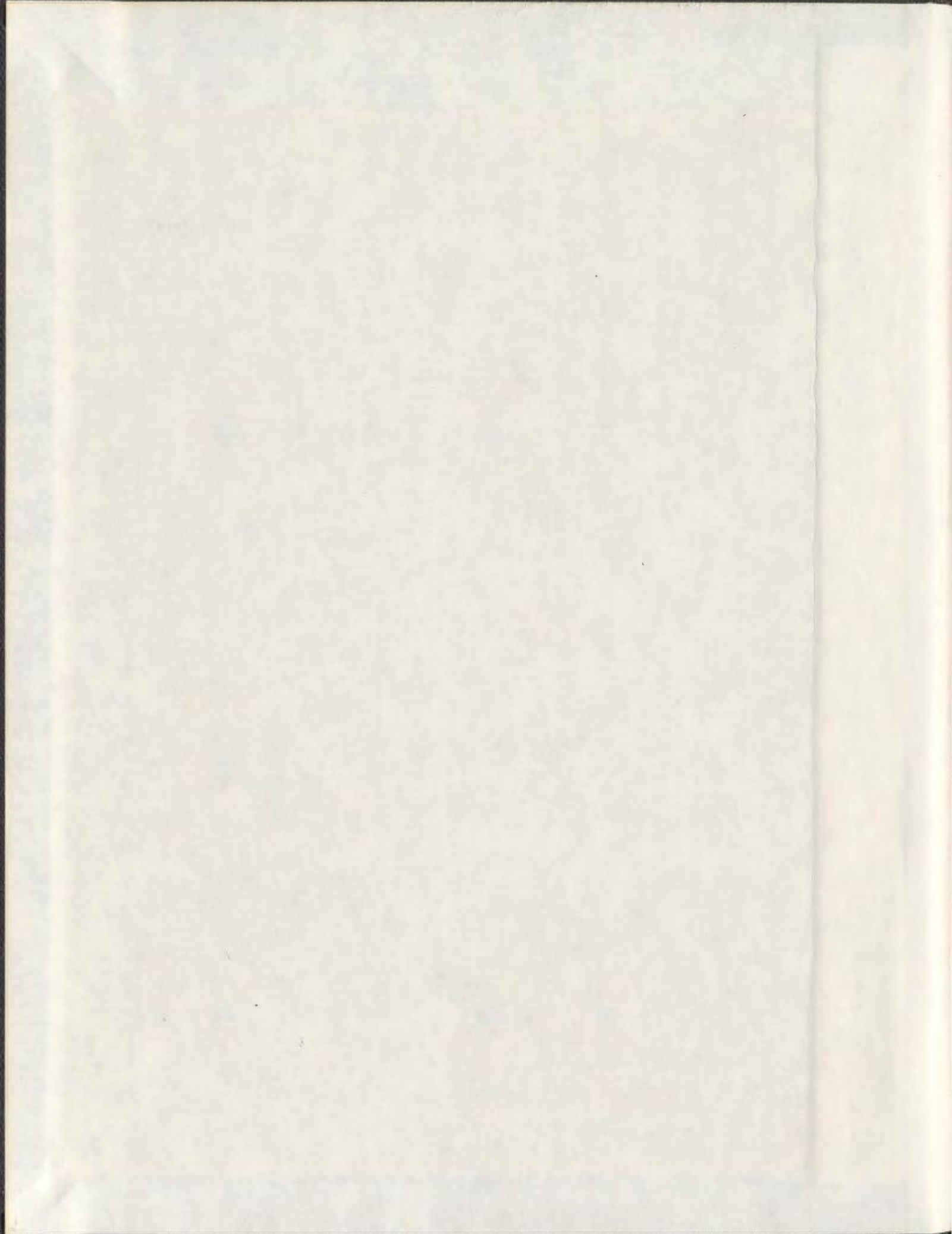


THE 'OTHER' PROFESSORS: JOB INSECURITY,
HEALTH AND COPING STRATEGIES AMONG
CONTRACTUAL UNIVERSITY TEACHERS

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**The 'Other' Professors: Job Insecurity, Health and Coping Strategies
among Contractual University Teachers**

by

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ABSTRACT

Highly educated “adjunct”, “sessional”, or “contractual” teachers are temporarily employed throughout Canadian universities to rationalize faculty hiring for cost-effectiveness. They are job insecure. This research centers on the job insecurity of a convenience sample of 32 contractual teachers at a Canadian university during 2008. A combination of qualitative and quantitative research instruments was used in this mixed methods study to explore how, and to what extent, contractual university teaching was job insecure; whether or not this job insecurity was a social determinant of participants’ health; and how participants coped with any negative effects of job insecurity on their health.

Participants expressed varying levels of job insecurity in their interview narratives of work history and experience. They identified three main sources of job insecurity: administrative hiring practices, the terms of their financial compensation, and their status and marginalization in the academic hierarchy. These sources of job insecurity challenged their emotional and to a lesser extent physical health in various ways. Most participants drew on individual strategies to cope with these challenges. They concluded their semi-structured interviews with evaluations of the university’s health related programs.

The interview data were triangulated with participants’ demographic information, task diary entries, and results on one or two *SF-12v.2*® *Health Surveys*. In addition to showing how job insecurity was a social determinant of participants’ health, the findings address the issues of job insecurity among professional workers, the individualization of

health risks and coping strategies, and the adequacy of employer sponsored “wellness” programs for contractual employees.

Overall, this mixed methods study provides a nuanced and valid understanding of the realities of contractual work for this highly educated sample of university teachers. It adds a unique case to our broader knowledge of job insecurity and health.

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Table of Contents

The ‘Other’ Professors: Job Insecurity, Health and Coping Strategies among Contractual University Teachers	i
ABSTRACT	ii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	iv
Table of Contents	v
List of Tables	viii
List of Figures	ix
Chapter One : Job Insecurity and Health among Contractual University Teachers	1
1.a The Research Context	2
1.b Significance and Potential Contributions of the Research.....	8
1.c Methods.....	10
1.d Overview.....	11
Chapter Two : The Foundation: Definitions, Concepts and Theories in the Literature ...	13
2.a The Context: Work Restructuring, Rationalized Hiring and Definitions of Job Insecurity.....	15
2.b The Structuring and Restructuring of Academic Professional Work	22
2.b.i Professionalization.....	22
2.b.ii Theories of academic capitalism and deprofessionalization	25
2.b.iii The feminization of work	33
2.c The Health Effects of Work Restructuring and Job Insecurity	38
2.c.i Early job strain research.....	40
2.c.ii Job insecurity as an OH issue	43
2.c.iii Job insecurity and the psychosocial work environment	47
2.c.iv Gender and health outcomes associated with job insecurity.....	50
2.d Coping with the Health Effects of Job Insecurity	53
2.e Summary and Conceptual Framework.....	61
Chapter Three : Methodology	66
3.a The Research Design.....	66
3.b Research Methods.....	69
3.c The Research Process.....	73
3.c.i Recruitment.....	73
3.c.ii Collecting the data	78
3.c.iii Working with the data.....	82
3.d Conclusion	89
Chapter Four: Sources of Job Insecurity among Contractual University Teachers.....	92
4.a The Sample.....	92
4.b Source 1: Getting the Job: The Old Way and the New.....	98

4.c Source 2: Money	113
4.d Source 3: Negotiating Contractual Status in the Academic Hierarchy	123
4.d.i Marginalization in the academic hierarchy.....	123
4.d.ii Marginalization in departmental and committee work.....	128
4.d.iii Symbolic marginalization in office space and location.....	131
4.d.iv Teaching and self-made security	136
4.e Conclusion.....	150
Chapter Five: Stresses and Strains: Job Insecurity and the Health of Contractual University Teachers	
5.a Defining and measuring health	152
5.a.i Participants' definitions of health	153
5.a.ii Participants' self-reports of health	156
5.a.iii General results from the SF-12v.2® Health Survey.....	158
5.a.iv Gender (sex) distributions in the SF-12v.2® Health Survey scores	163
5.a.v Age distributions in the <i>SF-12v.2® Health Survey</i> scores.....	167
5.a.vi Potential influences of other variables	169
5.b Challenges to Physical Health from Contractual Teaching	170
5.c Challenges to Emotional Health from Contractual Teaching	173
5.d The Intersection of Job Strain, Job Insecurity and Health.....	176
5.e Conclusion.....	189
Chapter Six: Managing Job Insecurity and its Health Outcomes	
6.a Individual Coping Strategies Using an Internal Locus of Control.....	192
6.b Coping Strategies Drawing on an External Locus of Control	203
6.b.i Collegiality and departmental support.....	203
6.b.ii Access to health benefits and programs.....	205
6.b.iii Workplace health programs.....	210
6.b.iv The Employees' Assistance Program	213
6.c Conclusion.....	215
Chapter Seven: Concluding Thoughts and Recommendations	
7.a Question 1: How and To What Extent is Contractual University Teaching Job Insecure?	218
7.b Question 2: How is Job Insecurity Related to ARU Contractuals' Health?	226
7.c Question 3: How did Participants Cope with the Challenges to Health from Job Insecurity?.....	231
7.d. Recommendations for Workplace Changes.....	236
7.e Recommendations for Future Research	239
Bibliography	245
Appendix 1: Research instruments	273
Appendix 1-A: Initial email / internal mail / advertisement request for respondents..	273
Appendix 1-B: Revised email / internal mail / advertisement request for respondents	274
Appendix 1-C-i: Consent form: 1st stage	275

Appendix 1-C-ii: Consent form, 2nd stage.....	277
Appendix 1-D: SF-12v.2® Health Survey.....	280
Appendix 1-E: Demographic survey	284
Appendix 1-F: Task diaries.....	285
Appendix 1-G: Guidelines for the semi-structured interview.....	288

List of Tables

Table 1: A comparison of terms relating to job insecurity.....	19
Table 2: The two stages of the study.....	79
Table 3: Selected variables cross-tabulated with level of job insecurity.....	97
Table 4: Physical health issues described by interviewees, n=27.....	170
Table 5: Emotional health issues described by interviewees, n=27.....	174

List of Figures

Figure 1: Self-reported health in the interview transcripts, n= 17 women, 10 men	157
Figure 2: <i>SF-12v.2® Health Survey</i> , 1st stage.....	160
Figure 3: Level of insecurity and MCS scores, n=32	162
Figure 4: <i>SF-12v.2® Health Survey</i> , comparison by gender	164
Figure 5: Changes in mental health over the semester	167
Figure 6: <i>SF-12v.2® Health Survey</i> comparison by age	168
Figure 7: Percentage of <i>job strained</i> and <i>not job strained</i> by category of job insecurity	185
Figure 8: Variation from MH norms, cross-tabulated with job strain	187
Figure 9: Participants' variations from the MH norms, cross-tabulated with level of job insecurity.....	188

Chapter One : Job Insecurity and Health among Contractual University Teachers

Few would dispute the idea that job insecurity threatens health or that education contributes to good health. What happens, then, when highly educated workers like contractual university teachers become job insecure? How is their health affected by their job insecurity? This dissertation reports on a mixed methods study of a convenience sample of 32 contractually hired teachers at one Canadian university in 2008. The first focus is on the sources of job insecurity in participants' academic workplaces. The second is on the challenges to health caused by job insecurity and the third is on participants' coping strategies for dealing with job insecurity and its effects on health.

My own experience of job insecurity initially led me to this qualitative research. When I began the PhD program, I had been a contractual teacher for fifteen years and was still feeling very uncertain as to whether or not I would be working in the following semester. Even though many faculty members of my department supported me as a contractual and lobbied for adequate pay for contractual teachers, the uncertainty of being hired on limited contracts prevailed. As the most flexible of university teachers, contractals are still the easiest to let go under conditions of budgetary restraint.

Over my long career as a contractual university teacher, I found it increasingly stressful to wait for the annual confirmation of my next contract. After about six years of teaching contractually, I began to attribute emerging health issues to my job insecurity, but wondered if I was being too sensitive or even obsessive. After all, contractual

university teachers did not fit the common perception of a precarious worker as someone with low education, low income, and few opportunities. Why, then, was I experiencing symptoms that research had uncovered among job insecure workers with less education, such as emotional stress, anxiety, and repetitive strain injuries (Quinlan, Mayhew and Boyle, 2001; Vosko, 2000)? Given my higher education, was it job insecurity or just low self-confidence that created these problems? And was I alone in this? When I started the course work for my PhD in 2003, few studies had been completed on the occupational health effects of job insecurity for highly educated workers.

From a sociological perspective, the decision to study job insecurity as a social determinant of health began with my private troubles, but it also speaks to a wider public issue (Mills, 1959), as demonstrated by the 32 participants in this study. We sociologists seldom study ourselves and our work conditions and those of us who are employed as teachers and researchers in universities are far from the most disadvantaged of workers. We do, however, still experience health-related problems when our jobs are insecure. Naming and analyzing these problems will contribute to our overall knowledge of job insecurity in the academic workplace and its consequences for health.

On a scholarly level, this study contributes to the sociological and occupational health research on precarious work among professional and skilled workers with higher levels of education.

1.a The Research Context

This research is based on a mixed methods study of a convenience sample of 32 contractually hired teachers at a Canadian university in 2008. The university is hereafter

referred to as “A Regional University” (ARU). It was the only one in the region. For the convenience sample, participants self-selected as volunteers to an advertised request or were approached because of their accessibility. They all relied on contractual university teaching as their primary source of income. During the study, participants completed four research instruments and described the sources of job insecurity, its effects on their health, and how they coped. I later assessed their qualitative narratives in the interviews for their levels of job insecurity and triangulated these results with factors related to their health and coping strategies. In the final analysis, I evaluated the concept of job insecurity and how it related to the theories of the deprofessionalization and feminization of university teaching work and the individualization of health risk.

Some terms need to be defined briefly at the outset of this study. *Occupational health* (OH) refers to the health outcomes of work and working conditions. The focus in this study is on the psychosocial aspects of work, particularly job insecurity and job strain, rather than the traditional OH concerns with workers’ ergonomic postures and exposures to biological and chemical substances in the workplace. *Job strain* is defined by Karasek and Theorell (1990) as a combination of workers’ low control and high task demands at work, along with low support in the workplace. *Job insecurity* was harder to define for this thesis, as discussed in Chapter Two. Eventually it was defined in terms of both the concrete conditions of temporary work and the perceptions of precariousness, with “no ongoing presumption of permanency or long-term tenure” (Louie et al., 2006, 466).

This study was conducted in the wider context of increasing job insecurity with the neoliberal restructuring of work. Employers *rationalize* hiring to be more cost

effective by cutting the number of permanent secure jobs and hiring more workers on a temporary basis (Harvey, 2005; Lewchuk, de Wolff, King and Polyani, 2006; Vosko, 2006). Replacement jobs are contractual or contingent on employers' needs. They are deemed more flexible because workers can be hired or laid off as demand requires and employers typically pay less in overall labour costs. Temporary, contingency, or contractual hiring produces greater job insecurity and uncertainty over future hiring for the workers affected (Bauman, 2000; Beck, 1999) and a generalized air of alienation and loss of self-respect, even hope, among all workers (Bourdieu, 1998; Sennett, 1998, 2006).

Contingency hiring has long been normalized among non-unionized workers in the low income clerical sectors of the labour market where women predominate and for newer entrants to the labour force, agricultural labourers, and low-skilled service workers (Vosko, MacDonald and Campbell, 2009). However, short-term contract work is now a standard hiring practice at all levels of service and production. This includes highly unionized and professionalized workplaces such as the provincial and federal civil services in Canada (Rinehart, 2006; Scott, 2004; Statistics Canada, 2005b, 2005c).

In universities across Canada, contractual teaching now supplements the work of tenure track and tenured faculty. Estimates suggest that the proportion of contractual teaching faculty in Canadian and American universities had risen from 30% in 1998 to more than 50% by 2010 (Rhoades, 1998; Stewart, 2010; Turk, 2008). In these early years of the twenty-first century, university administrations are relying on contractual hiring to meet budget shortfalls. With only limited temporary contracts and no long term commitment from the employer, contractual teachers are job insecure. According to Slaughter and Rhoades (2004), this is part of *academic capitalism* where university

administrations strive to meet capitalist as well as academic standards. For example, cost-cutting strategies are introduced into hiring budgets, leading to a *rationalization* of hiring into contractual positions that are easily discontinued when no longer profitable. These positions are often truncated versions of the permanent jobs they are replacing. In academic capitalism, students are framed as consumers and their evaluations of courses become performance audits of teachers (Donoghue, 2008; Rhoades, 1998; Slaughter and Rhoades, 2004).

Other changes in the Canadian academic labour market contribute to an overall sense of job insecurity. The number of academic positions available to new PhD graduates is declining according to Tamburri (2010), who cited census data indicating that 31% of Canadians with PhDs were university professors in 2001, down from 36% in 1986. By 2008, earlier predictions of mass retirements among Canadian faculty did not fully materialize. Kershaw (2009) noted that “every [Canadian] university contacted [in 2009] ... is experiencing the phenomenon of delayed retirements.” Estimates from academics are that from one third to more than one half of tenured faculty who reach age 65 are electing to continue working since a 2006 Supreme Court decision prohibited mandatory retirement (Canadian Association of University Teachers (CAUT), 2009/2010). In Canadian universities, this trend is slowing faculty renewal (Kershaw, 2009). It mirrors a larger trend of delayed retirement throughout Canada, which Carrière and Galarneau (2011) attribute to the increase in life expectancy after retirement.

A history of regional economic disparity and high unemployment is part of the context of this study. Well-paying jobs are in short supply in the region, and ARU is the only university offering contract work within commuting distance. A generalized air of

insecurity might affect the health and coping strategies of contractual teachers in ways other than would be predicted. For example, highly educated contractual teachers may be thought privileged in comparison to those around them because they have a university faculty position, albeit one that is insecure. They may feel they cannot complain.

Job insecurity was institutionalized in the conditions of contractual university teaching work at “A Regional University” (ARU) prior to 2008. Participants in this study were offered either *per-term* or *per-course* contracts. Per-term contractals taught a full course load of three or four courses per semester for a limited term of one, two, or more semesters, with no research or administrative duties. They were paid on a reasonable scale according to experience and length of contract. As members of the faculty association and *while employed*, they enjoyed periodic increases in pay and benefits. Nevertheless, their salaries were capped at less than the starting salary for tenure track professors and if hired continuously over a full year, they would teach almost twice as many courses. Per-term contractals had a qualified seniority that appeared to be easily discarded under certain circumstances (discussed in Chapter Four).

Per-course contractals at ARU had recently unionized as a separate bargaining unit but did not yet have a collective bargaining agreement with the ARU administration in 2008. Per-course contractals were the lowest paid teachers at ARU in 2008 and among the lowest paid sessional teachers in Canada at the time (CAUT, 2009). They were paid a set fee per course and could only teach one or two courses per semester. They had no health or pension benefits or seniority status. Contractals who taught only distance education courses were paid per student. They, too, did not qualify for benefits, pensions or seniority status. They are called per-course contractals in this thesis.

In universities across Canada, both per-course and per-term contractuels are usually assigned classes with higher enrolments but if the number of students enrolled is insufficient to cover the costs of delivering a course, the contract to teach it can easily be cancelled (Bauder, 2006; Berry, 2005; Herman, 2005; Junor, 2004; M.D. Parsons, 2005). This displaces the institutional risk of offering a course from the university to the individual contractual hire. For some contractuels, job insecurity lasts for extended periods of time.

In occupational health studies, the rationalization of hiring to be more cost-effective for employers, combined with different labour and health standards for permanent and temporary personnel, has been associated with deteriorating occupational health outcomes among service, clerical, and blue collar workers. Rationalized hiring can lead to intensified labour practices, flexible schedules, low job autonomy, low personal control, job strain from high demands, and low rewards. These are correlated with higher levels of repetitive strain injuries, fatigue, backaches, muscular pains, absenteeism, stress, and job dissatisfaction (Louie et al., 2006; Malenfant, Larue and Vezina, 2007; Menendez, Benach, Muntaner, Amable, O'Campo, 2007; Quinlan et al., 2001).

Few occupational health studies have explored the health effects of rationalized hiring among highly educated professional workers such as consultants, university professors, college instructors, and substitute teachers in the grade school system. Such workers are presumed to have secure employment and be in good health because of their educational and income advantages.

Overall, researchers have found that education is positively correlated with health (Mirowsky and Ross, 2008, 2007, 2005, 2003; Ross and Wu, 1995) and occupational

health effects differ by gender in many workplaces (Messing, 2006, 1998; Vosko 2000). However, I hypothesize that job insecurity is a social determinant of occupational health and its health risks are individualized. They can be experienced by any contractual worker regardless of gender or education.

In this dissertation, I address the following questions:

1. How, and to what extent, is contractual university teaching job insecure?
2. How is job insecurity related to participants' health? Does this vary by their social and demographic locations?
3. How do participants cope with the challenges to health posed by their insecure contractual work? To what extent do they find assistance in coping from the university's benefits and programs related to health?

1.b Significance and Potential Contributions of the Research

This study addresses gaps in both the sociological and occupational health literatures. Existing occupational health research on temporary jobs has concentrated on lower status workers, including part-time, temporary and self-employed piece workers in food processing, the retail and food service industries, agriculture, and call centers (e.g. Clement and Shalla, 2010; Lewchuk et al., 2008; Neis, Grzetic and Pidgeon, 2001; Vosko, 2000; Zeytinoglu, 2003; Zeytinoglu, Seaton, Lillevik and Moruz, 2005). With the exception of research on contractual nurses (e.g. Skillen, 1995), fewer studies look at more highly educated contractual workers in Canada.

This relates to the growing body of literature in the sociology of work on the polarization between “good” jobs and “bad” jobs (e.g. Duffy, Glenday and Pupo, 1997;

Kalleberg, 2013). With neoliberal restructuring, job security is diminishing throughout the labour force. This supposedly has fewer negative effects for highly educated and professional workers who have more autonomy and opportunities than those with less education or social capital (Hirsch and Naquin, 2001; Kalleberg, 2000, 2001, 2007; Lash, 1994). Instead, this study finds that even highly educated workers are in precarious situations when relying on temporary contracts.

Most of the sociological research on contractual postsecondary teachers in Canada and elsewhere has relied on quantitative surveys (Canadian Association of University Teachers (CAUT), 2004-2010), but some research narratives articulate the conditions of job insecurity or its perceived impact on tenure and academic freedom (Berry, 2005; Donoghue, 2008; Enke, 1999; Jarvis, 2001; Rajagopal, 2002; Slaughter and Rhoades, 2004). Few case studies have analysed the health challenges raised by job insecurity from the perspectives of contractual university teachers themselves.

Similarly, occupational health studies are frequently quantitative and concentrate on measurable factors such as job strain or ergonomic pressures more so than the psychosocial aspects of job insecurity (D'Souza, Strazdins, Lim, Broom and Rodgers, 2003; Messing, 1998; Quinlan et al., 2001; Strazdins, D'Souza, Lim, Broom and Rodgers, 2004). Qualitative details from observations, semi-structured interviews and participants' narratives can enhance our understanding of such realities (Geertz, 1973; Tope, Chamberlain, Crowley and Hodson, 2005). My qualitative study is designed to this end.

1.c Methods

This study employs a mixed methods approach with a qualitative focus. It draws on the findings of four research instruments administered to a convenience sample of 32 respondent/participants whose primary source of income in 2008 was contract teaching at ARU. These four research instruments include: a quantitative *SF-12v.2® Health Survey* (Appendix 1-D); a demographic questionnaire (Appendix 1-E); a task diary that participants filled out at least once and, in some cases, twice at different points of the semester (Appendix 1-F); and a semi-structured audio-taped interview at the end of the semester. The interviews frequently expanded into long narratives and discussions of job insecurity and its challenges to health (Appendix 1-G). This study is also informed by my own experiences and observations as a contractual university teacher between 1988 and 2008 (L. Parsons, 2006) and by data collected in interviews with representatives of the faculty association and the per-course contractuall's union. Throughout the thesis and in the interests of data integrity, I carefully distinguish participants' comments from my own observations and those of other stakeholders.

During the research for this mixed methods study, I drew on elements of four ethnographic methods, including grounded theory, institutional ethnography, new ethnography and Burawoy's (1998, p. 5, 2009) extended case study method. For Burawoy, researchers must "'extend out' from the field" and explore how participants' experiences reflect larger social realities. This involves "rooting ourselves in theory that guides our dialogue with participants" (p. 5). My conceptual framework is strongly influenced by Bourdieu's (1988, 1994) concepts of academic and social capital and by

Giddens' (1995b) theory of structuration, where actions and experiences are guided by both social structure and individual agency. For example, when looking at the intersection of participants' job insecurity and health, I weighed their perceptions of choosing the work because of the advantages it offered them against the constraints they described in their work as contractual teachers. I maintain a feminist sensibility and remain open to discovering how gender is implicated in the relationship between job insecurity and health.

By definition, this mixed methods study is a snapshot of one workplace at one time, so inferences cannot be drawn. While quantitative research using larger samples would provide more confidence in correlating the variables, qualitative research offers nuanced data with the depth required for a valid understanding of the reality of working contractually for these participants. This study is exploratory and can become a foundation for future research.

1.d Overview

The following chapters follow the standard order prescribed for dissertations. Chapter Two reviews the literature and theoretical perspectives related to job insecurity and health. It is divided into three sections. The first is an overview of the research on work restructuring in general and more specifically on job insecurity and the rationalization of hiring in Canadian university workplaces. The second section reviews existing research related to the health effects of job insecurity. Lastly, the third section examines how coping strategies for dealing with such health effects are, in turn, affected

by job insecurity. Chapter Three sets out the methodology for the project and ends with a description of the sample.

The next three chapters then present the qualitative and quantitative findings of the study. Chapter Four reviews the most commonly cited sources of job insecurity among the sample: the hiring process, financial concerns, and the status of contractual teachers in the academic hierarchy. The influences of gender are deliberated throughout the dissertation, rather than in a separate section. Chapter Five explores the health outcomes of job insecurity through participants' definitions, measures, and observations. Chapter Six describes participants' strategies for coping with the job insecurity of contractual teaching and its health effects. It concludes with participants' assessments of the benefits and workplace programs offered to them to assist with health-related issues.

In the concluding Chapter Seven, I discuss how the findings substantiate or refute relevant theories and literature. I conclude with recommendations for change and for future research based on my analysis and on participants' narratives.

Chapter Two : The Foundation: Definitions, Concepts and Theories in the Literature

To lay observers, university teaching appears to be the most secure of jobs. All faculty are assumed to be tenured and to enjoy academic freedom, superior pay and the protections and benefits of what Harvey (1990) calls *privileged* employment. However, the same processes of neoliberal work restructuring happening in other economic sectors are also occurring within the university (Aronowitz, 1997, 2004; Hicks, 1995). Under work restructuring, hiring is rationalized so that more and more faculty are job insecure in that they are employed on temporary short-term contracts. This research focuses on whether or not such job insecurity affects health among highly educated contractual university teachers.

Social determinants like employment, education, and income are all positively related to health in other studies (Raphael, 2010). What happens when job insecurity combines with high education and expectations of higher status and income? Does it undermine the positive effects of these other social determinants? Or do they mediate the negative health effects of job insecurity? This study will look specifically at: 1) how highly educated contractual university teachers experience job insecurity; 2) whether or not, and how, this affects their health; and 3) how they cope with the health effects of job insecurity. This chapter reviews existing research related to these issues.

Substantial quantitative research explores the context of work restructuring and rationalized hiring in Canadian workplaces, and a growing number of survey-based studies have been conducted in university workplaces. Fewer qualitative studies detail the

rationalization of academic professorial work in Canada or the occupational health effects of the ensuing job insecurity for contractual teachers in an academic hierarchy. This mixed methods study I am doing is designed to address this gap. In the review, Canadian research findings are supplemented by an exploration of studies conducted in the U.S., the U.K., Australia and Europe. While these studies are not easily comparable because of the unique social and policy related contexts of academic work in each country, they do offer useful concepts for analysis in this dissertation.

The first section of this chapter reviews the general literature on work restructuring, the rationalization of hiring, and definitions of job insecurity. It goes on to outline three theories relevant to academic professorial work: theories of professionalization, deprofessionalization, and feminization of academic faculty work.

The second section summarizes research findings on the overall health outcomes of a climate of uncertainty created by work restructuring and the rationalization of hiring. It goes on to look at research on the individual health effects of job strain, job insecurity, and the psychosocial work environment. It continues with a discussion of literature on how gender intersects with job insecurity and health. The concluding section reviews research on perceptions of risk, the individualization of risk, and strategies for coping with the health effects of job insecurity. These strategies can have an internal locus of control, such as the use of psychosocial resources, or an external locus of control, like workplace health programs and benefits for contractual workers. Some could include a combination of the two.

Together, the literature in these three sections forms the foundation for my study of job insecurity for contractual university teachers and its occupational health effects.

2.a The Context: Work Restructuring, Rationalized Hiring and Definitions of Job Insecurity

Job insecurity is an endemic feature of work in Canada in these early decades of the 21st century. It extends throughout the labour force to affect even seemingly secure professional workers. Though insecurity appears to be part of a recent trend, security at work was really only realized by a significant fraction of the labour force in the middle of the 20th century in Western developed countries. The following is a brief overview of the national and temporal contexts of the development of job insecurity.

Work has been redefined and restructured over the course of the 20th century in North America with neoliberal changes in administrative ideologies (Harvey, 1990, 2005; Rinehart, 2006; Vosko, 2006). In the early decades of the 20th century, the principles of unionization and the eight hour shift were strengthened in response to assembly line production in Henry Ford's car manufacturing plants. This eventually led to the ideal (though not always the reality) of a *standard employment relationship* (SER) for all working men after World War II. The SER consisted of full-time permanent work, with a progressive career biography and union- or market-negotiated benefits (Vosko, 2006, 2010; Vosko, et al., 2009). It was first realized in the automotive and manufacturing industries and then later by highly educated workers in the public sector who unionized between the Second World War and the 1970s (Beck, 2000; Rinehart, 2006). Seasonal and temporary jobs, often held by women, did not (and were not expected to) change to SER work (Vosko, et al., 2009)

Economic downturns, computer automation, and the breakdown of Fordist production processes in an increasingly globalized market since the mid-1970s are some

of the neoliberal restructuring processes that have undermined the SER. In Canadian workplaces, SER jobs with security and union protections have been undermined by the corporate and state responses to these processes. These responses involve outsourcing jobs, downsizing labour forces, and rationalizing hiring and job tasks in order to achieve flexibility and increase cost-effectiveness. Temporary jobs have replaced some SER jobs with many workers now hired, scheduled, laid off, and rehired according to employers' needs (Rinehart, 2006; Vosko et al., 2009). In neoliberal discourse, everyone is assumed to benefit from the increased competition, profits, and performance incentives induced by such rationalized hiring (Harvey, 1990; Sennett, 1998).

Rationalized hiring on a temporary or contractual basis is cost-effective for many employers because of limited contracts, lower labour benefits and costs, and the potential for intensifying work tasks (Beck, 2000; Kalleberg 2000, 2001, 2007). Guided by neoliberal ideology, the employers' responsibility to provide good SER jobs is deemed archaic (Harvey, 2005). Employers no longer need to schedule regular shifts or stay in one locale and offer full-time work in exchange for access to local resources. They are freed from these responsibilities for some (if not all) of their employees (Harvey, 1990; Lowe, 2000; Sennett, 1998). According to Harvey (1990), one consequence of neoliberalism is that labour is divided into two or more tiers. Core (SER) workers are judged the more essential and enjoy privileged employment and better treatment from management. Peripheral workers have temporary, insecure, and alienating jobs and are easily replaced. Other analysts highlight further contrasts between these groups of workers. For example, some employees experience escalating levels of role overload while others are downsized or laid off, or now fear this will happen because of an overall

climate of insecurity (Duxbury and Higgins, 2009; Rifkin, 1995; Ritzer, 2011). With neoliberal work restructuring and rationalized hiring, a growing proportion of the labour force experiences precarious employment and job insecurity (Bourdieu, 1998; MacEachen, Polzer and Clarke, 2008; Vosko, 2010).

Job insecurity is variously defined in the research in terms of concrete job conditions or perceptions of uncertainty (McDonough, 2000). These variations are evident in both sociology of work and occupational health studies (see Table 1, p. 19). In concrete terms, job insecurity has been operationalized as workers having two or more employers over a two year period or being hired on a casual or seasonal basis or on short, fixed-term contracts according to employer's needs (Hirsch and Naquin, 2001; Kalleberg, 2000; Virtanen, Kivimäki, Elovainio, & Vahtera, 2002). This definition excludes temporary contracts lasting longer than two years and does not include the early 21st century practice of replacing standard full-time jobs with repeated offerings of fixed term contracts. In 1999, more than 50% of Canadian "nonstandard" workers were still in the same type of job two years later (Statistics Canada, 2004). Perception is important here and job insecurity can exist even in situations of sustained employment with the same employer. Affected workers might perceive themselves as job insecure if their contracts are offered successively over time with no guarantee of renewal or if their contractual *status*, even with the same employer, changes frequently. Perceptions of the risk of job loss and uncertainty over future employment were used in occupational health studies by Domenighetti, d'Avanzo, & Brisig (2000) and Pelfrene et al. (2003).

The definition of *job insecurity* used in this analysis incorporates both the concrete conditions of temporary work and perceptions of precariousness, with "no ongoing

presumption of permanency or long-term tenure” (Louie et al., 2006, 466). This combination can be found in occupational health studies that look at aspects of health related to the concrete conditions of rationalized and flexibilized work, such as job strain and reduced levels of control, and to the perceptions of health risk (McDonough, 2000; Quinlan et al., 2001).

I considered using alternate terms for job insecurity such as precarious employment (Vosko, 2006) and employment strain (Lewchuk, de Wolff, and King, 2003) but, in the end, rejected these alternatives. These definitions broadened the focus beyond job insecurity to include an overall climate of uncertainty and work-life spill-over with subsequent health effects. For example, Polanyi, Tompa and Foley (2004) and Lewchuk et al. (2006) define *employment strain* in terms of work scheduling, tasks, location and workload, and uncertainty about many other aspects of life such as control over access to employment, future earnings, and providing for one’s household. In their research, many workers felt employment strain because they were combining part-time jobs. Some participants in this study held more than one job, but the majority did not. Contract teaching was the primary source of income for all participants and no other employers within commuting distance were hiring university teachers. Vosko’s (2006) *precarious employment* concept incorporates job insecurity and best applies to jobs with low wages, low benefits, low entitlements, and high risks of ill health. These definitions are less appropriate for use in this study which focuses on workers with varying types of contracts, wages, and benefits. The intention here is to explore whether or not job insecurity among highly educated workers is a health risk. Incorporating the health risk into the definition undermines this goal.

Scott's (2004) *work-related insecurity* widens the focus even more, to include a climate of uncertainty that is structurally created by the flexibilization of work, increasing levels of nonstandard work, workers' fears of inadequate income, and declining access to work overall. For the respondents in this study, job insecurity has been deepened by a climate of uncertainty and work-related insecurity but, again, the study focus is on the specific experience of job insecurity in relation to contractual university teaching. Because of its broader focus, the concept *work-related insecurity* will only be used when respondents refer to their prospects on the larger labour market. The other terms will be used when discussing the respective author's work. These terms are better suited to quantitative research projects on a larger scale than this one.

The terms related to job insecurity that were considered for this thesis are tabled below.

Table 1: A comparison of terms relating to job insecurity

Sources	Term	Conceptualization
Concrete definitions		
OH studies:		
Virtanen, et al., 2002	Precarious/ contingent / marginal employment	Temporary, casual, part-time, seasonal or fixed term contracts; hiring is contingent on employers' needs or organizational change.
Work studies:		
Hirsch and Naquin, 2001; Kalleberg, 2000; Statistics Canada, 2004	Nonstandard employment / Job insecurity	Having two or more employers or jobs over a two year period.
Perceptual definitions		
OH studies:		
Domenighetti, d'Avanzo, & Brisig, 2000; Pelfrene et al., 2003	Job insecurity	Perceived risk of job loss and uncertainty over future employment.
Combination of concrete and perceptual aspects in the definitions		
OH studies:		
Louie et al., 2006; McDonough, 2000;	Job insecurity	Concrete job loss and precarious access to work, combined with subjective perceptions

Quinlan et al., 2001		of uncertainty, lower employability, competing for contracts.
Structural definitions concerned with work-life spill-overs		
<u>OH studies:</u>		
Polanyi et al., 2004; Lewchuk et al., 2006	Employment strain	Uncertainty of work and in combining jobs: spill over into other aspects of control, household, the future
<u>Work studies:</u>		
Vosko, 2006	Precarious employment	“[F]orms of work characterized by limited social benefits and statutory entitlements, job insecurity, low wages, and high risks of ill health.” p. 11
Scott, 2004	Work-related insecurity	Overall climate of uncertainty

The objective conditions of insecure jobs can include contingency and temporary hiring, split or nonstandard shifts, low status and control in the workplace, and low pay with few or no benefits. Such insecure jobs in Canada increased in proportion, type, and the range of occupations affected in the 1990s (Galarneau, 2010; Scott 2004) and accounted for approximately one third of all job growth in Canada between 1997 and 2003 (Statistics Canada, 2010b). According to Galarneau (2010), one in every eight Canadian workers was in a temporary job in 2009, usually at proportionately less pay than those engaged in permanent work. Contract jobs comprised slightly more than half of all temporary jobs in Canada in 2009. The unadjusted gap in average hourly earnings between permanent and temporary workers was 14% less for those on contract, 34% less for seasonal workers, and 33% less for casual and other workers. Even after adjusting for demographic characteristics (e.g. age, education, province of residence) and for labour market characteristics (e.g. unionization, company size, job duration), the earnings gap between temporary and permanent workers in Canada remained. Compared to permanent workers, earnings were still 9% less for men, 8% less for women hired on contracts; 11%

less for men, 16% less for women working seasonally; and 12% less for men, 8% less for women hired as casuals or others. In 2003, those working with temporary employment agencies earned 40% less than permanent workers (Galarneau, 2010; Statistics Canada, 2005b).

Canadian women are statistically over represented in precarious employment according to Vosko (2006). This varies by type of employment. For example, in 2009 women were 54.3% of contractually hired workers and 61.4% of casual workers, but only 36% of seasonal workers (Galarneau, 2010). Approximately 11.8% of all employed men in Canada worked part-time in 2012, compared to 26.5% of all employed women (Statistics Canada, 2012a).

At the beginning of the 21st century, job insecurity and the overall deterioration in the standard employment relationship was “occurring at the top of the skills hierarchy” (Beck, 2000, 82). More than one quarter of people on temporary contracts in Canada in 2009 were professional workers and 40% of all contract jobs were in the public sector, including in education, health care and social assistance, and public administration. Close to 35% of all contractual workers in Canada held a university degree, 54% of whom were women (Galarneau, 2010).

Under neoliberalism, there is an underlying assumption that individual workers are or should be responsible for managing their own risk of job loss or job insecurity and for securing their futures through education and good health (Sennett, 1998, 2006). Given the spread of temporary, insecure employment throughout the labour force and into the professional occupations, the next task of this literature review is to look specifically at existing research on how this has affected university faculty work. Because less research

has been done on faculty in Canadian universities, I augment the next section of this review with literature from the United States, Britain, Europe, and Australia.

2.b The Structuring and Restructuring of Academic Professional Work

Research on how professional work has changed with neoliberal restructuring often concentrates on how professionalization is undermined. Some researchers draw insights from theories of professionalization, deprofessionalization and academic capitalism. Others allude to a feminization of work when discussing contractual work. The next subsections consider how these ideas can provide a context for explaining job insecurity among contractual academics.

2.b.i Professionalization

Just as workers in other sectors of the labour force were reaching for the ideal of a standard employment relationship during the 20th century in developed countries, highly educated academics were engaging in a *professional project* (Larson, 1977). In asserting their professionalism, academics were influenced by the ideal traits of professions identified by Durkheim (1984) and Weber (1968). Academics had a defining doctrine to “... serv[e] the generation, preservation and dissemination of systemic knowledge” (Cavelli and Teichler, 2010, p. S1). Their clientele was altruistically defined as society in general and colleagues and students in particular. Their power lay in expectations of tenure, autonomy in their work, a good system of salaries and promotions, and academic freedom.

By the mid-twentieth century in North America, academics in different disciplines had achieved varying levels of professional status, tenure, academic freedom, and licensing (Aronowitz, 1997). Part of this variation was due to the differences in the extent to which they exerted the *social closure* that defines a profession. Social closure involves admitting selected candidates into the profession while keeping others out through licensing and other practices created to enhance their collective mobility and economic rewards. It is justified by the profession's claims to knowledge and expertise and by a meritocratic system of educational qualifications required for entry (Larson, 1977; Witz, 1990). By this definition, most academic disciplines exercised substantial control and closure over the standards of education and performance required for admission in the late 20th century. However, only some academic disciplines like medicine, engineering and accounting also include the system of licensing that is mandated in a professional project (Larson, 1977).

Entry into all of the academic professions involves years of graduate work and sponsorship into social networks. Some academic students feel obliged to engage in an obsequious relationship with mentors and superiors or at least to demonstrate internalized conformity in the early years of their careers in a bid for such sponsorship (Aronowitz, 1997; Bourdieu, 1988). Entry also demands substantial involvement with research and publications.

Traditionally, the contractual teaching appointment was just a first step in the standard academic career. It drew on applicants' *social capital*, defined by their interactions and networks, and was circumscribed by the *academic capital* of their mentors, defined by Bourdieu (1988, p. 84) as the power and control over status and

position in an academic hierarchy: “[D]octoral candidates, from whom the assistant lecturers are usually appointed ... are placed in a relation of wide-ranging and prolonged dependency [to sponsors and mentors].”

Along with academic and social capital, entry into the academic profession (as with many other professions) up to the 1960s and 1970s was mediated by classism and racism (Bourdieu, Passeron and de Saint Marin, 1965/1994; Dews and Law, 1995) Social closure mechanisms, as with those in medicine, law, and engineering favoured white, middle to upper class men (e.g. A.D. Abbott, 1988; Coburn, 1999; Freidson, 1986; K.M. MacDonald, 1995; Nisbet, 1971). Feminist studies of professionals, including academics, up to the 1980s found discrimination by gender (Bernard, 1964; Epstein, 1970; Kanter, 1977; Rossi and Calderwood, 1973; D. E. Smith, 1987; Witz, 1990). According to Bolton and Muzio (2008), Muzzin and Limoges (2008) and Schleef (2010), vestiges of discrimination on the basis of gender, race and class remain. Schleef argues that professional socialization into the cognitive skills, values, and emotions valued in the professions is still guided by a “hegemonic masculinity.” To be considered professional, all have to follow a “male [white, middle class] idiom” (p. 133).

Academic capital, the professional project, and social closure drew on the premises of a hierarchical structure. In analysing American universities during the 1960s, Nisbet (1971) argued that “few structures have been more stratified, more sharply layered in distinct ranks, than the academic community” (p.50). Bourdieu (1988) concurs by describing formidable academic hierarchies in the universities of France through to the 1980s. Since the 1960s full and associate professors in Canadian universities have formed faculty associations to negotiate tenure and academic freedom. Assistant professors

would start on tenure track appointments, with the promise of tenure after a qualifying period. These were full-time and secure positions that could not be withdrawn by employers without just cause (Turk, 2008).

Then, as now, lecturers and sessionals were hired temporarily, without tenure (Rajagopal, 2002). Their academic freedom was compromised by the threat of job loss and they were in the unenviable position of being the most marginalized of faculty workers, excluded from professional circles until they could procure a coveted tenure track position. They were generally overlooked until the workplace restructuring of the 1980s and 1990s threatened the academic profession, as discussed in the following section.

2.b.ii Theories of academic capitalism and deprofessionalization

Since the 1980s, professional hierarchies throughout North America and Europe have been affected by economic downturns and work restructuring like other sectors of the labour force. Some professionals have faced unemployment, underemployment, and job insecurity, unthinkable a few decades earlier (Freidson, 2001; Kaufman, 1982; Rinehart, 2006; Sennett, 1998, 2006). Rationalized contractual hiring has increased disproportionately in post-secondary institutions throughout the developed nations. In universities and colleges in the United States, the estimates of the growth of contractual *adjunct* teachers range from approximately 32% of American teaching faculty in 1970 to 48.7% in 2007 (Coalition on the Academic Workforce, 2010). The estimate of the American Association of University Professors is even higher at 68% of all faculty in degree-granting American universities in 2005 (Glazer-Raymo, 2008).

The same trend is occurring in Canadian universities. Drawing on data gathered by the Canadian Association of University Teachers in 2010, then president Penni Stewart observed that almost 50% of academic positions at larger post-secondary institutions in Canada are now “off the tenure track” (Stewart, 2010, A3; see also CAUT, 2010; Turk, 2008). Using Statistics Canada’s Labour Force Survey data, Lin (2008) found that 31% of university teachers in Canada were “non-permanent” in 2005, up from 15.5% in 1999.

Critics argue that the growth in the contractual teacher cadre since the 1980s is a product of *academic capitalism* (Slaughter and Rhoades, 2004) and of the *neoliberal university* (Canaan and Shumar, 2008). In both terms, the primary goal of university administrations is to rationalize the costs of delivering academic programs, sometimes at the expense of upholding academic standards. Under academic capitalism and in the neoliberal university, values shift from academic curiosity and freedom to an entrepreneurial ethos and the overall commodification of education. Teachers are evaluated by students through performance audits and research productivity is often marketed beyond the university at the expense of professorial teaching. Hiring is rationalized and contractual teachers are strategically hired as a cost effective means to deliver courses (Donoghue, 2008; Nisbet, 1971; Turk, 2008). In Aronowitz’s (1997) words, the tenured professor holds the “last good job in America” (p. 202) and is both supported and undermined by a growing “academic proletariat” (p. 219). Contractual teaching adjuncts are “the reserve army of the underemployed” (Tirelli, 1997, p. 190; Slaughter and Rhoades, 2004; Muzzin and Limoges, 2008).

Contractual teachers are regarded as cost-effective by university administrations because they command lower pay than tenured and tenure track faculty and they are usually assigned larger classes. They can easily be hired or released with no long term commitment from the administration (Rajagopal, 2002; Tirelli, 1997). Under rationalization, traditional professorial work is unbundled into teaching, research, and university or community service. Teaching is further divided into its constituent elements of student communication, lecturing, tutoring, and grading. These can then be redistributed between tenured faculty and contractuels with “lower levels of degree certification” (Slaughter and Rhoades, 2004, p. 18) for the most cost-effective balance of task assignments.

This process is quite uneven across American and European universities and has led to some misunderstanding over contractual status. Rhoades (1998), for example, labels adjunct contractual teaching as *part-time*, which can be read as involving fewer hours than the work of full-time tenured professors. Because research and administrative service are seldom required of contractuels who are hired only to teach, contractuels do indeed appear to work part-time. However, many contractuels teach more courses than the full load required of tenured professors, for substantially less pay. They are full-time workers. In addition teaching even one course can quickly become full-time in the short term, depending on class size and the amount of preparation needed (Bedford, 2009; Muzzin and Limoges, 2008; Rajagopal, 2002). In Canada, full-time work is defined by Statistics Canada (2012c) as 30 or more hours per week. The United States Department of Labour’s (2013) Fair Labour Standards Act does not designate a particular number of hours per week as full-time, but employees must be paid overtime after 40 hours per

week. To partially address the problem of distinguishing full-time from part-time teachers, the American Association of University Professors (AAUP) defines *contingent adjunct* teachers as either part-time or full-time but always non-tenure track and temporarily employed (Glazer-Raymo, 2008).

Rajagopal (2002) refined the definitions further by identifying two types of adjunct contractual teachers in Canadian universities. The *classic* contractual teacher is a per-course or sessional instructor who holds a full-time job elsewhere and teaches part-time out of interest or for a small extra income, usually at a set fee for each course. The turnover rate is fairly high. A growing proportion of these classic contractual teachers in Canada are now over 55 years of age (26% in 2005) and include tenured professors who opt to teach part-time rather than fully retire, as well as retired professors who teach so that they can retain office space on campus (Morrisette and Ostrovsky, 2006). As Muzzin and Limoges (2008) point out, classic part-time teaching tends to benefit men and those women who have additional money coming in from other sources like pensions or a day job.

Distinct from classic contractuels, *contemporaries* rely on full-time temporary or per-term contracts as their primary source of income and work (Rajagopal, 2002). Some call them “full-time part-timers” (Bedford, 2009, p. 5). In Bedford’s qualitative study of U.S. adjuncts’ written responses to interview questions, most respondents “differentiate[d] ... a full-time professional adjunct ... from a part-time teacher” by their “scholarly engagement” and delivery of “professional quality instruction” (p. 7). With experience, however, these contemporaries are relatively more expensive to hire than the classics. Some university administrations are willing to risk a high turnover rate and hire

the less costly per-course classics on a semester-by-semester basis (Berry, 2005; Herman, 2005).

Alongside types of contracts, variations exist throughout Canada in the union protection of contractual university teachers. Unionization offers a measure of security to otherwise uncertain employment, but few universities in Canada had contractual unions or contractuales in faculty unions until the early 2000s. Indeed, tenured faculty in Canadian universities only started to unionize or form associations in the 1980s, partly in response to neoliberal economic restructuring.

In their annual almanacs from 2004 to 2010, the Canadian Association of University Teachers (CAUT) distinguished “Lecturer”, previously called “Other”, positions as non-tenure track, in comparison to full, associate, and assistant professorships. Lecturers were members of CAUT through their affiliated faculty associations, but only for the duration of their contracts. For the most part, they were hired on a full-time basis for a specific term, usually spanning eight months or longer, like Rajagopal’s (2002) contemporaries. Those hired on the classic per-course appointments at Canadian universities were excluded from CAUT’s member associations during the 2000s.

Traditionally used as entry level jobs in academic careers, short term teaching and research contracts now constitute a longer term alternative when secure tenure track positions are not available. What has worried critics Slaughter and Rhoades (2004) and Donoghue (2008) is the proportionate growth in the number of contractual teaching and research positions and the possibility that these will undermine the professional project of tenured academic faculty.

In the emerging academic capitalism of the 1980s and 1990s, the rationalized hiring of contractual teachers based on performance audits created job insecurity for increasing numbers of academic professionals. This represented a *deprofessionalization* process for those with tenure according to Donoghue (2008) and Rhoades (1998) because it undermined the system of tenure and with it, the profession's source of academic capital and autonomy. For contractual faculty, however, rationalized hiring and performance audits could be seen as "professionalization from above," imposed on workers by administrations in a bid to increase their professionalism on the job (Evetts, 2003, p. 23).

Deprofessionalization takes a number of forms (Derber, 1982). Ideological deprofessionalization is a loss of control over the larger objectives of professional work. In the academic professions, such a loss of control also means a loss of the professional doctrine of academic freedom and research autonomy. Technical deprofessionalization is a loss of control over the actual tasks of the work, as occurs with the administrative standardization of teaching. According to Derber (p. 30), "relative worker autonomy" would occur among deprofessionalized academics if the profession struggles with university management over ideological control but still maintains a high degree of technical control over teaching and research tasks.

Deprofessionalization is complex "because many of these processes effectively co-opt some segments of the profession [e.g. tenured faculty in administrative positions] to police their peers [e.g. contractuels] rather than introduce unmediated lay [e.g. managerial] control" (Dingwall, 2008, p. 138). For the academic professions, Cavelli and Moscati (2010), Donoghue (2008) and Rhoades (1998) linked the deprofessionalizing

process to divisions in academic autonomy and task control between contractual and full-time faculty. This also varies between teaching colleges and research universities.

By the 1990s, studies of the professions acknowledged marginalized cadres in analyses of internal differentiation and stratification, status ambiguities and status degradation, and differing levels of autonomy and internal control over tasks and decision-making. Under conditions of heightened internal stratification, trust declines, collegiality no longer defines interaction, and the legitimacy of the professional project is in question (A.D. Abbott, 1988; Evetts, 2003).

The growth of temporary and part-time university teaching positions in the lower levels of the academic hierarchy contributes to deprofessionalization by effectively “challeng[ing] [the] academic profession’s [social] closure,” according to Rhoades (1998, p. 134). Muzzin and Limoges (2008) describe the angst of full professors in both the United States and Canada whose “vision [is] of universities becoming low quality, watered down sweatshops” (p. 109) because of work restructuring and academic capitalism. Aronowitz (1997, p. 107) observed that many tenured faculty deny that contractals constitute an “academic proletariat.” Rather, they regard contractals as “privileged crybabies” and are hostile to their attempts to unionize. Aronowitz argues that these tenured faculty are trying to preserve their own right to the “last good job in America.”

The threat of deprofessionalization from contractual hiring can exacerbate tensions that already exist in the academic hierarchy. Researchers have observed that the teaching work of contractual faculty threatens that of full-time faculty because it is essentially the same job but with lower pay, fewer benefits, less autonomy, and higher

task demand (Berry, 2005; Glazer-Raymo, 2008; Rajagopal, 2002). However, university administrations typically do not have the same expectations for research, publication and university service for contractuels as they do for tenured faculty and some among the professoriate see this as an unfair advantage. These lower expectations do not lessen contractuels' job insecurity. Their teaching work is undervalued, which can add to their marginalization. Teachers without a research agenda are deemed less than professional and research and publication take precedence over teaching in hiring, promotion, and tenure assessments in many Canadian and American universities (Hira and D. Cohen, 2009; Litner, 2002; Nisbet, 1971).

A distancing occurs when contractual teachers are marginalized and excluded from collegial decision-making and workplace social networks. In university surveys in five western European countries, Cavelli and Moscati (2010) found that the majority of academics preferred to identify themselves as researchers rather than teachers. With few exceptions (e.g. Berry, 2005; Rajagopal, 2002), researchers rarely refer to the support that contractual teachers provide to tenured and tenure track faculty. This lack of acknowledgement is partly due to the performance of professionalism among academics.

[Sessionals are] ... made invisible in the university caste system by disappearing as "professional failures" according to the ideals of meritocracy...Performances of professionalism subtly demand that tenure track faculty forget the structural conditions in which these temporary labourers work and naturalize success and failure as a matter of personal merit. (Church, 1999, p. 251)

This pattern varies within and between universities in Canada. Teaching is regularized at some universities and appreciated in some departments to a greater or lesser extent than in others. Teaching contractuels are accommodated in some

departments while treated as marginalized workers, even pariahs, in others (Brown, 2010; Lundy and Warne, 1992; Muzzin and Limoges, 2008).

Academic capitalism, then, further polarizes faculty labour through deprofessionalization. It divides faculty by occupational status and creates conflict, leading tenured faculty to question the legitimacy, orientation, and intent of contractual teachers. Professional control is tested when entry is determined by rationalized hiring practices rather than by members of the discipline. Both full-time and contractual faculty feel the pressures of deprofessionalization under academic capitalism with increasing workloads and decreased work quality. Academic capitalism now markets teaching and students purportedly influence hiring through performance audits like course and teacher evaluations. Opponents argue that these processes undermine the academic freedom and collegiality necessary for academic professionalism and control (Canaan and Shumar, 2008; Currie, 2004; Donoghue, 2008; Martin, 1998; Newson and Buchbinder 1988; Rhoades, 1998; Slaughter and Rhoades, 2004).

Adding to the argument that the rationalization of hiring has led to the deprofessionalization of academic work, some feminist analysts suggest this is also part of a feminization of the work. This is discussed in the next section using contractual university teaching as the case in point.

2.b.iii The feminization of work

The rationalization of North American hiring since the 1980s to be more cost-effective has led to greater flexibility in work. Such flexibility is also associated with women's work in economic theories cited by Armstrong and Armstrong (1990) and with

a feminization of work in early feminist theories cited by Bolton and Muzio (2008). In flexible feminized jobs, work is scheduled to meet the demands of employers and, ostensibly, the needs of women workers who juggle work with family responsibilities. This feminization of work is juxtaposed against the standard employment relationship (SER) of full-time, secure and well-paid work.

Earlier studies located feminized jobs in the growing number of women in low paying, low status service occupations (Bolton and Muzio, 2008). However, Vosko et al. (2009) and Cranford, Vosko and Zukewich (2003) argue that this is not a new phenomenon. In contrast to the rising expectations after World War II that North American men procure SER work, women have always predominated in part-time, temporary, and marginalized jobs. Such jobs were and still are considered flexible, allowing women time to balance home and family responsibilities (Armstrong and Armstrong, 1990). In research on work-family balance, women are still more likely than men to opt for such flexibility (Hill, Martinson and Ferris, 2004; Hochschild and Machun, 2003; MacDonald, Phipps and Lethbridge, 2005).

Current theories of the feminization of work are now extending beyond the numerical preponderance of women in low status jobs to a cultural process of devaluing such aspects of work associated with women's jobs as the "soft skills" of nurturing and emotional labour in maintaining workplace and client relations. This occurs even in professional occupations and extends to men as well as women. Feminized work at all levels of the occupational hierarchy is increasingly defined by a degradation of job security and control for women, and increasingly, for men (Bolton and Muzio, 2008; Vosko, et al., 2009). Cranford et al. (2003, 456) refer to it as a "feminization of

employment norms.” Those who must engage in emotional labour have “little symbolic power or agency in their work” (Sallez, 2010, p. 300) or in interactions with clients (Acker, 2006; Bourdieu, 2001).

In the knowledge sector, feminized jobs frequently involve the same or similar demands as do the jobs of more secure co-workers. In Junor’s (1998) Australian study, for example, women knowledge workers who opted for contractual flexible work still had to meet high demands for skill, communication, and worker loyalty, but under more rigid and erratic shiftwork scheduling. Their employers did not offer them any real flexibility to cope with work and family role conflicts. As in Canada, little consideration was given to contractual workers’ family needs (Fudge and Vosko, 2005; Statistics Canada, 2003).

To what extent can the theory of the feminization of work be applied to contractual university teaching? As in many professions, the numerical ratio of academic women relative to men is improving but in general, the proportion of men increases as status goes up (Evetts, 2003; Daiski and Richards, 2007). Women in Canadian universities were 35% of full-time teachers in 2005, up from 29% in 1999 and 13% in 1970 (Canadian Federation for the Humanities and Social Sciences, 2006; Statistics Canada, 2005a, 2006a, 2006b).

Academic women have not reached parity with men among tenured professors and the proportion of women is growing at different rates by discipline (Bolton and Muzio, 2008). For example, the proportion of full-time women in all faculty ranks across Canada in the 2006/2007 school year was 50.5% in Education, 42% in the Fine Arts, 40.7% in the Health Professions, 42.4% in the Humanities, 12.3% in Engineering and the Applied Sciences, and 15.8% in Mathematics and the Physical Sciences (CAUT,

2009/2010). Quantitative research by the Canadian Association of University Teachers (CAUT, 2004 - 2010) found proportionately more women than men among the Other (non-tenure track) category of teachers in the 2006/2007 school year in the humanities and social sciences (e.g. 71.9% in English) and fewer in the areas of Mathematics (27.6%) and Engineering (20%). Overall, men held 54.4% of all non-tenure track positions in all disciplines on the national level. In Sociology departments across Canada in the 2006-2007 academic year, women comprised 53.3% of the lecturers (non-tenure track), 56.9% of the assistant professors, 50.4% of the associate professors, and 34.7% of the full professors (CAUT, 2009/2010).

Women were not as disproportionately represented in the bottom ranks of the academic profession for Social Sciences as they were in other disciplines like the Humanities. However, the feminization of professional work is evident when there is a degradation of work in the tasks usually performed by women. For example, both full time and contractual faculty women cite similar gendered expectations for emotional and service labour that is rarely valued beyond rhetoric (Baker, 2010; Glazer-Raymo, 2008; Hannah, Vethamany-Globus and Paul, 2002). Full-time faculty "... women [in American universities and colleges] have made significant gains in careers associated with the public good [e.g. teaching] ... but do not fare as well in the resource-rich academic capitalist knowledge / learning regime" (Metcalf and Slaughter, 2008, p. 100). The latter regime refers to the current American research sector driven by corporate funding and demands. Alemán (2008) found evidence that American faculty women spend more time on teaching activities than men and speculates that this is at the expense of engaging in publishable research, a requirement to enter a tenure track position. In their Australian

faculty surveys, Currie, Thiele and Harris (2002) also found that most of their tenured and tenure track women respondents felt valued for their sociability, supportiveness, collegiality, conscientiousness, and contributions to the university. Concomitantly, they designated this a feminine working style that is less powerful and less rewarded than “being aggressive and competitive [for which] ... [m]en are both rewarded and condemned” (Currie et al., 2002, p. 104).

Gendered expectations of young academic women in Britain were the focus of Barnes-Powell and Letherby’s (1998) autoethnographic description. Here, students and some full-time faculty and administrative supervisors expected new women faculty to do gendered care work and be open and “interruptible” (p. 67) in their daily work. They argue that because university administrations fostered a consumerist mentality, students were particularly demanding and rude to contractual women teachers. Webber (2007) describes how both contractual women and men in her study were pressured to be “Miss Congeniality” (p. 12) to win over American students. Some lowered their grading standards to ensure positive course evaluations, thinking these would determine whether or not they would be rehired. According to Cotterill and Waterhouse (1998) and Reay (2000), women adjuncts are especially likely to be dismissed by full-time faculty as inferior academics struggling for credibility.

So while gender differences in the number and rank of faculty are eroding to varying degrees across disciplines in Canadian university workplaces, gendered expectations of academic workers continue. Does the gender of the contractual teacher make a difference to their experience of these expectations? An application of the theory of feminization poses contractual teaching as a feminized version of professorial work,

but would contractual teachers themselves agree? How useful is the theory of the feminization of work in explaining the experience of job insecurity in contractual teaching? These questions will be addressed in the concluding chapter of this dissertation.

Regardless of gender, contractual university teachers themselves have little voice in either academic capitalism or in its opposition and they are affected differently by work restructuring and rationalized hiring than are tenure-track and tenured faculty. All experience a climate of job insecurity but because they do not have tenure, contractual faculty have fewer effective means for dealing with it. Moreover, the concrete conditions of job insecurity are more immediate for those hired on contract. Few studies concentrate on the health effects of job insecurity for contractual university teachers, especially in Canada. Because occupational health research on the intersection of job insecurity, health and education is in the early stages, I again draw on American, Australian, British, and European sources for the next section on the health effects of job insecurity.

2.c The Health Effects of Work Restructuring and Job Insecurity

The neoliberal restructuring of work away from an SER ideal to a greater normalization of job insecurity has been associated with health risks for workers in occupational health (OH) research since the 1990s (Benach, Amable, Muntaner and Benavides, 2002). Similarly, in Lowe's (2000) meta-review of sociological research on Canadian workers, quality of work, job satisfaction, and sense of control are all associated with health and tend to decline with the growth of insecure jobs. Lowe estimates that approximately 20% of all Canadian workers surveyed during the 1980s and 1990s described their jobs as insecure, stressful, dead-end, depressing, and requiring little skill.

The growing job insecurity experienced by individuals is contributing to a climate of uncertainty for everyone according to Bourdieu (1998) and Scott (2004). Generalized stress levels are now elevated for all tiers of workers and even those with secure jobs may feel insecure if their co-workers are job insecure. Chen et al. (1999) found that declining job satisfaction, mounting anxieties, and negative job attitudes among permanent employees in several American workplaces across occupational sectors were related to poor communication between them and those hired temporarily to replace their co-workers. Studies of restructured workplaces find that both permanent and temporary workers face demands for intensified work, unpaid overtime and greater efforts to maintain a standard of living. These demands have been shown to correlate with reduced control and to psychological distress, lower self-rated health, higher absenteeism rates, and higher distress scores in studies by Duxbury and Higgins (2009), Pelfrene et al. (2003), and Statistics Canada (2007a; 2007c). In their European surveys of academic professionals, Cavelli and Moscati (2010) associated rising pessimism and declining job satisfaction and workplace morale with increases in the proportion of part-time teaching contractuales. They argue that the consequent erosion of tenure creates greater anxieties among both tenured-stream and tenured faculty.

Generalized stress is associated with poorer self-rated health and depression in studies by Ferrie, Shipley, Stansfeld and Marmot (2002), Burgard, Brand and House (2009), McDonough (2000), Pelfrene et al. (2003), and Scott (2004). The perception of persistent job insecurity is correlated with feelings of disassociation and poorer self-rated health among all workers in studies by Tremblay (2004), Domienighetti et al. (2000) and Sparks et al. (2001). As workplace health becomes a managerial mantra, some argue,

workers are encouraged to hide any stress resulting from job insecurity and other work conditions (Bourdieu, 1998; Hochschild, 1997; MacEachen et al., 2008; Sennett 1998, 2006).

The remainder of this section reviews relevant concepts and topics in the literature that inform this research. From the health outcomes of a climate of uncertainty, it now turns to occupational health studies on the health effects of work restructuring for individual precarious workers. These studies initially centered on job strain and more recently on job insecurity. The fourth topic discussed below is how the psychosocial work environment can affect health among job insecure workers. The section ends by looking at a review of occupational health studies that have looked at intersections between job insecurity, health and gender.

2.c.i Early job strain research

Before the 2000s, occupational health studies focused on the ergonomic, environmental, chemical, and biological features of workplaces and work routines. *Job strain* was more the central concern in this body of work than were the cognitive, emotional, or psychological distress associated with job insecurity. In Karasek's model of job strain, high demand in job tasks is combined with low control over the work itself and low support in the form of instrumental feedback from coworkers and supervisors to produce job strain (Karasek and Theorell, 1990). Early studies found that job strain creates stress with varying physical disorders of the digestive, coronary and circulatory, immunological, and musculo-skeletal systems. These include repetitive stress injuries, fatigue, backaches, and muscular pains. Job strain was later associated with psychological

distress such as anxiety, depression, and poor heart rate (Andre-Petersson, Engstrom, Hedblad, Janzon and Rosvall, 2007; Strazdins et al., 2004).

Job strain occurs at least occasionally in most jobs. In permanent SER work, it usually happens as demand peaks, so workers cope through temporary personal adjustments. Their levels of control or creativity or ability to problem-solve might mediate the health effects of job strain more than would lowering workplace demands. The negative consequences of job strain for health are more pronounced in work characterized by low control and autonomy and high demand (e.g. nursing, home care, elementary school teaching). In SER work, job strain is associated with higher absenteeism, lower levels of mental and physical health, and higher rates of depression (Scott, 2004; Spitzer, 2005; Statistics Canada 2006c; Temple, 2009).

Job strain is prominent in many (but not all) insecure jobs (Sparks, et al., 2001; Strazdins et al., 2004). Early studies concentrated on precarious workers with low education and low income because they were significantly affected by work restructuring. Here, job strain evoked greater stress and more job dissatisfaction (Benavides et al., 2006; Mayhew and Quinlan, 2002; Messing, 2006, 1998; Neis et al., 2001; Quinlan et al., 2001; Zeytinoglu et al., 2005). Precarious workers' low education may have exacerbated the high health risks of insecure work, given that education is a strong determinant of health (Ross and Wu, 1995; Mirowsky and Ross, 2003).

Most of the 93 occupational health studies of "nonstandard" workers in Quinlan et al.'s (2001) review of research between 1984 and 2000 were epidemiological studies. In these studies, "nonstandard" included temporary, part-time, and contingently hired workers. The authors looked for measurable outcomes in the structure of nonstandard

work tasks such as repetitiveness, monotony, and “pressurized work processes and more disorganized work settings” (Quinlan et al., 2001, p. 367). In almost 82% of the studies reviewed, these aspects of job strain were strongly associated with negative occupational health indications related to both physical and mental health. Quinlan et al. found that chronic stresses and common mental disorders were associated with both job strain and elements of job insecurity like the intensification of work, competing for contracts, and feeling over or under employed or generally mismatched to the job. Strazdins et al. (2004) and Statistics Canada (2007d) found that the combination of job strain and job insecurity heightens the probability of mental and physical health problems, anxiety, and low self-reported health.

Daniels (2006) argues that when job strain is defined solely using Karasek’s model, researchers often fail to distinguish how the latent and perceived psychosocial facets of the work are related to job strain. In the traditional epidemiological studies of the Canadian working population reviewed by Eiken and Saksvik (2006), for example, temporary workers with low control had less stress and absenteeism than permanent workers. Their lower stress could be explained by their lower commitment and involvement in the workplace. By way of contrast, high demands and high commitment at work were positively associated with stress for the full-time Canadian workers in Duxbury and Higgins’ (2009) survey. However, the temporary workers in the epidemiological studies reviewed by Eiken and Saksvik also had lower support than permanent employees. Their lower absenteeism rates could be related to this lack of workplace support.

Relatively few studies have examined the occupational health effects of job strain among contractual university faculty, but there is strong evidence of job strain among university teachers in general, where stress and burn-out are associated with high demands at work (Bilge, 2006; Dressel and Langreiter, 2008; Herman 2005; Taris, Schreurs, Van Iersel-Van Silfout, 2001; University and College Union, 2012). High occupational prestige and educational levels do not eliminate job strain. In their study of Dutch university teachers, Taris et al. (2001) found more emotional exhaustion, withdrawal behaviours and health complaints among those with high job demands (job strain) than among those without job strain. For these full-time university teachers who had a measure of security in the system of tenure and academic freedom, job strain was more the issue than job insecurity.

2.c.ii Job insecurity as an OH issue

Researchers are now taking greater pains to distinguish between job strain and job insecurity. For example, D'Souza et al. (2003) found that job strain (high demand, low control) and job insecurity (defined by "both the threat of job loss, and uncertainty regarding future employment" p. 849) were *independently* associated with depression, anxiety, poor self-rated health, and poor physical health among European professional workers. Other research findings suggest that job insecurity is more likely than job strain to elicit symptoms of *chronic* mental stress (e.g. depression, mood disorders), emotional problems (e.g. anxiety, poor sense of mastery and lower self-esteem), and physical effects (e.g. coronary problems) among individual workers. Job insecurity is also positively associated with substance abuse and poor self-reported health (Burgard et al., 2009;

Ibrahim et al. 2009; Lewchuk et al., 2008; Scott-Marshall, 2010; Werner-Leonard, 2006). Worse occupational health outcomes were linked to job insecurity in Virtanen's (2006) review of 27 studies in Canada, Spain, the US, Sweden, and Finland and in 87% of the 61 studies of all types of *precarious* jobs in Johnston and Quinlan's (2006) meta-analysis. When compared to permanent employees, the *temporary* workers in Virtanen's study experienced 54% more occupational health injuries, 25% higher stress rates, 8% higher scores of poor physical and global health, and 24% more musculo-skeletal disorders.

Temporary workers reported 23% *less* sickness absence than permanent workers, which Virtanen (2006) relates to their tenuous positions in the workplace. *Presenteeism* when sick was evident in Scott-Marshall, Tompa and Trevithick (2007)'s longitudinal labour market survey of *underemployed* Canadian workers and affirmed in Gadbois' (2002) and L. Parsons' (2006) autoethnographies. The latter worried about losing future contracts as university teachers if they called in sick. Level of job insecurity was often cited as a reason for presenteeism when sick in studies by Dew, Keefe and Small (2005) and Hansen and Andersen (2008).

Chronic stress and anxiety were not alleviated with reemployment among Ferrie et al.'s (2002) British civil servant respondents, even when their jobs became permanent. Sparks et al. (2001, p. 405) speculate that "... some longstanding temporary workers may not perceive the threat of becoming unemployed as they no longer have expectations of full employment." They argue that the health effects of job insecurity are also mediated by workers' class position and personal lifestyle habits. Would they be mediated by higher education?

Higher education is generally a positive social determinant of health in Canada (Canada, Public Health Agency of Canada, 2011; Raphael, 2010). Similarly, Herd, Goesling and House (2007) found that in American surveys from 1986 through 2002, higher education and income delayed the onset and slowed the progression of chronic illnesses and functional limitations. Workers with little job security and low education felt they could not complain about chronic illnesses. Would highly educated subjects experiencing job insecurity and only low to average incomes feel the same way?

Subjects with higher levels of education displayed heightened perceptions of job insecurity and risk in studies by Domienighetti et al. (2000), Pelfrane et al. (2003), Tremblay (2004), and the British University and College Union (2012). In Domienighetti et al.'s (2000) survey of both full and part-time Swiss workers, participants with higher levels of education suffered from more problems with stress, low self-esteem, sleeplessness, tranquilizer use, low back pain, and avoiding or postponing self-care than did those with less education. The authors speculate that because of their greater investments in education, these knowledge workers worry more about the decreased status associated with the unemployment or underemployment that accompanies job insecurity. Similarly, among Taris, Kalimo and Schaufeli's (2002) large sample of Finnish workers, perceptions of being under-rewarded in comparison to their educational investments were associated with higher levels of emotional exhaustion, cynicism and health complaints. Workers were not at risk for health problems when they felt over-rewarded or that the rewards of their work were greater than their educational investments.

Are highly educated workers with low job security in better health than their less educated counterparts? McDonough (2000) would argue they are not. In a quantitative analysis of Canada's 1994 National Population Health Survey, McDonough found little evidence that social groups who vary by education, income, gender, marital status, or age were more or less "vulnerable to the health damaging effects of job insecurity or that social support in the workplace buffered these effects" (p. 469). Job insecurity was problematic for all workers and was associated with health problems.

Corroborating evidence for this finding is found in Lewchuk et al.'s (2006) survey of 404 people in various types of precarious employment in Ontario during 2002-2003. High employment strain, measured partly by job insecurity, was associated with most ill health indicators in a sample of university and other workers on short-term research and administrative contracts. Along with the rest of the sample, these university contractuels experienced a high degree of employment and income uncertainty and constant evaluation. They suffered from inattention to health concerns while exerting considerable effort to stay employed. None had any other source of financial support. They reported several health issues, including sleep disorders, unhealthy eating, weight gain, deterioration, and cumulative nervousness. Lewchuk et al. conclude that with workplace restructuring, the individualization of the employment relationship means that workers now have fewer supports from colleagues and employers to help them get and keep good jobs.

Another perspective on job insecurity is how it combines with particular psychosocial aspects of work like social support to have further health repercussions. The

next section of this foundational review of the literature will focus on those psychosocial elements.

2.c.iii Job insecurity and the psychosocial work environment

From a review of research on the overall health effects of job insecurity, this discussion now turns to research on aspects of the psychosocial work environment that are associated with health. Siegrist and Marmot (2004) defined the *psychosocial work environment* as the “socio-structural range of opportunities that is available ... to meet (the) needs of well-being, productivity and positive self-experience” (p. 1465). In their meta-analysis of studies on the social determinants of occupational health, Stansfeld and Candy (2006) noted strong associations between mental health and aspects of the psychosocial work environment such as social capital, social comparison, collegiality, and the level of creativity in the work. All have significant health outcomes.

Social capital is defined by the social interactions and relationships within one’s social network. Social capital is measured by trust in the workplace and by its component horizontal and vertical, bonding and bridging ties. In their study of more than 25,000 Finnish public sector employees, Oksanen et al. (2008) found that high social capital was associated with lower risks of depression and anti-depressive treatments and more so for men than for women. Respect and trust between seniors and juniors in the workplace hierarchy (vertical social capital) and trust and reciprocity between co-workers and employees (horizontal social capital) were crucial to good mental health and self-rated health.

As well as facilitating trust between workers, social capital is potentially empowering. Vertical bridging social capital is inclusive because it ties members of unlike groups. Horizontal bonding social capital favours intimacy within groups, allowing greater access to resources (S. Abbott, 2009; Domínguez and Arford, 2010). Ferlander (2007, p. 122) found that “cross-cutting ties—bridging and linking social capital” *between* groups of workers enhances control and by extension, health. In contrast, bonding social capital *within* groups can easily lead to exclusionary practices and then to worsening health outcomes for those outside the group. Bridging capital of the right nature and quality in the workplace “may help to buffer against the effects of occupational stress” by offering social support (S. Abbott, 2009, p. 301). It might also enhance social integration, collegiality, and access to workplace resources.

Social capital in the workplace can significantly affect health through *collegiality* and social comparison. Canadian studies of nurses, for example, have found that collegiality is partly determined by respect in the workplace, which is strongly and positively related to mental health and health-related problems (Daiski and Richards, 2007; Skillen, 1995; Statistics Canada, 2006c). Collegiality is an ideal for workplace communication and networking in the academic profession and is very much affected by one’s social capital and place in the work hierarchy. This leads to social comparison, also with its own health effects.

Social comparison is perceptual and especially significant in self-rated health. For example, lower income was associated with lower self-rated health in Canada in research during the 1990s (Statistics Canada, 2007e). In the general population Canadian National Health Survey during 2000, Dunn, Veenstra and Ross (2006) found that self-rated health

status was directly and positively related to respondents' perceptions of how their actual absolute socioeconomic status (SES) compared to that of all Canadians. SES here was measured by personal and household income and education.

Social comparison of one's position in relation to that of others is exacerbated in workplaces with multiple tiers of status, such as in the long-standing academic hierarchies of European and Canadian universities. Little research has been done on the occupational health effects of such comparison, but studies of contractual university teachers often focus on their low status and stigmatization in these hierarchies, which presumably affect social comparisons. For a Canadian example of this, see Rajagopal's (2002) large scale study of adjunct faculty in Canada during the 1990s. Such stigmatization can create chronic stress and employment strain for contractuels themselves.

[T]he caste like characteristics of this [adjunct] segment of the academic labour force inhere in its status within the university hierarchy. The status is not only low, but for many it becomes inescapable. Especially for those part-timers who consider themselves trapped and who teach in settings where they are on sufferance, the indignities of part-time status are reinforced by the cavalier disrespect they encounter. In settings in which part-timers are perceived as a valuable resource, as in professional faculties, [the] negative aspects of part-time status may scarcely be noticed (Lundy and Warne, 1992, p. 274).

Positive psychosocial work environments are potentially compromised by the rationalization of hiring, which further exacerbates the polarization of workers and the relative inequality between core and peripheral workers (Harvey, 2005), or tenured and contractual professors. This leads to the fragmentation of social cohesion and a disintegration of collegiality in the workplace. Subsequent social comparison by workers, of their own status and relative to that of others, has negative health consequences from

feelings of generalized stress (Coburn, 2000; Hofrichter; 2003; Siegrist and Marmot, 2004).

There is some evidence that stigmatization, like job strain, can be mediated by the nature of the work itself. In a quantitative study of American full-time workers, Mirowski and Ross (2007) found that position within a work hierarchy had less impact on health than did the role of creativity in the work. They distinguish creativity from autonomy, noting that it is “productive activity involving originality, resourcefulness and self-expression” (p. 385). Even in jobs with less than ideal autonomy, those who had creative work that allowed problem solving and learning had significant health advantages. Under the right conditions, academic teaching utilizes these attributes of creative work. The question that arises from this is whether or not the health benefits of creativity are undermined by job insecurity? Changes in the psychosocial work environment can affect workers’ sense of well-being, self-efficacy, and coping strategies. These will be considered in the sections and chapters that follow.

2.c.iv Gender and health outcomes associated with job insecurity

Whether or not gender interacts with job insecurity to affect health, particularly among highly educated workers, is relevant to this research. In studies on job insecurity and health reviewed by Spitzer (2005), women had less control within female segregated occupations than men. Alongside low levels of occupational and social power, this lack of control was associated with women’s higher levels of depression, cardiovascular diseases and musculoskeletal disorders. For women, “autonomic and neuroendocrine stress responses ... [were induced by] ... stymied self-efficacy and eroded self-esteem” (Spitzer,

2005, p. S83). Gender differentials in work-related health impacts are further evident in Andre-Peterssen, et al.'s (2007) research on Swedish workers in the 1990s. Here, low social support and passive work situations (high demand, low control) are related to increased risk of stroke and myocardial infarctions among women but not among men.

Does gender make a difference in the experience of job insecurity, with its threat of unemployment? Certainly, *women* are more often in jobs that are insecure and have low status, opportunities, and rewards. In addition, Canadian women experience more stress because of their unpaid care and household work combined with paid work (MacDonald et al., 2005). As Spitzer (2005) and Messing (2006) observe, stress is increasingly perceived as a feminine issue in occupational health studies that focus on gender differentiation. This attitude ghettoizes stress as a women's problem, implying that it is a result of weakness or a female tendency to complain. It overlooks the interplay between gender differences in working conditions such as job insecurity and stress in contractual work.

In quantitative research, the gender gap in health is narrowing for men and women in the same occupations and job insecurity appears to have significant effects for everyone. For example, health, distress and sense of control were directly related to level of employment for *both* men and women in Ross and Bird's (1994) large scale analysis of American workplaces. Health was best for those engaged in full-time work, medium for those in engaged in part-time work, and worst for those unemployed. In their large-scale American study, Mirowski and Ross (2007) found that women's and men's health was better even in a job with lower autonomy where supervision was high and decision-making low, than while unemployed. Similarly, employment status and income are

positively correlated with health and negatively correlated with distress for both men and women in Denton, Prus and Walters' (2004) analysis of Canadian National Population Health Survey (CNPHS) data from the 1990s.

Lower status and lower rewards in temporary jobs are associated with increased distress, anxiety, higher blood pressure, ulcers and depression for both women and men. All of these conditions weaken the immune system (Hayward and Colman, 2008; Ross and Bird, 1994; Spitzer, 2005; Statistics Canada, 2006c). Perceptions of persisting job insecurity were a significant predictor of poorer self-rated health in Burgard, Brand and House's (2009) analysis of longitudinal data on men and women in two nationally representative American samples. Gender and status differentials intersected with job insecurity to create many stresses for individual workers in studies by Lejeune (2006), Lippel and Sikka (2010) and Messing (2006, 1998).

In their discussion paper of health statistics in Atlantic Canada, however, Hayward and Colman (2008) noted gender differentials in the health effects of unemployment, with women affected more than men. Unemployed women experienced greater levels of anxiety, depression, and visits to doctors than did unemployed men. Employed men had lower distress levels than employed women and these lower levels correlated with their higher levels of job satisfaction, greater control and the better pacing of work (Hayward and Colman, 2008).

In Matthews, Hertzman, Ostry and Power's (1998) follow up to a large scale, 33 year study of the 1958 British birth cohort, the psychosocial characteristics of work varied significantly by gender and between full-time, part-time and home-based workers over their adult working lives. Women in this cohort experienced fewer positive learning

opportunities and more monotonous work than did men. Full-time working women enjoyed better job conditions like “learning opportunities, pace of work and flexibility of breaks” (Matthews, et al., 1998, p. 1418) than did women engaged in part-time work or work at home. A socio-economic gradient in self-reported health was evident among men and women in all occupational statuses in Matthews et al.’s study. Part-time and home workers reported poor health more often than full-time workers. Matthews et al. conclude that because of their poor health outcomes, part-time jobs with lower levels of control did not provide women in this cohort with a viable solution to the problem of work/family imbalance.

The primarily quantitative studies reviewed above usually ended with a call for more qualitative research on the occupational health effects of job insecurity. My study answers that call from the perspective of highly educated women and men in Canada, particularly contractual university faculty. Does gender or variation in social capital, social comparison, and collegiality affect the health outcomes of their job insecurity? A related question surrounds how workers’ education, income, and psychosocial resources help them cope with the occupational health effects of job insecurity. The final section of this chapter reviews the literature on possible coping strategies.

2.d Coping with the Health Effects of Job Insecurity

How do contractual university teachers cope with the health outcomes of job insecurity? Are the risks to their health individualized? Or do workplace administrations assume some responsibility for addressing these issues? What health-related programs or policies are available to contractually hired teachers and how effective are these? I have

already described some aspects of the psychosocial work environment that might affect coping strategies. This final segment briefly reviews literature on the individualization of risk, psychosocial resources as a social determinant of health, and strategies for coping with health that draw on internal and external loci of control (defined below). Briefly, coping strategies can draw on either or both.

Risk and choice are elements of work that draw on psychosocial resources. To reiterate, work restructuring since the 1980s has heightened the individualization of risk, according to Beck (1994, 1999, 2000) and Bauman (2000). Workers are held responsible for the choices they make, such as entering contractual work, but career paths are notably less predictable when hired on a temporary or contractual basis. Working contingently and without security implies a failure of workers to make the right (rational) choices by educating themselves and pursuing the best employment opportunities. This individualizes what are structurally created risks that cannot be avoided by most workers (Bauman, 2000; Beck, 1994, 1999; Giddens, 1994, 2003; Sennett, 1998, 2006). With the restructuring of work, workers also develop an elevated perception of risk that generates a tacit compliance with the status quo. They no longer speak of rights to full-time employment, to regular hours, or to job protections related to health (Bourdieu, 1998).

The individualization of risk does not have uniform consequences for all workers. Some analysts argue that the heightened risk of job insecurity and the erosion of workers' skills that result from work restructuring primarily affect the semi-skilled and unskilled. They suggest that work restructuring has positive effects for educated knowledge workers who are no longer tied to a single employer or to co-worker loyalty and can enjoy boundaryless careers. In this argument, contractual knowledge workers have more

autonomy in networking and career building and more opportunities to develop different types of skills and career adaptations (Hirsch and Naquin, 2001; Kalleberg, 2000, 2001, 2007; MacEachen et al., 2008). Lash (1994) points out that workers are commonly perceived as winners if they have enough resources and freedom to visualize the possibility of new jobs, opportunities and higher incomes. There is a rationally chosen work biography. Other precarious workers are judged losers if they are over-determined by structural constraints, located in the lower rungs of the workplace hierarchy and excluded from the cultural fields of work (Lash, 1994). There is a “breakdown biography” (Beck, 1994, p. 8).

The results of empirical studies on risk and choice are complex. Perceptions of risk are reflexive and agentic, varying with the occupational status, social location and localized cultural understandings of risk by respondents (D. Abbott, Quilgars and Jones, 2006; Lupton, 1999; Malenfant et al., 2007; N. Smith, Cebulla, Cox and Davies, 2006). For example, women more often choose or accept temporary or flexibilized jobs because of constraints like feeling responsible for child and elder care (Jurik, 1998; MacDonald et al., 2005; Vosko and Zukewich, 2006). Similarly, Garcy (2002) found that US adjunct faculty who chose to enter adjunct teaching had particular characteristics relating to social location: age (particularly youth), lack of tenure, gender (women), and marital status (single). Those who ended up in adjunct teaching by default were pressured into it by the overall structural growth in contingent employment and the vulnerability of their particular academic discipline to adjunct growth. In education and the fine arts, the number of adjuncts was higher because faculty spent less time doing research, the number of majoring students was declining, and there were many alternative and cheaper two year

programs competing for college tuition dollars. Disciplines with a higher proportion of younger faculty also had a higher proportion of contingent faculty workers (Garcy, 2002).

Whether working in insecure jobs is seen as managing risk or making choices, the health effects are mediated by workers' psychosocial resources, a social determinant of health (Raphael, 2010). Psychosocial resources include self-esteem, mastery, sense of coherence, and sense of control (Clarke, 2008). The psychosocial resource of having a sense of control over one's life and work enabled better functional health and lower distress levels for both men and women in Denton et al.'s (2004) analysis of the general Canadian National Population Health Survey (CNPHS) data for 1994-5 and in the health statistics of Atlantic Canadian men and women in Hayward and Colman's (2008) discussion paper.

Occupational health studies have linked psychosocial resources to the psychosocial work environment and specifically to the intrinsic and extrinsic rewards of work. Feelings of self-efficacy and self-esteem are both crucial to another psychosocial resource, identity maintenance. All are intrinsic rewards of work that can enhance well-being and health, but they are also affected by extrinsic work conditions like exposure to job strain, imbalances between effort and reward, and marginalized positions in work hierarchies (S. Abbott, 2009; Berkman, Glass, Brisette and Seeman, 2000; Liukkonen, Virtanen, Kivimäki, Pentti and Vahtera, 2004; Schreurs, van Emmerik, Notelaers, and de Witte, 2010; Siegrist and Marmot, 2004; Werner-Leonard, 2006). The instrumental extrinsic rewards of work that affect health include pay, promotion, benefits, or in some cases, simply being employed (Clarke, 2008).

Lindstrom (2009) compares poor work conditions (e.g. job strain and passive job positions) with unemployment. Both have similar effects on trust, another psychosocial resource for health. Ibrahim et al.'s (2009) study of the CNPHS data found a significant relationship between insecure work and adverse psychosocial health for workers on shorter than two year contracts more so than for longer-term employees. The meaning and health effects of job insecurity vary with all of these psychosocial resources as well as with workers' social locations, reasons for taking the job, and whether or not they consider organizational structures in the workplace to be fair or just. For example, the individual attributes of mastery and self-esteem were related to inappropriate behaviours of supervisors and declining *organizational justice* in Siegrist and Marmot's (2004) review of occupational health research. Organizational justice refers to perceptions of fair and equitable treatment in the workplace and to trust between co-workers and between employees and managers (Elovainio, Kivimäki, Steen and Vahtera, 2004). Poor managerial style can be defined by a lack of consideration for workers' conditions, lack of effective communication and feedback, or pressure and bullying tactics. All of these are associated with "psychosomatic stress symptoms, musculo-skeletal symptoms, anxiety and depression" (Sparks et al., 2001, p. 501). Good managerial styles and communication are associated with high job satisfaction, lower uncertainty, increased efficacy and well-being, and increased productivity. Managerial style can be problematic for workers in temporary positions who are often not perceived as committed to the work process and are treated accordingly.

The individualization of risk and psychosocial resources are instrumental in strategies for coping with the health effects of job insecurity. Coping strategies are further

categorized here by subjects' *internal or external locus of control*. If the cause of the health problem is thought to be an external situation or social structure, subjects are more likely to look outside themselves and their immediate relationships for the structural means to manage or change their circumstances. Because the locus of control is external, their health problems seem more difficult to overcome. Subjects with an internal locus of control draw on personal resources for relief. These include such psychosocial resources as cognitive activities to shore up self-confidence, resilience, emotional management; intimate relationships and personal narratives that maintain a sense of coherence and meaning; and social networks that are part of one's social capital (Clarke, 2008; Leary and Hoyle, 2009). An internal locus of control was evident among respondents in Phillips' (2012) quantitative study of Canadian workers' *self-made security*. In their self-made security, workers internalized what they believed was their own sources of workplace capital (skills, experience, and relationships with employers) and explained how this helped them to maintain work in the face of mass layoffs in 2008. Self-made security drew on their sense of coherence.

Sense of coherence and social capital were also important for the intermittent Quebec workers in Malenfant et al.'s (2007) qualitative study. Finding and keeping work required constant adaptation which they found significantly damaging to their sense of well-being. Some gave up trying to get work while others accepted compromises that contradicted their work ethics and values. Well-being was tied to their internal loci of control. Respondents perceived working intermittently as either a failure or more helpful in developing a broader range of skills and personal resources than they could realize in a secure job. They used internal loci of control to address a problem that is largely external.

Research finds that the more effective approach for individuals to deal with health problems is to assume an internal locus of control (Clarke, 2008). However, this might be at the expense of not acknowledging the structural causes of these problems to the extent they should be (Ross and Wright, 1998; Ville and Khlal, 2007). Moreover, some coping strategies with an internal locus of control result in deteriorating health, particularly the overconsumption of alcohol, food, or medications.

Coping strategies with an external locus of control involve collective resolutions to the health problems associated with job insecurity, such as unionization and collective bargaining or the actions of occupational health and safety (OHS) committees or the use of workplace wellness or health programs. In their cross sectional research involving 312 manufacturing firms in Ontario, Geldart, Smith, Shannon and Lohfeld (2010) found strong negative associations between injury, lost time rates, and workers' involvement in decision-making and OHS committees. Union membership, working in publically regulated employment, and maintaining (social capital) links to employers and workplaces were external coping strategies that limited the negative health effects of precarious employment in Dionne-Proulx's (2006) research comparing 418 health care workers, 1781 CEGEP teachers and 1000 construction workers with varying levels of education and employment statuses.

Employers often tackle occupational health issues through health promotion and individual lifestyle or wellness programs in the workplace or in policies for mediating issues such as disrespect and harassment between co-workers, workers and supervisors, and sometimes workers and clients. By attributing responsibility to individuals, these workplace health programs effectively individualize the risk and ignore how actual

structural conditions of work like job insecurity can mediate occupational health problems (Lipscomb, Loomis, McDonald, Argue and Wing, 2006; Messing, 1998; Tracey, 2008).

Institutionalized medical and pension benefits can enhance feelings of security, becoming another coping strategy with an external locus of control. As noted previously, contractual university faculty are often ineligible for all or parts of such benefits. Differential access to workplace services has been found to worsen occupational health, especially when health benefits or programs are selectively available to full-time permanent workers and not to temporary or contractual workers (Johnstone and Quinlan, 2006; Lippel, 2006; Mayhew and Quinlan, 2002).

Universally high labour and occupational health standards for all workers are a significant means of dealing with the health effects of job insecurity. In Finland, for example, temporary workers have lower stress levels than full-time workers because of universal workplace protections (Virtanen, 2006). Rodriguez (2002) found that throughout the 1990s, British temporary and contractual workers had far more legislated work protections and far fewer adverse occupational health issues than their counterparts in Germany. Occupational health is worsened for part-time, temporary and other precarious workers when they are not informed of their rights or of occupational health codes and workers compensation coverage that may help them (Johnstone and Quinlan, 2006; Rodriguez, 2002; Vallee, 2006). Lippel (2006) found that in the recently deregulated labour market of Quebec, work legislation was so remiss as to place precarious workers at greater risk than SER workers and occupational risk was “subcontracted out” (p. 252). Occupational illness was seriously underestimated as a

result. Proper workplace protections would significantly lower occupational health risks and protect precarious workers from the vagaries of job insecurity and its negative health outcomes (Jackson, 2006; Lewchuk et al., 2003; Messing, 2006, 1998; Quinlan, 2006, 1993; Vosko, 2006).

Coping with the individualization of risk and the anxiety, stress and concomitant physical health manifestations of job insecurity necessitates a series of strategies that draw on both internal and external loci of control, including psychosocial resources, collective bargaining, and workplace health programs. While actions that use external loci of control would be more effective in changing the structural conditions of job insecurity and therefore its negative health effects, strategies with an internal loci of control are more accessible to individuals in precarious and temporary jobs. Few studies have been completed on how such coping strategies have been used and experienced by contractual university faculty. This is another gap in the literature that will be addressed by this research.

2.e Summary and Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework for my dissertation rests on the literature reviewed in this chapter, beginning with the premise that the job insecurity resulting from neoliberal work restructuring affects professional as well as semi-skilled and unskilled workers. This mixed methods study intends to explore whether or not and how contractually hired university teachers experience job insecurity, and then how this affects their health and strategies for coping with health.

Job insecurity refers to respondents' uncertainty over future employment in the same position because of their reliance on temporary, limited term contracts (McDonough, 2000; Louie et al., 2006). This definition combines the concrete conditions and perceptions of job insecurity. It does not start with the premise that job insecurity is gendered or leads to job strain or negative effects for health. Instead, this definition allows respondents to raise it, or not, as an issue for research.

Academic capitalism has encouraged the rationalization of hiring and job insecure contractual teaching in universities across North America and Europe since the 1980s. This rationalization has been interpreted in a number of ways and two are deliberated in this thesis. Some critics fear that the recent growth in contractual teaching jobs in North American universities is part of a deprofessionalization of the academic profession, threatening academic freedom and tenure. Others imply that contractual university teaching represents a feminization of professorial work. Both of these theories were reviewed in this chapter. The question of whether or not respondents in this study see their job insecurity as a feminization of their professional work or see themselves as victims or opportunists of deprofessionalization under academic capitalism will be addressed in the concluding chapter of this dissertation.

Job insecurity and the rationalization of hiring have expanded under academic capitalism. Contractual teaching, once the beginning of a standard academic career, is now entrenched as a lower segment of the academic hierarchy in many universities. Differential status in the academic hierarchy affects the collegiality, social capital, and networks that are essential to creating and maintaining academic capital. Health is affected by these components of work.

Most of the literature on academic hierarchies, academic capitalism, and the rationalization of academic labour is based on quantitative survey research or provides theoretical or historical analyses. These studies and autobiographical narratives tend to focus on the work and status of contractual university teachers more than on the health effects of their job insecurity. This mixed methods study will address this gap by linking participants' experiences, interpretations, and perceptions of job insecurity to health.

In this chapter I reviewed research on the health effects of job insecurity. Until the 2000s, occupational health researchers did not have a clear definition of job insecurity so empirical studies measured various aspects that were more or less present in different types of contingent and temporary jobs. Earlier quantitative studies of neoliberal work restructuring for lower paid service workers looked for job strain, often finding that job strain was integral to job insecure work. Current research distinguishes between the health effects of job strain and job insecurity, partly because job strain is evident at some point in all jobs and is not always a problem for health. Job insecurity is a qualitatively different experience altogether, with deleterious health effects for anyone who is precariously employed.

The OH literature calls for qualitative research on how variations in the types of insecure jobs combine with the different social locations and statuses of precariously employed workers to affect health. For example, higher education is generally considered to be a positive health determinant. For highly educated contractual workers, however, the negative effects associated with job insecurity are heightened by the time and money invested in their education. This leads to such questions as: Are the health effects of job insecurity further mediated by workers' perceptions of choice, creativity, and autonomy

in their work? Or by their social capital and networks, collegiality, or social comparison in the workplace?

Coping with the health effects of job insecurity was the focus for the final section of this review. The literature again provides a number of concepts to be used later in this dissertation, beginning with the individualization of risk. With the individualization of risk, workers are responsible for the risks associated with insecure work and its ensuing negative health effects. Those who argue that risks are rationally chosen by workers seldom consider the weight of individualism as an ideology in their own theorizing. They presume that the higher the education, the better one's health and health choices and the more capable one is in dealing with stress, whether chronic or acute. The psychosocial work environment, such as in the lack of available options and a generalized climate of uncertainty, is ignored. Do contractual workers really have a choice of rejecting job insecure work in favour of SER jobs? The last section then turned to workers' psychosocial resources. Research shows that positive psychosocial resources like sense of control, self-efficacy, mastery, and self-esteem can provide some health protection. These can be elements of self-made security.

Research on how workers cope with adverse health effects often draws on the concept of internal and external locus of control. Psychosocial resources are used when workers feel they can control their situation themselves. This will be explored later in this thesis. When control is externalized, the focus is on the impact of institutional structures like organizational justice and access to workplace health benefits and programs. Do these mediate the health outcomes of workplace situations like job insecurity and status

differences? This research adds to the evaluative study of workplace health programs by introducing the experiences of highly educated contractual workers.

A literature review can never cover everything, but this chapter has set out a fairly extensive foundation for my study. Before beginning the research, I was aware that unanticipated experiences, conceptualizations, and processes would be revealed in the data. As will be shown in later chapters of this dissertation, I was not disappointed. The answers to many of my questions surprised me and led to more questions for future research and other literature reviews. At this point, I turn to the study itself. The next chapter details the methodology used in this research. Chapter Four explores the sources of job insecurity that participants identified as most salient to their experience of academic capitalism. These sources of job insecurity provide the background for an in-depth consideration of the health outcomes of job insecurity and participants' coping strategies, both detailed in subsequent chapters.

Chapter Three : Methodology

This dissertation is based on the findings of a mixed methods study of 32 women and men who taught contractually at ARU in 2008. It explores the sources of participants' job insecurity, its challenges to their health, and their coping strategies. This chapter details the design, methods, recruitment, data collection, and data analysis of the research. Briefly, the research design is based on the mixed methods approach, so a combination of methods was used. The first stage of the research involved 32 respondents completing a demographic survey and a *SF-12v.2® Health Survey*. Twenty-eight of these respondents agreed to complete parts or all of the second stage, which included another *SF-12v.2® Health Survey*, one or more task diaries and a semi-structured interview. These methods were supplemented by my observation notes taken prior to and during the research. Recruitment posed a few problems so there were two intakes of respondents in two separate semesters. Analysis of the data began during its collection and extended throughout the processes of transcribing the interviews and writing the dissertation. The analysis included categorizing the interview data according to respondents' issues and categorizing respondents according to a conceptual refinement of job insecurity. The following account of this methodology concludes with a description of the study sample before proceeding to the findings in Chapter Four.

3.a The Research Design

This research was designed as a mixed methods study. I wanted to explore the relationship between job insecurity and health from a qualitative and comprehensive

vantage so respondents' narratives in the semi-structured, open-ended interviews would be the foundation of the analysis. However, I also wanted descriptive data on the sample, their health, and their daily activities that could be compared and triangulated with these narratives. Rank (2004) argues that combining qualitative with quantitative methods permits such a triangulation of results for greater validity. We are closer to participants' issues and truths if they are repeated and aligned in various types of data. Anomalies between sources for each participant indicate a need to explore participants' meanings further or redirect the analysis or both.

My mixed methods approach was further influenced by ideas from grounded theory (Glaser and Strauss, 1967; Charmaz, 2001), institutional ethnography (D.E. Smith, 1987), new ethnography (van Maanen, 1988; Geertz, 1983; Goodall, 2003; Highmore, 2002), and extended case study (Burawoy, 1998). In all of these ethnographic methods, respondents' narratives are central to the analysis. Grounded theory, institutional ethnographies, and new ethnographies construct interpretations out of narratives. Subjects are, after all, the authorities of their own lives so subsequent analysis must be presented as an academic interpretation of that reality. One example of such an analysis in this research is the use of theoretical sampling, in which concepts and ideas are refined based on subjects' qualitative data. Researchers address conceptual gaps in the data by returning to the narratives for clarification and adjustment, rather than increasing the sample size. Theoretical sampling relates to the dimensions and variability of concepts (Charmaz, 2001; Corbin and Strauss, 1990; Goffman, 1959, 1961). In this study, the concepts of job insecurity and self-made security were further developed using this technique.

Elements of the extended case study approach appealed to me as a contractual teacher myself, because analysis incorporates the researcher's reality while exploring those of respondents. Both are then extended out to the larger social values, power analyses and the contexts of a situation (Burawoy, 1998; 2009; Van Maanen, 1988). The researcher who follows Burawoy's extended case study method considers how social context and situational knowledge change over time. He focuses on the process of how "power is reproduced through social actions in social situations" (Burawoy, 1998, 17) and then "move[s] beyond social *processes* to delineate social *forces* that impress themselves on the ethnographic locale" (p. 19, italics added).

Theory is integral to the research process in Burawoy's (1998) extended case study method and my research was guided by theory from its inception. For example, my ideas about job insecurity and the social context of work were informed by Bourdieu's (1988, 1994, 2001) concept of academic capital; Slaughter and Rhoades' (2004) academic capitalism; Weber's (1958, 1968) concept of rationalization; Larson's (1977) professional project and Derber's (1982) deprofessionalization; Beck's (1999, 2000) theories of risk and the flexibilization of work; and Vosko's (2006) concepts of the SER, precarious employment, and the feminization of work. The extended case study's combination of mixed methods with the most appropriate theoretical interpretations is well suited to examining job insecurity for different workers in their social contexts (Hartley, 2004).

Aspects of new ethnography were particularly relevant to this research because the sample was not bounded in the conventional sense of "community". New ethnographies focus on communities in flux that are defined by varying space, time, identity, and discourses. Identities are situational and "interaction is always a tentative

process that involves the continuous testing by all participants of the conceptions they have of the roles of others” (Angrosino and Mays de Perez, 2000, p. 681-682; Goodall, 2003; Van Maanen, 1988).

Finally, all of these qualitative approaches demand reflexivity during the research and in the analysis (Burawoy, 1998; Charmaz, 2001; Geertz, 1983; D.E. Smith). During the research, intervention by the researcher is unavoidable so situational knowledge should be exploited as a stimulus during the interviews. The researcher must admit that at least some of the writing is autobiographical and must look at how she, herself, affects the research process. Qualitative researchers need to question the extent to which personal perception and academic concepts distort their interpretations.

The mixed methods approach and elements of various ethnographic methodologies were used in this research to produce a rich body of data for exploring the occupational health effects of job insecurity among contractual university teachers. The methods are detailed in the next section.

3.b Research Methods

Four research instruments were consecutively administered to each participant during one of the two research semesters. Additional information was derived from my observations as researcher and as a long-serving contractual university teacher, as well as from interviews with representatives of the relevant unions and online human resources information.

The order in which the research instruments were administered was important. The demographic questionnaire provided descriptive and quantifiable information and the

SF-12v.2® Health Survey gave a quantitative measure of health as a norm-based comparison for each participant. These were administered during the first stage meetings to set the parameters of the group. They also provided participants with a reference point for the research that was quite useful during the second stage interviews later in the term. The task diaries, which could be quantified but also provided written qualitative data, were completed at the beginning of the second stage of the research for the same reason. A second task diary and the *SF-12v.2® Health Survey* were administered near the end of semester to record any changes in participants' health or daily activity during the semester. The open-ended, semi-structured interview was administered near the end of the semester, after participants had engaged with these earlier research instruments.

The demographic questionnaire (Appendix 1-E) included questions on respondents' social location, such as age, marital status, number and age of dependents, and spouse's or partner's occupation. It also asked for particular details of respondents' working conditions, including the quality of work (full- or part-time), number of contracts over the past two years, estimated hours of work on each contract and a brief description of any other jobs apart from contractual university teaching. All 32 participants, 12 men and 20 women, completed the demographic questionnaire in the first meeting.

The *SF-12v.2® Health Survey* (Appendix 1-D) was chosen to measure participants' general physical and mental health in relation to functionality at work. It is designed as a clinical assessment tool for physicians. It provides a norm-based comparison against the general 1998 US population norms on age and gender for each individual patient. Because it gives individual norm-based comparisons, the *SF-12v.2® Health Survey* can be administered to a small non-representative sample. In a large

enough group (32), the collated individual scores can be compared as a group to the larger population based sample. Variations of the *SF-12v2™ Health Survey* have been used in sociological and occupational health research involving both large and small samples (see Ware, Kosinski, Turner-Bowker and Gandek, 2007 for an extensive bibliography).

The *SF-12v.2® Health Survey* asks 12 questions on eight scaled items.

Respondents' answers were entered and compiled in the accompanying Quality Metric software as individual scaled scores and as both group and individual norm-based comparisons for each item and for physical and mental health in general. The norm varies slightly on each component. This norm-based scoring is based on the

linear transformations of scores to achieve a mean of 50 and a standard deviation of 10 in the general 1998 US population, for both the *SF-12v.2® Health Survey* physical and mental health summary measures ... [and on] all eight *SF-12v.2® Health Survey* scales to make comparisons across scales much more meaningful and to simplify their interpretation in relation to population norms (Ware et al., 2007, p. 41).

All 32 participants completed an initial *SF-12v.2® Health Survey* during the first meetings. Those who agreed to continue to the second stage of the research were asked to complete another *SF-12v.2® Health Survey* closer to the end of the semester. Twenty-eight did so, including 11 men and 17 women.

I used the task diaries (Appendix 1-F) to trace participants' management of time and tasks during two separate days near the middle and end of semester. Each single day was divided into 13 one hour (or more) periods and respondents were asked to fill them in as completely as they could. The breakdown of tasks, time of completion, and whether or not it was a "typical day" were entered into a SPSS spreadsheet for quantitative analysis. Some participants were brief; others added copious details that were incorporated into the

analysis as qualitative written information. The task diaries were the least well received of the research tools among this sample. I asked for three task diaries in the consent forms but this was soon reduced to one or two after several participants told me they could not find enough time to fill them out. Twenty-five participants did the first task diary near the middle of semester, but only 13 completed the second task diary near the end of semester. The first task diary was compared to each respondent's initial estimates of their work time per week on the demographic survey. The second set of task diaries gave a sense of how respondents' workload changed throughout the semester. The problem of getting participants to complete these task diaries became part of the data itself and was ultimately useful in introducing the question of job strain during the semi-structured interviews.

The qualitative semi-structured interviews and narratives are central to the analysis in this research. Such narratives produce valid responses because the interviewer can ask for clarification and trace how subjective meanings are formed. They reveal complexity in the attitudes, motivations and behaviours of social actors. In addition, health narratives can become coping strategies in and of themselves. For example, Ville and Khlat's (2007) respondents developed meaning and a health enhancing sense of coherence by delineating causal relationships between their health and life events during the research.

The semi-structured interviews (Appendix 1-G) were conducted near the end of the semester, after the other research instruments were completed. Twenty-seven of 32 respondents agreed to do an interview (10 men and 17 women) and all set the time and place. All but one agreed to be digitally recorded and all but three followed my interview

schedule. The three who did not answer direct questions made it clear that they wanted to “say my piece without interruption” and began their narratives without any prompting from me. All participants were free to elaborate on anything they deemed relevant to the research during the interviews and in the task diaries. Most of the information I was seeking eventually came out in their monologues or they willingly answered any remaining questions afterwards. Interview times ranged from one half to two and a half hours, with most lasting about an hour.

My own observations and experiences as a contractual university teacher were recorded in personal diaries prior to and during the research. Although they are not foundational to this study, they helped me situate the research for participants during our initial first stage meetings (Krizek, 2003; D.E. Smith, 1987). My tacit understandings and insider information helped in developing further questions during the interviews and guided a concurrent categorization of the data (Bochner and Ellis, 2002; Van Maanen, 1988). The tacit knowledge of the researcher both informs the analyses and is a useful research tool in itself, as found in the 158 workplace ethnographies reviewed by Tope et al. (2005).

3.c The Research Process

3.c.i Recruitment

The proposal for this study was approved by an Interdisciplinary Committee on Ethics in Human Research in January 2008. The research at ARU began immediately. Twenty-three respondents either volunteered to participate in the study in response to my advertised request or were snowball sampled during the winter semester of 2008. Another

nine were recruited through the same advertisement or were snowball sampled in the fall semester of 2008.

Two intakes of participants had to be conducted in the two separate semesters (winter and fall 2008) because of a few difficulties with recruitment. The first was identifying the population. Institutional data on contractual academics in Canada was incomplete or not available in 2008. To start the recruitment process, I contacted the Human Resources Department of ARU, the ARU faculty association, and the recently formed per-course contractuels' union to request contact information for contractually hired teachers over the past year. These requests were denied for two reasons. First, access to any lists of either per-term or per-course contractuels was restricted due to privacy issues. Secondly, the representatives of all three organizations said they did not have an accurate list of names and email addresses because of the high turnover and changing statuses of contractual teachers. The faculty association only represented per-term contractuels while they were on contract. For many, this was only two thirds of each year. Up to 2008, even CAUT, the Canadian Association of University Teachers, had not kept track of the numbers of contractual university teachers across the country because their member faculty associations could not provide reliable numbers for their annual faculty review (CAUT 2007, email correspondence). The per-course contractuels' union had not yet brokered a contract with the university, so did not have access to departmental lists themselves.

Without a population list, a randomized search for respondents was impossible. Instead, a general advertisement for participants (Appendix 1-A) was sent out to all ARU newspapers and posted on an interdepartmental news listserv near the beginning of the

2008 winter semester. I also emailed each department secretary and asked that the advertisement be forwarded to their contractual teachers. The proposed research plan was to administer the first stage of the study, including the demographic and *SF-12v.2*® *Health Surveys*, to all per-term respondents to this initial advertisement. I would then select a minimum of 30 from this group who would become participants in the second stage of the study. I assumed that a population so well versed in the necessity of research on health and job insecurity would respond positively to my recruitment call.

Fewer than anticipated responded to the first advertisement and I did not get enough volunteers to meet even the minimum sample of 32 required to run the *SF-12v.2*® *Health Survey* as a group. I was soon informed by potential respondents that one problem was in the initial definition of my target population. The first call was only to *per-term* contractals who were hired to teach full-time (at least 3 courses per semester) for one, two or more semesters and for whom contractual teaching is a primary source of income. This group was chosen based on Rajagopal's (2002) analysis of *contemporaries* in the post-secondary system. Their income depended on contractual teaching, so I assumed that they were more susceptible to its inherent job insecurity. I did not want to include those who Rajagopal categorized as *classics*, those with a primary income from another job because they are not job insecure in my definition. This categorization proved to be less applicable at ARU where many per-course instructors did not have a more secure source of income from regular permanent employment. Rajagopal's categories were designed for a different university and were not as applicable in this study.

Two weeks after the first advertisement was posted, I revised the definition of my target population on the advice of five per-course contractual respondents. They insisted

that they should be included in the study because they, too, experienced job insecurity and depended on this work as their primary source of income, as small as it was. Three of these initial five regularly switched between per-term and per-course contracts.

The second advertisement (Appendix 1-B) invited anyone to participate if contractual teaching was their primary source of income. To clarify this, the advertisement was revised to substitute the word *teaching* for the word *term* in the title. It now read “Teaching contractals wanted for a study on job insecurity and health.” The revised advertisement included the proviso that contractual teaching was the respondent’s primary source of income. It also assured recipients that the research had been approved by the Interdisciplinary Committee on Ethics in Human Research at the university where I was a doctoral candidate. The first advertisement did not include this ethics statement on the recommendation of Miller and Boulton (2007), to avoid seeming too officious and to distinguish this study from surveys by the ARU administration. Including the ethics statement in the second advertisement, however, helped to assuage fears of exposure among those who responded.

The revised advertisement was posted on the university wide electronic news listings. I tacked up paper copies on bulletin boards and hand-delivered the advertisements to the two departments with the highest proportions of contractual teachers on campus according to the faculty association and from which there had been no initial response. The third method of participant recruitment was snowball sampling. I approached possible candidates referred to me by earlier respondents and who I met during a contractals’ social function.

The first intake in the winter semester of 2008 finished with 25 respondents, 23 of whom went on to become participants. In the second intake during the fall semester of 2008, I used the same revised advertisement. Participant recruitment finished with a total sample of 32. By the end of the recruitment process, 20 of the 32 participants had volunteered in response to the advertisements and 12 were snowball sampled. In the final sample, the 14 per-course contractuals were not classics by Rajagopal's (2002) definition because they depended on teaching for their primary source of income. The 18 per-term contractual participants did fit Rajagopal's classification of contemporaries, but usually only for two thirds of the year. Twenty-five of my final 32 respondents regularly switched between per-term and per-course appointments.

The final 32 respondents comprise a *convenience sample*, defined by self-selection. Convenience sampling has constituent biases that can affect recruitment positively or negatively, but as Bryman (2004) and Van Maanen (1988) point out, such bias can just as easily exist in any randomized sample where respondents must give consent to participate. For example, recruitment may have been affected by perceptions of risk. Being highly educated, most respondents in this study understood how stress is caused by multiple factors. They might have been concerned that disclosing health issues would compromise their privacy and lead to the loss of future contractual work. So the question becomes: Why did some take these risks when others would not? Cultural studies have found that some subjects need to take risks to feel at least momentarily unfettered or to take a stand against constraint (Lupton, 1999). In the end, those who did come forward insisted that this study "needs to be done" (Sylvie) and regarded the process as cathartic or important to social change or both.

Another potential bias in this sample is that volunteers may have been experiencing more insecurity and more health problems than others in the population. Little can be done to control for this in a convenience sample, but I am confident that participants did *not* over-report negative health effects for two reasons. The first is that several carefully monitored themselves during the interview narratives for any over-exaggeration. They qualified their remarks on poor health by noting that “the same can be said of any job,” even when relating specific health issues to the insecurity of this particular job.

The second reason I believe respondents did not exaggerate the negative health effects of their insecurity was because their *SF-12v.2® Health Survey* results were higher on physical health when compared to US 1998 population norms on age and gender. This is predicted by the literature on the health determinants of education (Raphael, 2010). Less predictably from the social determinants literature, but corroborating the negative health effects of job insecurity, respondents’ results in the norm-based comparisons were much lower on mental health.

3.c.ii Collecting the data

The study proceeded in two stages, as illustrated in Table 2, p. 79. In the first stage, I visited or phoned each of the 32 respondents for a 20 to 30 minute initial meeting early in the semester. Respondents could choose where and when to meet. Past research has found that interviews should preferably take place in informants’ homes or at neutral meeting places to avoid circumscribing responses by workplace associations (Hollander, 2004). Most of my respondents, however, chose to meet in their workplace offices. A few

who did not have good office space opted to meet elsewhere on the ARU campus and only one wanted to meet off campus.

Table 2: The two stages of the study

Stage One: 32 respondents completed an initial ...	> meeting (30 in person, 2 by phone)
	> consent form (n=32)
	> demographic survey (n=32)
	> <i>SF-12v.2® Health Survey</i> (n=32)
Stage Two: 28 participants went on to complete parts or all of ...	> 2nd consent form (n=28)
	> 2 sets of task diaries (25 earlier in the term, 13 later)
	> <i>SF-12v.2® Health Survey</i> near end of term (n=28)
	> semi-structured interview near end of term (n=27)

At the beginning of the initial meetings, respondents and participants were briefed on the nature and intent of my research and on how their data and identifying information would be safe-guarded and kept confidential. I assured them that their participation was free and voluntary and asked them to sign a consent form for each stage in which they were willing to participate. These consent forms promised a significant degree of confidentiality (see Appendices 1-C-i and 1-C-ii). In keeping with the consent forms, obvious associations between particular responses and departments or other people within ARU were masked in the interview transcripts and observation notes. I assured participants that their electronic data files would be stored securely on my personal computers and would be password-protected. I personally transcribed two-thirds of the

digitally recorded semi-structured interviews using a computerized media player and a word processing program. An assistant transcribed the other third and I checked each of these transcriptions verbatim against the digitally recorded file. When completed, the digitally recorded files were deleted from all computers and the assistant no longer had access to any of the data. Hard copies of the research information are stored in a filing cabinet off campus and under lock and key.

Data from respondents' demographic and *SF-12v.2*® *Health Surveys* during the first stage meetings are reported anonymously, as quantitative measures. Participants created their own pseudonyms for the qualitative data. The master list with corresponding names was accessible only to me and used only for clarification during data collection. For further privacy protection, participant names, contact information, and consent forms are sequestered under lock and key and kept separate from the data. These procedures are in the guidelines of the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada's (2009) *Tri-council policy statement: Ethical conduct for research involving humans*.

Some of the initial meetings with respondents included dialogues in which we compared experiences and exchanged institutional information on working contractually in university workplaces. I acknowledged my own participation both as interviewer and as a reference point, noting that my observations would help inform the analysis. This signified an understanding of the issues and my willingness to collaborate in the interview process, both found helpful in other workplace research (Miller and Boulton, 2007; Sanger, 2003; D.E. Smith, 1987; Tope et al., 2005; Wagle and Cantaffa, 2008). I referred those who were curious or worried that I might present a victim-oriented interpretation of their interview narratives to my brief autoethnographic paper (L. Parsons, 2006). I

reflected on how my personal choice of working contractually was embedded in the contradictory discourses surrounding work and family for women. I believe participants' faith in my representing them fairly was strengthened when I empathized with their stories. Self-identifying as one of the group and using my own reflections helped to establish trust.

In keeping with ethics commitments and when it was helpful, I provided respondents with information from the ARU Sexual Harassment and Respectful Workplace policies and on the university's employee counselling services. Respondents were informed that the only benefit to them in participating in this research was to air concerns and contribute to our knowledge of the relationship between job insecurity and health. Finally, I assured them that they were free to refuse to answer questions or to withdraw from the study at any time, as guaranteed in both consent forms.

By the end of the two research semesters, 32 of an initial 34 respondents completed the first stage of the research and 24 completed all of the second stage. Four more responded to parts of the second stage and only four did not complete any of the second stage. The data collection concluded with 32 initial meetings, 32 demographic surveys, 32 first stage and 28 second stage *SF-12v.2*® *Health Surveys*, 25 mid-semester and 13 end-of-semester task diaries, and 27 end-of-semester semi-structured interviews with participants.

3.c.iii Working with the data

Qualitative data analysis differs from quantitative in part because it yields observations and tendencies rather than statistically confirmed relationships. Analysis begins at the moment of collection. During the initial first stage meetings in this research, several respondents provided detailed qualitative data so I started tentative categorizations immediately after each meeting. One result of these early conversations was that the sample parameters changed, as noted above. I also used these observation notes as data and to prepare for the semi-structured interviews later in the semester. During the interviews, they helped to introduce relevant questions and discussions.

The demographic and *SF-12v.2® Health Surveys* administered during the first stage meetings and the task diaries in the second stage provided data that was immediately entered in either the Quality Metric (2007) software or *SPSS Student Version 14.0* (SPSS Inc, 2006). This produced preliminary descriptive statistics of the sample. Each respondent was sent a personal health report and the brief comparison of their health with a norm-based reference group that was generated by the *SF-12v.2® Health Survey* software. I referred back to these reports to set the context for the health-related questions in the semi-structured interviews.

The preliminary quantitative analyses were updated and refined after the second stages of the research were complete. For example, I extended some of the data from the demographic survey to approximate income. The annual individual incomes of respondents were derived from their answers to questions on current contractual status, status over the past few years and the amount of time spent in other sources of work. I

used these in conjunction with information from the ARU administration and statistics from the Canadian Association of University Teachers (CAUT, 2004-2010), Statistics Canada (2007b, 2010a) and Canada's National Occupational Classification codes (Human Resources and Skills Development Canada (HRDSC), 2009) for the province of the study. I had to go beyond these sources only once to look at PayScale Inc. (2008) in the case of a spouse with a postdoctoral research position. Spousal incomes were estimated based on responses to questions on spouses' occupational and job statuses plus whether or not they worked full-time. Most spouses of my respondents worked "Standard full year, full-time hours," where the range is 1900 to 2300 hours per year according to Statistics Canada (2007b). This was averaged at 2100 hours for each spouse working full-time. Wage rates for each occupation were also averaged. Because I did not ask specifically about spouses' working histories, length of service was not included in the calculations. Salaries would be higher if spouses worked for longer periods, so mine are conservative approximations. Nevertheless, they are adequate for giving a snapshot of family income. Household income was approximated by adding together the total income for respondents and their spouses, factoring in whether or not they worked full-time.

The second quantitative measure, the *SF-12v.2® Health Survey*, was quick and easy to administer, score and interpret. The accompanying software by Quality Metric (2007) did a norm-based comparison of the sample with the US 1998 population on age and sex. It further reported on the physical and mental health scores for each individual, how these varied from the US norms, and how the individual's health status changed to either *better*, *the same* or *worse* between two or more surveys. I used the measures on the last survey completed for each of the 32 sample participants to gauge their variations

from the norms. The change in health was available for 28 participants who completed the second *SF-12v.2® Health Survey*.

Other determinants of health such as education and income could be incorporated into the descriptive coding of the *SF-12v.2® Health Survey* but not into its statistical analysis. To explore possible associations with these and other relevant variables, I extended the *SF-12v.2® Health Survey* data using the *SPSS Student Version 14.0* (2006) (SPSS Inc., 2006) program to produce the descriptive statistics and cross tabulations referred to in this dissertation.

Within the *SF-12v.2® Health Survey*, the size of the group is important in determining “statistical power.” With the smaller sample of this study, the only potential comparisons available were the differences between a group mean and a fixed norm, which required 32 responses to accurately detect five points of difference, and the differences within the same group over time which needed 30 respondents doing two or more surveys (Ware et al., 2007). The 32 respondents in this study completed the first survey early in the semester (dated February 15, 2008 for convenience). There was enough to do a significant group comparison between the sample mean and a fixed norm. However, because only 28 respondents completed a second *SF-12v.2® Health Survey* (dated later in March, 2008), I could not do a comparison of differences over time within the group.

The task diaries revealed participants’ daily workload, the types of work they performed, the intersection of paid and unpaid work and their organization of time—all of which were categorized for analysis. The task diary data were transcribed into a word processing program, coded, and then entered into a spreadsheet rubric for quantification. I

used this rubric and the quantified measures in *SPSS Student Version 14.0* (SPSS Inc., 2006) to produce further descriptive statistics and some cross tabulations. I also referred to participants' task diaries during their semi-structured interviews to determine whether or not they associated their tasks with job strain, job insecurity, or both.

These various uses of the quantitative data helped to create a statistical description of my convenience sample and their health. Although I cannot use it to generalize about the health of all contractual university teachers, it does indicate directions for exploration in the qualitative data here and in future research. I use this statistical description to help deduce patterns and relationships, and then turn to my qualitative data for explanations.

In all 27 of the semi-structured end-of-semester interviews, participants started with their work histories. They defined health and rated their own health, often briefly noting how it was affected by job insecurity before going on in the interview. They then described a positive or negative critical incident in the workplace by elaborating on the precipitating circumstances and on how they dealt with it. The critical incident focus is designed to link emotion to job conditions, coping strategies, and organizational processes. Subjects in McDonald, Daniels and Harris' (2004) study, for example, mapped the conventions of their daily work and identified a specific and recent emotional experience at work. They enumerated first the primary and then the secondary job conditions related to this experience, and then described their emotional reactions. They reviewed their coping strategies for dealing with these emotions and traced the immediate and subsequent long-term consequences of the incident. Following the same template in this research, participants' critical incidents reveal the subjective complexity of the meanings and relationships between health, contractual status, and job insecurity, and of

how participants coped. When they could not immediately recall an incident during the interview, I provided anonymous examples from other participants' or my own narratives as illustrations. They then provided their own critical incidents.

As mentioned above, the digital files from the interviews were uploaded to my computers, transcribed, and then deleted from the recording device. With the full collection of transcriptions before me, I used a software program, NVIVO 7.0 (QSR International, 2007), to begin categorizing the qualitative data. As in quantitative data, the results produced by qualitative computer software depend on the coding (Burnard, Gill, Stewart, Treasure and Chadwick, 2008; Davidson and Jacobs, 2008). I started by doing a series of preliminary text searches for key words throughout the interviews, the task diary transcripts, and my observation notes from the preliminary meetings. I used both my literature review and the relevant points in the data to select the search terms and to refine the categorizations. This yielded 75 text searches, which were then sorted according to emerging patterns and themes in the data which related to the main research questions. Twenty-four data files emerged. After eliminating repetition and overlap and refining the categories, I reviewed the transcripts once more to find any points from participants not yet acknowledged. The meticulous transcriptions of the interviews were indispensable in this process.

The next step was to apply a rubric to each data file to deduce common and disparate patterns in the narratives. I wrote a summary matrix for each of the 24 theme files, complete with selections of illustrative quotes. I then looked for links, commonalities, and differences across the files. This entailed moving between the summary matrix and data analysis files and back again, drawing inferences from the data

to add to subsequent analysis. I relied on the strategies first developed by Glaser and Strauss (1967) and refined and revitalized many times since (e.g. Brause, 2003; Burnard et al., 2008, Nadin and Cassell, 2004). These 24 data matrices provided the basis for the qualitative portion of this dissertation.

During this analysis, I was informally triangulating the results of the different methods to see how job insecurity has patterned outcomes, even within a fairly diverse small sample. Triangulation is important in bringing together the results of different methods. It is used to check validity and uncover disconfirming evidence, reaching beyond quantitative or qualitative methods alone (Fine, Weis, Weseen, and Wong, 2000; Fontana and Frey, 2000; Hartley, 2004).

Triangulating the data in the final stages of analysis revealed a need for theoretical sampling (Charmaz, 2001) to clarify my concept and application of job insecurity. All participants in this study were job insecure, but to varying degrees, so I needed to categorize their data according to their level of job insecurity. When considering how to do this, I had to avoid distorting or misrepresenting respondents' answers to fit the categories. The measure of job insecurity used in occupational studies during the 1990s, in which job tenure is less than two years (Hirsch and Naquin, 2001; Kalleberg, 2000), was rejected. If I had used this definition, none of the 25 participants who had switched from per-term to per-course or unemployed and back in the previous two years (2006 to 2008) would be considered insecure. All had successive contracts from the same employer. Despite a clear pattern of frequent rehiring, all but two of the 27 interviewees were uncertain as to whether or not their contracts would be renewed in the following semester and year. The approaching end of semester evoked job insecurity for these 25

respondents. While the job was unlikely to disappear, getting the contract to do that job was never guaranteed.

To gauge their level of job insecurity, then, I engaged in theoretical sampling and reviewed participant's transcripts and elaborations on the task diaries, as well as my observation notes, for direct references to their (1) job insecurity and to (2) the uncertainty of future contracts. I also looked for statements about having (3) little to no departmental support, (4) ambiguous roles within their departments, and (5) negative workplace interactions. On a personal level, I looked for indications of (6) feelings of having little control, (7) difficulty in planning for the future, (8) financial problems, and (9) having no future plans for changing their situation. Generally, those with three or fewer of these indications were categorized as *low on insecurity*, those with four to six aspects were classified as *medium on insecurity*, and those with seven to nine were classified as *high on insecurity*.

Based on a small convenience sample, the results of this research are not statistically significant, but they are useful in denoting where respondents generally fall on levels of job insecurity. I refer to these categorizations throughout the remainder of the thesis, to indicate how levels of job insecurity translate into daily life. Respondents' categorizations on job insecurity were cross-tabulated with some of the demographic findings of their social location (see Table 3, p. 97). The results triangulated well with other indications of job insecurity, as discussed in the following chapters.

Four of Burnard et al.'s (2008) means of validation were used in the analysis to verify that my interpretation of the data is valid. These include my explanation of the research methods and analysis in explicit and careful detail for each respondent, a search

for contrary cases that might change my results, and engaging in an ongoing comparison with similar studies and texts. For the fourth means of validation, seven participants were asked to review and confirm their statements and quotes that might be included in the dissertation. Six asked for minimal revisions only, which was reassuring. Only one wanted to have the quotes removed, but still wanted to be counted in the general sample. All seven verified the accuracy of my analysis.

Because the sample is small, participants are identified in these chapters by a chosen or assigned pseudonym, as well as by their levels of job insecurity and other variables.

3.d Conclusion

This chapter has described the mixed methods approach as used in this study of contractual teachers at ARU. The methodology began with a brief description of the research design and the quantitative and qualitative methods employed during the fieldwork. The quantitative data provide descriptive statistics of the health and social locations of participants. The qualitative data predominate in the final analysis.

I reviewed my sampling strategies and the problems inherent in recruiting from a vulnerable population, including the perception of risk in providing information about the health effects of job insecurity. In the conclusion to this study, I discuss how and why such risks must be weighed in the research process and offer recommendations to future researchers.

Over the course of the research, each participant was asked to participate in two stages of the study and complete four research instruments. Because of sampling issues,

this study extended over two semesters. This chapter reviewed the data collection and analysis during and after the research, and then described the sample. The analysis employed triangulation, reflection, tentative conclusion, doubt, new links and considerations, and then further reflection. It was an engaging process and one that offers as valid a representation of participants' reality as is possible under these research parameters.

I am confident that this study has captured the subjective meanings of participants, the definitive attribute of good social science according to Van Maanen (2002, 1988), Goodall (2003) and D.E. Smith (1987). My analysis also meets the criteria of reflexivity when I assess how my own perspective and social location affect the interpretation of participants' narratives (Messing, 1998; D.E. Smith, 1987; Warren 2001). My social location as an insider helped in knowing which questions to ask and how to frame them differently for individual participants (Goffman, 1974; Tope et al., 2005; Zinn, 2001). Researchers with insider status are better equipped to evaluate the information they receive, possibly because they are politically sensitive to using and reporting on certain types of information (Becker, 1998; Bergman and Coxon, 2005). I carefully appraised the utility of each illustrative quote in this dissertation, who would be affected, and who might be rendered even more vulnerable. Ultimately, the final choice of study parameters, categories, and interpretation of participants' discourse is mine alone, as befits good sociology (Ellis and Bochner, 2000; Giddens, 1995a; Kondo, 2001; D.E. Smith, 1987).

The mixed methods approach used in this research provided invaluable lessons in developing multiple research skills and understanding complexity. The combination of

methods was very productive, as illustrated in the following three chapters where I present my findings and continuing analysis.

Chapter Four: Sources of Job Insecurity among Contractual University Teachers

At this university, they tend to hire contractals only on a four or eight month basis as opposed to a full year, or better yet, a 3 year cycle. It makes life more difficult – you are never entirely sure of whether or not you are going to be doing this next year – are they going to be hiring a new faculty member? In my section? So that my position is made redundant and there's no place for me? (Ian).

Respondents in this research answered an advertisement for participants in a “study on job insecurity and health.” All 32 who agreed to a first stage meeting referred to the upcoming termination of their contracts at semester's end. The 27 second stage interviewees expanded on job insecurity and its health effects for contractual university teachers. All but one of these 27 participants interpreted job insecurity as a structural aspect of contractual work that creates anxiety over future employment and income. This chapter investigates participants' perceptions of the sources of job insecurity in their working lives.

Participants identified three main sources of job insecurity: the hiring process, which incorporates both academic tradition and rationalized management practices; the lower pay associated with contractual work; and their status as contractals in the academic hierarchy. Before proceeding to these three sources of job insecurity, the first section of this chapter describes the sample.

4.a The Sample

The convenience sample in this research numbered 32. This was about 7% of the combined ARU population of per-term and per-course contractals in 2008 according to

the retrospective counts by the faculty association and the per-course contractuels' union. The combined ARU population of contractuels was 422 in the first semester of research and 459 in the second. Institutional records of repeat hiring were not available but most participants here were employed in both semesters. Seventeen of the 18 per-term teachers had at least an eight month contract over the fall and winter semesters. Many then drew Employment Insurance (EI) or switched to per-course teaching of one or two per-course classes in the spring semester. All of the 14 per-course contractuels taught one or two courses on a four month basis and were applying to teach courses in the following semester. For most, getting a four month per-term contract (no benefits or pension included) was an occasional but welcome boon to the bank account.

Of the 32 respondents who completed the first stage of the research, six had taught for two years or less and only one of these was on her first contract. Ten respondents had taught as a contractual for more than a decade, six for 6 to 10 years, and ten for 3 to 5 years. Most respondents were from the science and arts faculties at ARU. Only six taught in the professional schools. This was a highly educated sample. Four of the 32 respondents held only a Bachelor's degree, but two of these had additional professional certification and the other two were working on Master's degrees. Seven respondents had completed PhDs, 11 were working on PhDs, and 10 held a Master's degree.

Approximated annual household incomes were reasonable for the majority of respondents. Eleven had household incomes of greater than \$100,000 and eleven more were in the \$50,000 to \$99,000 range. In 2008, the average total income for economic families (two or more people) in Canada was \$91,700 in 2010 dollars (Statistics Canada, 2012b). Six respondents had estimated household incomes of \$30,000 to \$50,000 and

four lived in poverty at less than \$30,000 a year. Twenty respondents were married, 12 were single.

On age, two respondents were 65 years or older, nine were 50-59 years old, seven were 40-49, eleven were 30-39, and three were under 30 years old. This appears to be a relatively older sample compared with US studies in which contractual university teachers are often younger (e.g. Garcy, 2002). However, Canadian university educators are aging. Forty-seven percent (15 of 32) of the participants in this study were over 45 years of age compared with almost 60% of all university educators and over 50% of “part-time” professors in Canada in 2005 (Lin, 2008). Lin (2008) and Kershaw (2009) speculate that aging contractals are frequently retired professors returning to work part-time. However, none were included in this sample because of the requirement that contractual teaching was the participant’s primary source of income. For these participants, contractual teaching was more than a temporary student or retirement job.

Twenty women and 12 men agreed to participate in this research, for a gender ratio of 62.5% women to 37.5% men. This gender ratio compares well with the Canadian Association of University Teachers’ (CAUT, 2004-2010) national population data on gender for all disciplines. In the university-specific CAUT data for ARU in 2005/2006, “Other” women outnumbered “Other” men by 64.3% to 35.7%. “Other” is a non-tenured category which included per-term but not per-course contractals, as discussed in Chapter Two. The gender ratio in this sample does not match the combined membership statistics from ARU’s per course contractals’ union and the faculty association. Here 47% of the 422 per-term and per-course contractals in the Winter semester of 2008 were men, suggesting that men are somewhat underrepresented in my sample. However, the

combined totals at ARU incorporate those who fall into Rajagopal's (2002) "classic" category of adjuncts. These are more often men than women who teach a few extra courses a year for status or interest, in addition to their outside jobs or after retirement. Again, these classics were excluded from this study sample by the stipulation that eligible participants had to rely on contract teaching as their primary source of income.

All of the 14 per-course and 18 per-term contractuales in this sample relied on contractual teaching as their primary source of income, which I designated as a key element of job insecurity. After the data were collected, I categorized participants by level of job insecurity. Each transcript was evaluated according to the weight placed on nine indicators of job insecurity (p. 89 above).

Among the eight designated as *low on job insecurity*, one participant said that job insecurity did not affect him at all. Three women and four men recognized that job insecurity is a problem for other contractuales and five of these had been job insecure earlier in their career. Five were on contracts of one to three years, three of the five men and two of the three women were married to professional spouses, and two women were financially secure from other than household income. Only one of the eight who were *low on job insecurity* did not proceed to the second stage of the research.

The nine respondents with *medium job insecurity* often qualified their worries. They either discussed plans and strategies if they didn't get work or hopes that the faculty association or the per-course contractual union would uphold their seniority rights when negotiating the next collective agreements. Two of these nine worked as laboratory instructors in permanent per-term positions for two thirds of each year, as mandated after five years of service by their non-faculty union. Only three of the 32 respondents

altogether were in this non-faculty union. None of the other 29 respondents qualified for permanent teaching positions at any stage of their work history. Others in the *medium on job insecurity* category felt that they had departmental support that would carry them from year to year. A few mentioned their financial flexibility now that they were getting older and had more income stability. One of those with *medium job insecurity* did not go on to the second stage of the research.

Fifteen of the 32 respondents were categorized as *high on job insecurity* and the overall tenor and remarks in their interview narratives revealed unmitigated anxieties. They related stories of co-workers who were (unfairly) not rehired and how this impacted them. They spoke further of the uncertainty and lack of safety they felt in the application and hiring process and of an anomic feeling that they had no other employment prospects. A few worried that others in their department lobbied against them. Three of the respondents with *high job insecurity* did not complete the second stage of the research.

In the cross-tabulations of these categories with other aspects of social location (see Table 3, p. 97), proportionately more women than men were *high on job insecurity* (55% of the women, 33.3% of the men). Proportionately more men than women were *low on job insecurity* (33.3% of the men, 20% of the women). This begs the questions: Are women more insecure than men or do they perceive more insecurity in contractual teaching? Or are they simply more willing to articulate their sense of insecurity?

Table 3: Selected variables cross-tabulated with level of job insecurity

Level of job insecurity, based on qualitative data			
	Low, n= 8	Medium, n=9	High, n=15
Length of service (n=32)			
1 to 2 years (n=6)	0%	33%	66%
3 to 5 years (n=10)	20%	30%	50%
6 to 9 years (n=6)	17%	33%	50%
Over 10 years(n=10)	50%	20%	30%
Switching contracts (n=32)			
Switch (n=25)	20%	28%	52%
No switching (n=7)	42%	29%	29%
Type of contract (n=32)			
Per-course (n=14)	14%	36%	50%
Per-term (n=18)	33.5%	22%	44.5%
Job strain or not (n=27)			
Job strained (n=11)	27%	27%	45%
Not job strained (n=16)	25%	37.5%	37.5%
Sex (n=32)			
Women (n=20)	20%	25%	55%
Men (n=12)	33.3%	33.3%	33.3%
Marital status (n=32)			
Single (n=12)	25%	25%	50%
Married (n=20)	25%	30%	45%

Other variables were important to job insecurity in this sample as well. For example, 52% of those who switched between per-course and per-term contracts compared with 29% of those who did not switch were *high on job insecurity*. Of the seven respondents in this sample who did not switch status, three had contracts of 12 months or more, two chose to remain per-course teachers and two held repeating eight month per-term contracts (for four and 13 years respectively) and drew Employment Insurance (EI) in the third semester. Length of service was also relevant: 66% of those

with less than two years of service were *high on job insecurity*, compared to 30% of those who had been working as contractuels for more than a decade.

Contractual status had less of an effect: 50% of per-course participants and 44% of per-term participants were *high on job insecurity*. This may be partially due to the lack of effective seniority rights for both groups. The per-course contractuels did not have seniority rights in 2008 because their newly formed union had not yet brokered a collective agreement with ARU. Per-term contractuels enjoyed a qualified recognition of their seniority in the faculty association, but most argued that it offered little real job protection. This is discussed further in the following sections.

4.b Source 1: Getting the Job: The Old Way and the New.

Well, what do I know [about the contractual hiring process in my department]? Seems entirely random to me. I mean people have good intentions but it can help people get to hell quicker ... Here's the problem: There's sort of an understood thing that nobody ever talks about but you can teach [for] a few years per-course and then you get some longer [contracts], and then you know, here's some more. But if the department can arrange for a tenure track position or they suddenly decide they want to rejig the whole system, there's not much we contractuels can do. [The work] will all disappear (Dave).

Obtaining successive teaching contracts without the assurance of seniority was the most formidable source of job insecurity cited by participants in this study. Contractual hiring is not a recent phenomenon in university workplaces but the process itself is changing. During the 20th century “adjuncts” or “sessionals” in North America and “teaching assistants” in Europe were recruited from the graduate student cohort on the recommendations of supervisors and mentors. Some were hired as spousal appointments on the request of faculty spouses or their colleagues. Such contracts began and continued

out of goodwill, depending on the contractuels' social networks and social capital. They were defined by uncertainty and ambiguity. With the rationalization of university management by the 1990s (Rhoades, 1998), contractual teaching was deemed a cost effective short-term alternative to hiring tenure track faculty. What participants in this study encountered in 2008 was a hiring process that drew from both the old and the new.

Traditionally, contractual teaching was one means of sponsoring selected graduate students into tenure track positions and an academic career. Some were tested and rejected or withdrew. Many of the contractuels in this sample were hired under this logic.

In the beginning of my second year of the PhD program, I was taking a theory course with two students in the class and two profs and we all just really clicked. So the following semester, one of the profs asked me if I wanted to co-teach with her. So that's how I started teaching. I never applied once for a sessional appointment in (this department). [I was asked to teach], yep. And I think part of that was because the policy was to just appoint grad students to teach the courses from semester to semester, unless someone from outside wanted to teach (here). Then they would have to apply (Sylvie).

As a traditional part of the socialization of graduate students, contractual teaching offers some preparation for the future academic labour market. Fourteen of the 32 respondents in this study were first hired while still registered as graduate students, many as part of their financial support package "because funding for graduate students here is just pretty minimal" (Sylvie). In 2008, graduate students at ARU were allowed to teach a maximum of two per-course contracts each semester and still retain their full-time student status. Taking on a per-term contract of three or more courses each semester meant forfeiting one's graduate student funding from most sources in Canada and switching to part-time student status.

A graduate student himself, Damien reasoned that giving priority to a graduate student justified his losing a follow-up contract.

About halfway through the term ... [I was asked] if I would like to teach my course again in the next semester so I expressed interest. But then about a month later I got this e-mail [from the department] saying I wasn't going to get it. No explanation as to who got it and why, and no discussion of seniority. That wouldn't happen at other universities. I was a little disgruntled and surprised with that, partly because I'm used to a very strong union [at my home university]. ... and this goes to job insecurity ... [But I found out that] ... they were considering a graduate student at the time and I'm ok with that. It would have been fine if they had actually sent an e-mail saying 'we really appreciate what you've done, [but] there's a grad student and we'd like to give them teaching experience.' Even though at another university that would have violated seniority.

Twelve participants were still in graduate programs during this research.

Hiring processes for graduate students differed somewhat between departments at ARU. Most departments required completion of at least a Masters' degree prior to hiring, but four interviewees in three departments were hired with only a Bachelor's degree or with their Master's degree still not completed. This was a supply issue, according to Ian.

Use to be, as soon as you were a graduate student at the Master's level, they would actually consider you for teaching. Partly that was from need. There was one point when the department was SO desperate for per-course instructors, they hired an undergraduate honours student to teach a course, which was fairly unprecedented. But these days the [process is] a little more formal, a little more rigorous. They expect students to have completed the graduate program in teaching [a series of teaching workshops coupled with some mentoring for a semester] and typically, to be beyond their first year [of graduate work] and preferably... toward the end of their program. So that it doesn't interfere with their time of completion and so on (Ian).

Other departments would hire only active PhD candidates and stipulated which stages of the program they should have completed, usually the course work and comprehensive examinations. A few respondents complained of patronizing supervisors who effectively blocked their teaching contractually to ensure that they completed their

graduate degrees. But six others appreciated this practice, admitting that their research suffered because of their teaching. They had little choice but to apply for teaching contracts because of financial exigencies. As pointed out by one seasoned contractual who had himself started to teach as a graduate student,

They're not doing the graduate students any favours by giving them a couple of courses. Because, in fact, they're just students and if they haven't taught before, they simply lose the semester learning how to teach for the first time. They pay full tuition that semester and what's left over wouldn't cover what they'd get if they were only full-time students with a teaching assistantship [TA]. And on top of that, they lose the half year. Unless they learn the real lesson which is, "don't spend any time on teaching." Which is a good lesson to learn (Dave).

Three respondents in this study, all *low on job insecurity*, were hired with the promise that they would secure a tenure track position if their work was suitable or after completing their PhD degrees. Two of them began teaching contractually in the 1980s and although the tenure never did materialize, their contracts continued.

Contractual hiring in universities is sometimes used to create a spousal appointment as an additional incentive for newly recruited tenure-track faculty to move to the area. In this sample, none of the ten respondents with faculty spouses (five women, five men) said they were overtly hired as spousal appointments. All but one were qualified for their positions and only two, both men, suspected they were favoured because of their spouses' faculty positions. One man told me that he would deliberately not ask for such an appointment, "though it's within my rights to do so" (Dave). Dave and three other participants who were faculty spouses felt "tied down", that they could not leave because of family ties. "They [the administration] know we're caught" (Terry).

Spousal appointments could displace many participants in this study, despite the faculty association collective agreement stipulation that spousal appointments should not

replace per-term positions that had already been approved by the administration.

However, per-term and per-course teaching contracts were not usually granted until late spring or just before the teaching semester, long after tenure track hiring and any spousal appointments were complete. There would be no “previously appointed” people to replace. For most per-term participants, this was after they were no longer employed on a contract and no longer members of the faculty association. Participants in the *high on job insecurity* category wondered how much they could rely on the faculty association to represent their interests if their per-term contracts were then offered instead to spousal appointments. One interviewee was tracking two requests for spousal appointments to her department that, if accepted, would replace two per-term people whose contracts were not yet approved for the following year. Someone was “going to get the axe.” Maeve noted:

How can you feel free [to grade students properly] if you know that you could be replaced anytime? If someone gets hired here, ... [they might say] “okay, if I come I want my husband or wife to have one or two courses.” So the department says to me “oh well, you’re bumped and you’re the reason.” They might say it’s because you teach badly, or they don’t like your course content, and it wouldn’t matter that no one has ever complained about you before, you know what I mean? It would really have nothing to do with me as a teacher.

Eleven participants voiced doubts that the faculty association guidelines would provide much protection if challenged.

I asked the department about it [the collective agreement], whether or not I would be the first considered for the term contract because I had it last year... They said basically they’ll still choose who the best candidate is, regardless of that clause. So I asked if it meant I didn’t have a chance at all and they said, “No.” They [said they] had to consider it, but they still have the right to choose the best candidate. So I don’t know how much the clause influenced their final decision (Della).

The traditional hiring processes were problematic in many ways. Although 23 of the 27 interviewees described some sort of *a priori* support and social capital in the form

of personal connections and goodwill, they also described the ambiguities it created.

Seventeen had been actively recruited to teach by former professors or friends and a few of the longer serving contractuels worried that this support was waning as their sponsors aged.

Well all my crowd is gone, all retired. The only one left is Dr. Oldguy. I'm sure I have his support and Dr. Otheroldguy. They were really encouraging at the beginning and helped me out quite a bit. But Dr. Newhire and people like her, I don't talk to these people or anything. I just don't know them. I actually don't trust this younger crowd as much as I trusted the older crowd. I just get that feeling that... you have to be political now in order to survive in the University whereas before we had my crowd, the [Oldguys] ... They just wanted to do their research and teach and that was their focus (Hal).

Others spoke of the possibilities of goodwill turning sour or of difficulties if those making the hiring decisions arbitrarily decided against them. For example, just before the start of the school year and after refusing other work opportunities, Catherine was informed that the longer per-term contract she was promised would be scaled back to nine months. Her department chair also told her that as a contractual, she was not in the faculty association. She called the faculty association anyway and discovered that she was, in fact, a member while on a per-term contract.

The faculty association spokesperson said they knew of other departments where this happened and if you don't know the difference, you don't know your rights. So anyway, I appealed the contract withdrawal and had to go to a hearing. I realized then that I should have saved emails. Earlier on, ... I had an e-mail from [an administrative person] saying "don't you worry about this, it'll all be fixed up".... [but] at the hearing he said "oh well, *you were just a lecturer* [emphasis mine], you weren't an assistant prof." I pointed out that "everything that came addressed to me was as an assistant prof, I sat on committees, I supervised students, I did everything that any other prof was doing and I was acting [in an administrative capacity] for three months." They lost their case. But it didn't do me any good ... our point was proven but there never was an apology [and the contract remained at nine months]. So yeah, that really stressed me out.

In this case, the administrator was actively defending his or her right to make a flexible last minute hiring decision at the expense of the contractual hire. Catherine's prior *ad hoc* agreement with the department was peremptorily dismissed.

Altogether, 13 of the 27 interviewees complained of a covert withdrawal of support (e.g. lack of communication) and of overt aggressive actions by tenured colleagues in key faculty positions. Six believed they were misled about upcoming contracts or interviews and five detailed cases of outright harassment. These stories are told elsewhere in this dissertation. Only four complained to the administration and then only after much deliberation, feeling that this was outside the boundaries of professional collegiality (see Chapter Six). The larger question is how much secrecy and workplace abuse is sustained in striving for such collegiality?

Under the older hiring processes at ARU, many contractuales did not receive a written job offer until after the teaching semester had started. A number of participants recalled promised contracts disappearing at the last minute. Others told of being hired at the "last minute, offered courses on Friday to start teaching on Monday. It's the story of adjuncts' lives" (Rachel). This was less of a problem for the more experienced teachers who had less work to prepare for their contracts. They were happy to get extra "last minute" teaching because of the additional income. It was still an issue for six respondents who were waiting to find out if a promised course would go ahead because of enrolments or funding. They would have little time to prepare.

One year it was mid-August before I found out. ... In June, it was "we're going to get you to teach this, then in July it was "no, we don't need you to teach now" and then in August it's "yeah, we will get you to teach it." That happened to me a couple of times. [A] few semesters ... I didn't have any teaching at all because it was all pulled at the last minute. Like last summer I had nothing. And [in] a few

semesters ... I was knocked back from a [per-term] contract to a per-course at the last minute. That's really hard on the budget! (Stephanie).

Few contractuels feel comfortable enough to formally express any lack of trust in *ad hoc* hiring agreements, fearing this would jeopardize their future chances of work. And despite the recent shift to a more rationalized hiring process for contractuels, Christian pointed out that "the university has no responsibility to actually hire you, even after they make the offer."

By 2008, Canadian universities had gone through a series of cost-cutting exercises. Administrators argued that they could not cut the salaries of tenured faculty which were negotiated with faculty associations and entrenched in collective bargaining agreements. The new rationalized protocols for contractual hiring, on the other hand, could be implemented as a budgeting tool.

Both the older and the newer hiring procedures created varying degrees of job insecurity for participants in this study. Some were consulted or at least informed of what was happening and a few described the efforts of their department [chairs] to preserve the better paying, less exploitative per-term contracts. These participants saw the cost-cutting logic and understood that their departments were expected to reduce teaching budgets through a complex system of course allotments between tenured and tenure track faculty and then among contractuels. Half of those who had taught for more than a decade found the traditional hiring process comprehensible. They were also *low on job insecurity*. Possibly they were more entrenched in the academic system or had developed the social capital needed to get the contracts. Like those *high on job insecurity*, they imagined that the new rationalized process of hiring would be more equitable. It had the appearance of

greater objectivity and managerial oversight (and thus less arbitrariness), but as Beck (1999) notes, career continuity is no longer assumed.

At ARU, last minute changes to contract offers continued and many like Stephanie (above) felt the unfairness of being “cut.” One respondent even had to wait until students were tested and then placed in her class after the semester started before she was awarded the contract. She worried that if she complained, she might lose the contract altogether. Six participants described how their departments responded to cost-cutting pressures by eliminating all per-term contracts and then re-distributing the courses on per-course contracts between those applying. All contractuals were then awarded at least one course at the expense of those who had regularly received two per-course contracts each semester and those who previously had per-term contracts. As Sophie said, “You never know, each semester. It’s very dicey if I’ll even get a course next semester.” Another cost-cutting strategy cited as a regular practice in most ARU departments was to increase enrolments in the first and second year courses taught by the “cheaper to hire” (Rachel) per-course contractuals.

The effects of such budget cutbacks and the rationalization of hiring extend to everyone in the workplace. One respondent told me of a department in which most of the laboratory instructors with 12 month contracts were laid off and then fewer were rehired on eight month contracts. They no longer had any work in the intervening four month semester. This made the remaining instructors “fearful for their jobs” (Barbara) and task demands increased for everyone on the respective teaching teams because there was no longer anyone hired to do the course preparation work during the intervening semester.

A positive effect of the rationalization of contractual hiring at ARU was that it introduced an element of security by instituting standardized deadlines and formalizing the application process. By 2008, all per-term contractuels had to apply annually in response to a public advertisement. Applicants were told what to include in their applications (e.g. curriculum vitae, sections of the teaching portfolios) and given deadlines. They sometimes applied to the faculty (e.g. Arts, Science) as well as to their particular departments, and could expect to hear the results of their application by certain dates.

Per-course contractuels apply each semester to teach specific courses, again in response to public advertisements and by submitting the same materials. Participants *low* or *medium on job insecurity* found the established timelines more helpful, comprehensible and predictable:

Yeah, it was awful before we had to formally apply. Because they would not tell me anything until the beginning of the semester. But it started getting better and now there is a certain date when the chair would put in the request to the Dean and the Dean has so far, in the last six or seven years, responded in a timely fashion (Janice).

The 27 interviewees expressed a continuum of comfort around the formal reapplication processes. Only six, all categorized as *low on insecurity*, thought they would likely get the contracts they wanted again. The others were happy to have the set timelines but the ritual of annually reapplying for work was time consuming and a primary source of stress. They spoke of the psychological stress and uncertainty evoked by the reapplication process because it continually re-established that they did not have any rights to the work. Several interviewees considered the reapplication process to be “demeaning,” “insulting,” and “disrespectful.” Renée was upset “[t]hat we could be that

exploited and taken advantage of, and the work that we do, the contribution that we make, is so easily dismissed! ... [W]e were just looked at as, the *labour* we were doing!" Those who had taught for many years felt "undervalued," "under-appreciated," and "exploited." Christine observed that "It just doesn't seem fair, that you still don't feel valued enough to know if you're even going to have a job in September."

The majority of interviewees felt easily replaceable and some speculated on who might replace them. Again, under recent hiring protocols, contractual and per-course positions were publically advertised. This expanded the competition to anyone with an appropriate Master's degree inside or outside the academic community. This was attracting business and professional people and retired high school teachers who applied "for the status of teaching at a university" (Janice), or for "something to do" (Sarah), or who were "just shuffling into retirement" (Terry). The actual response to such advertisements depends, of course, on the supply. It is possible that a relatively larger pool of underemployed candidates exists in Education and the Arts than in other faculties in Canadian universities, as in Garcy's (2002) US study. Interviewees like Jon referred to greater pressures of competition from this broadcast method of advertising:

Yeah, I'd like to take some time off and would probably get a contract back, but you never know on what terms. For me personally, the only real reason that I've been able to feel some continuity here is because I teach a difficult course that no one else wants to do. If I weren't teaching that, there would be no reason for them to keep hiring me. So if I said, "Okay, I'm away for a semester," what would happen? Hopefully the chair would say I'd get the job back when I was ready. But then that means [they advertise for] somebody else to teach that course [while I'm away]. And it's not going to be tenured faculty, because none of them wants to do it, so then the door gets opened to someone else to compete with.

Only one interviewee described a short supply of contractual teachers in her professional school; "There's never anything temporary for us unless you want it to be—

it's our market to dictate." Jessica was on leave from her professional job to teach on an eight month per-term contract.

Six respondents, all *high on job insecurity*, worried that they would be replaced by "younger, maybe more motivated" candidates who are more "enthusiastic and energetic." One was suddenly denied a contract he held for years because of his "lack of PhD experience." These stories undoubtedly contribute to a climate of insecurity that affects everyone.

[Some] people in my department have worked there for almost 20 years... They still have to reapply, make a case for themselves. And it's true that if someone else younger comes along, they can be tossed. (Sarah).

Again, by 2008 the hiring process at ARU appeared more meritocratic by implementing formal rules, but some *high on job insecurity* interviewees complained that the new hiring committees were not as objective as expected. They reiterated variations of the following extended description by Sophie. Remember that this 2008 study was conducted before the first contract was signed between the per-course contractuels' union and ARU. Seniority among per-course contractuels was not yet formally acknowledged.

Our department forms a committee [that] takes all the applications and then ranks them. The interesting part, and I say this hesitantly because I'm not really supposed to be aware of it, is that per-course contractuels who've never worked for us before are getting ranked higher than the people who have been teaching here for three or four years because someone in the department knew them as undergraduate students. This happened [during the last hiring period] ... everyone in my office was waiting to hear what they were getting ... and this girl outside of our faculty told me, "I got offered a job by [your] department." She's never worked here before and she did not do her graduate degree here. [Departmental policy is to] give priority to their own students while they're still registered in the graduate program so they get exposed to teaching. And I agree with that. We have three graduate students who would get ranked above everyone else anyway because of their experience. But she got offered a position before, I would say, seven or eight other people who have been here a long time and she's never taught here before.

In our department, ...the search committee ranks per-course and per-term applicants. And you never know your ranking or your status on the list until you get the phone call. The only way you know that someone's ahead or behind you on the list is if they get the call the day before or the day after you. So it's a bit of a messed up system in that sense. ... There has been [tension around that] in the past, ...more from those of us who are using it as our [primary] income. We tend to be a little more tense. And some of the senior per-course instructors... do care and their feathers get a little ruffled when it goes out of order. They've been loyal to the faculty and doing a course or two for them every semester, then they end up ranked eighth on the list.

Many participants had low expectations of administrative commitment because their years of service were not systematically recognized. There was no formal seniority system at all for per-course teachers and per-term seniority was tenuous. A few interviewees pointed out stipulations in the faculty association contract that allowed departments leeway in contractual hiring. For example, a per-term contractual had priority in hiring if she or he had a history of teaching a particular course, but only if this course was still part of a per-term contract. They had no right of refusal or seniority if it was offered as either a per-course contract, a spousal appointment, or part of the teaching load of a tenured or tenure track faculty member. Many participants suspected that the language of the faculty association contract could easily be reinterpreted and that job security really only extended to the next semester.

The long term service of contractual teachers was, for all intents and purposes, ignored by the ARU administration. This strengthened the position of tenured faculty, according to one official with the per-course union:

The problem is that the [faculty association] really doesn't want you working at all on a teaching per-term appointment. Rather than working at making teaching per-terms less contingent, they are more interested in seeing as few ... as possible. There are people who have taught continuous teaching per-term appointments for years, but the fiction is that they are not "permanent" employees. If you are in that

position and are not rehired for some arbitrary or unfair reason you cannot go to the faculty association because, as you no longer have a contract, you are no longer a member or represented by them. This also means that academic freedom is a bit of a fiction for per-term appointments. Sure you can't be fired for saying or teaching something that someone in power doesn't like but you won't be rehired. There is no real seniority language for teaching per-terms in the faculty union's collective agreement. When hiring, departments are required to "consider" those who have taught before but there is no seniority list and I wouldn't say those "considerations" have any real teeth. This would seem fine with the admin because having people teach on a per-course basis and represented by another union is much cheaper and the main faculty association now has no language that limits the numbers of per-course appointments that can be hired.

On the day after my last interview in December, 2008, the per-course contractuels' union did finally win a contract with ARU that began counting some (not all) courses retroactively. This would later lead to a problem of split seniority for 25 of the 32 participants who regularly switched between contractual statuses. Their seniority would be confounded by the different parameters of contractual work used by the faculty association that intermittently represented per-term contractuels, the per-course contractuels' union, and the public service union that represented laboratory instructors. This is a problem to be addressed in future research.

For all of the interviewees in this study, job insecurity was relative to the security of tenured and tenure track faculty and was continually reaffirmed by the combination of the old and new hiring procedures. Several observed that up to 2008, departmental cost cutting and the distribution of contracts without seniority guidelines exacerbated the degree of insecurity among contractuels and engendered mistrust between per-course and per-term contractuels. Most participants alluded to or directly described job insecurity as an institutionalized and unavoidable part of contractual teaching. Contractuels were, by definition, "easier to cut because we have the least amount of power" (Hal). The issue is

complex. Because of the history of underemployment in the region and the absence of other universities nearby, many participants regarded the trade-off between job insecurity and a reasonably well-paying job as normal:

I feel that [job insecurity] is part of being a contractual. I didn't choose it, for sure, but certainly I wouldn't get this job around here, this level of pay for this amount of flexible work and at my level of education, without some negative conditions attached. So basically I try to not say much to people about the anxiety (Naomi).

While the trade-off seemed normal, the lack of employer responsibility for contractual workers was still thought to be unfair, especially in a workplace that should be exemplary. For Roy, "it's got no place in a university. It's something you expect out of the Ford Motor Company."

Three participants, all *high on job insecurity*, raised the spectre of what might happen if their contracts "dissolved altogether." Two women with PhDs joked about applying for retail jobs at Wal-Mart and Tim Horton's as their "fall back plans."

And then, what does it say when the university, a very large employer, treats people no better than Wal-Mart does? What does that really say to society at large? Not just to the university community, but to the city, the province, Canada? Am I better off than a Wal-Mart employee? I get a little more salary but I still don't get the benefits. They don't either. There's no job security here but they don't have job security. The only difference is salary, but most of us have these student loans on top of everything else. So, if I didn't have any student loans, maybe working at Wal-Mart would be okay (Gerry).

Unlike contractual knowledge workers with "boundaryless" careers who can hypothetically choose alternate employment (Beck, 1999; D. Abbott et al., 2006), most of the participants in this study saw little else available for them in the local job market. Added to this uncertainty were the financial issues facing contractual teachers, the second most frequently cited source of job insecurity among participants. This will be the focus of the next section.

4.c Source 2: Money

I don't mind having just two courses because it's cheap to live here. With 3 courses the department has to give you a [per-term] contract at a lot more money and they really don't want to do that. But they pay for that flexibility. People just don't put as much effort in their work as they would if they had just a little more security (Christian).

Convention usually prohibits discussion of money, but 27 of the 32 respondents identified the income from contractual teaching as an important source of their job insecurity. They might have been sensitized to financial issues by my advertised request that respondents rely on contractual teaching as a primary source of income (an important aspect of job insecurity). Only two respondents had enough income from elsewhere that I questioned their participation. They argued that the incomes from their 12 month per-term contracts exceeded that of their teachers' pensions and they indicated they had other sources of job insecurity as well. However, they were categorized as *low on job insecurity* in the qualitative analysis and both scored above both the mental and physical health norms on their *SF-12v.2® Health Surveys*.

In 2008, the pay scale for contractual service at ARU was lower than that of tenure track and tenured faculty. It was further stratified by type of contract: per-course; per-course distance; per-term for four months only, so they were not eligible for benefits or faculty association membership; per-term for eight months or more, which allowed them benefits and faculty association representation. The lowest paid were per-course contractals who taught one or two courses for less than \$4000.00 per course. They did not receive any health or pension benefits and their service was not counted towards seniority. Using the administration's calculation that each course constituted 15 hours of

work per week, Maeve despaired that “when you divide the hours into the pay, we’re paid less than a cashier at Costco.”

Unlike Rajagopal’s (2002) classics who work full-time elsewhere or have funding from full-time study or research programs, the per-course participants in this study relied on contractual teaching as their primary source of income. Only the painfully austere could live on such meagre incomes. Even at the maximum of two courses per semester for all three semesters of the school year, their annual income was less than \$24,000 before taxes. This was near the federal government’s “low income cut off” for a family of two in ARU’s home city (Statistics Canada, 2007f). Almost all of the per-course teachers described their income as “poverty line” (Jenny) or as “just getting me out of poverty” (Phillip).

ARU contractuales who only taught distance education courses received a little over \$100.00 per student per semester, again with no benefits or seniority status. This “by the each” (Hal) remuneration was good if the course was well-subscribed but if undersubscribed, the teacher could end up earning less than if they taught per-course on campus. In the year after the study, the per-course contractuales’ union negotiated a minimum guaranteed payment for distance courses of about 55% of the regular per-course rate with an additional \$106.00 per student when the registration went above the minimum of 24 students.

In contrast to per-course appointments, per-term contracts involve a full-time commitment to teach at least three courses each semester for the length of the contract, with no research or administrative duties required. For per-term contractuales, income varied by education and experience and was relatively good as a proportion of an annual

salary. At ARU, the 2008 average ceiling for experienced per-term contractals was \$56,000.00 per annum if they taught at least nine courses over the three semesters. This was about \$13,000 less than the average salary floor of a tenure track professor who taught five courses over the same year in addition to research and administrative duties (CAUT, 2009/2010; Statistics Canada, 2010a). The caveat is that most of the per-term contractals in this study were hired on eight month term contracts. They really only earned two thirds of this salary plus any income they could muster from other sources during the third semester such as EI or per-course teaching. Interviewees noted how these pay differentials fed social comparisons within and beyond the ARU faculty workplace.

Overall, the pay for per-course and per-term contracts was far lower at ARU than in the rest of the country at the time of this research (Statistics Canada, 2010a). The average annual salary of lecturers (per-term contractals) at ARU for the 2007/2008 school year was a striking \$19,000.00 less than the average for lecturers across the country (CAUT, 2010).

Money worries were qualified for participants by their social location. For example, many were happy with the fit between contractual work and their family or study obligations. All but two of the 20 married participants had young children at some point in their contractual teaching careers. For them, the flexibility of contractual work was both attractive and necessary. Scheduling issues were more manageable when one of the spouses worked on contract:

But the thing is, [my wife] can't take much time off [for maternity leave] because she's on a three-year project [and if] you cut a year in that, it doesn't work. So she only took three months off for maternity leave and worked half time for another month. We manage not to have a nanny except when I work afternoons. But finding someone for weekdays from 1:00 to 5:00 is not easy. In the summer, I

have an early morning class, so [my wife] will be with the baby until my class ends... and then I take the baby and go home or do whatever (Christian).

Seven of the eight women and both of the two men who referred to gender issues in their interviews were still actively raising children. They were well aware of how their immediate needs to combine work and family could undermine their status as academics.

Most of those less worried about money were married and had reasonable household incomes. They had some choice in taking contractual work, but none wanted to “fall back” on their spouses’ incomes. Like Roy, their job insecurity was not alleviated by spousal or household income.

Yeah I don’t really know Linda ... I do this [contract teaching] by choice, but at the same time I feel like if I were to lose this gig, my hand would be forced and it would not be in a direction that I want. So ... I’m quite thankful for the job ... but the underlying insecurity is that I’ll *lose my advantage* [italics mine] and that I’ll have to go work at [a building supplies store] or something. I know that sounds rash but that’s all I can think of right now.

I can only imagine what other people go through. I mean we’re lucky, my wife works as a professional so there’s no real complaints like that, other than those of my own doing. I’m not a very good money manager myself. It would be very stressful [if I lost this job].

Almost all of those participants in the lower household income categories were *high on job insecurity* in the categorization of the qualitative data. They did not relate the lower pay of contractual work to gender as I had initially expected from the literature on the feminization of work. The sole earners in the household found the financial parameters of contractual work “extremely stressful.” Three were in serious household debt beyond student loan repayments and constantly worried about the skew in their income-expense ratio:

I’m finding that this is all affecting the family finances as well and that’s really stressful. Every year, we’re going backwards in terms of money because I don’t

work for four months of the year. I get EI but that's not enough to meet all the bills. ... So the pressure's been building and my anxiety levels are going through the roof. I've actually had to go and get a prescription for tranquilizers, which has never happened to me before....

[crying] The stress of being laid off is always worse in the first month, when there's no cheque coming in at all. I'm really getting upset, now, dreading this first month coming up. I find that my anxiety skyrockets because I'm not providing for my husband and child the way I should be. I have no control over anything that's going on in that first month. It gets better as the summer goes on and I get more relaxed and once EI kicks in, I feel a lot better about the finances, although we're getting seriously into debt right now. It's something [for you] to look at – the idea of how debt builds up over time because of contingent work (Natalie).

Not surprisingly, primary breadwinners and the single per-course contractuels worried constantly about money:

I work fall and winter, 2 courses per and I want more spring teaching but there just aren't enough courses to go around. The senior faculty want their pocket money, so I never get spring courses, even though I always apply... Um. I worry because I've come to a point now where I'm depending on [the per-course teaching] to pay the mortgage ... And ... I don't have seniority or a PhD and a lot of retired profs out there want those contracts (Phillip).

Eleven of the 32 respondents who completed the demographic survey supplemented their contractual income by working at other jobs outside of the university. Nine of these 11 juggled per-course teaching with freelance work as researchers or teaching elsewhere or with non-academic jobs such as crafts and arts work, data entry, baking, retail work, and bartending. Five of the 11 were well over 40 years of age and worried that they would never stop "doing these little gigs" (Phillip). Even when teaching the maximum of two courses each semester, they would not give up these other sources of income because future contracts were never guaranteed.

Twelve interviewees mentioned either using or not qualifying for the federal government's Employment Insurance (EI) system to supplement their teaching income

between contracts. This was challenging for those who only worked on per-course contracts because EI payments are much lower in proportion to income and difficult to live on. In addition, it was difficult to make up the hours in the last 52 weeks required for EI. Each course was weighted as 15 hours of work a week by the ARU administration, so per-course contractals had to teach the maximum of two courses a semester for all three semesters to qualify.

Fourteen of the 32 respondents juggled teaching with graduate work and student loan repayments, adding considerable stress to their financial planning.

My student loan goes to repayment as long as I'm working as a per-term, so I'm going to go back to full-time student status at the end of this semester but then I can only work as a per-course. And I can't pay student loans on a one or two per-course basis, so I may just extend full-time student status until next year. And then see if I can pick up other stuff, supplementary things (Sylvie).

Contractual income intersected with debt load to create a "perfect storm" of stress for at least seven interviewees. They dreaded the period of waiting to hear whether or not they would have contracts in the upcoming semesters:

I would say that every April is the worst time. ... It's a tremendous burden. Tremendous. Round about this time [March], I get a bit down because end of term is coming, which means that my regular pay stops and the per-course pay scale has to start because I'm no longer contractual ... and that's a huge drop in pay. So you're starting to worry about bills and how you're going to pay this and that and get through the next four months. You've got that playing on your mind along with all those other stresses. Work stresses (Stephanie).

Social comparison in terms of money and status plagued several participants, whether or not they were stressed about personal debt. The symbolism of their lower levels of pay combined with ambiguous recognition of their seniority and service implied they were less valued workers in the university hierarchy, even institutionally invisible. A

few pointed out that pay was their only form of institutional feedback and it was not enough.

The separate pay scales for contractual teaching work were most irritating for the PhD prepared interviewees. A few were upset that as PhD prepared “visiting assistant professors” on per-term contracts, they received the same pay as Master’s prepared “lecturers.” Although their salaries increased incrementally with the pay raises accorded to members of the faculty association, some per-term participants still found their pay inadequate and their entitlements limited. Six were concerned that the faculty association was “ambivalent” and even “dismissive” of their concerns.

Well a few years ago when faculty went out on strike, all the contractals went out too. There was an understanding that they were going to help us out. But basically they did nothing in the end and in many ways they used us as a bargaining chip to get things for themselves, giving up things for contractals. They used us. I consider this particular union used us and I'm very, very disappointed (Hal).

Social comparison on pay levels distressed nearly all of the per-course teachers who received a set fee of under \$4000 per course. In 2008, this pay rate per course had not changed in more than ten years. Like many others, Roy perceived a trade-off between self-esteem and contractual work. When asked if anything else should be included in my study, he replied:

Well basic stuff like more money, the fact that the faculty association gets a wage increase whereas the non-faculty association people don't, I think that's degrading. The right thing to do would be to give everyone the increase. I'm sure it would improve the way people like me feel about their courses right? Maybe with more money or more recognition, more being invited to meetings, anything like that could improve things. It's not a large amount of money but it would make you feel better about yourself, about what you do. It would be more professional. It would be a good idea *for increasing one's self-esteem*, to know that if you're going to be treated like a contractor, you can be reimbursed like a contractor instead of like a piece rate worker.

Status issues linked to pay and benefits were evident in the assorted other irritants interviewees added when asked the same question. A few complained that contractuales do not get the same considerations as regular faculty and staff on parking privileges or recreational fees. They are treated as a “member of the public” rather than as “an instructor with students waiting for them to show up in class!” (Rachel). Five interviewees complained that contractuales do not qualify for conference funding or for any other kind of professional development apart from the university-offered workshops and lectures.

All of the per-course respondents had to consider the costs of working. Three found that they were not paid enough to cover their babysitting bills and two non-permanent resident instructors could not afford the fees and costs of maintaining work permits. One per-term contractual who was asked to do extra lecturing found that her investment in time was not worth the compensation, especially after her department deducted her extra lecture pay from her regular salary.

Holiday pay came up in interviews with a few respondents but it was effectively hidden in the pay stubs. Most assumed that as contractuales, they did not qualify for holiday pay. The few who did mention it did not know when the holidays could occur.

They said that technically our contract ends on the day that our marks are due from our exams, so I think for me that will be on the 21st of April. But my pay extends until April 30th, so I’m assuming I have to take those days in between as holidays (Della).

A spokesperson from the per-course contractuales’ union explained that the university includes the provincially mandated 4% holiday pay *within* the payment for a per-course contract. It is never “articulated” on the pay stub, nor is it added to the base

rate of pay. Per-course contractuels are advised that their set payment per-course already includes the 4%.

Health benefits and pensions were raised in participants' discussions of pay. Many participants considered health and medical benefits to be an income supplement denied them. This, along with sick leave, will be addressed in Chapter Six as part of the institutional support offered to contractual teachers. Pensions are discussed next, as part of participants' long-term financial planning.

Retirement planning is a growing part of the Canadian workplace discourse as workers age (Schellenberg and Ostrovsky, 2008). Participants in this study repeatedly complained that they could not do any long-term financial planning when on contract. I did not ask a direct question about pensions in the semi-structured interviews but 12 of the 27 interviewees brought it up. Per-term contractuels had limited pension coverage because they could contribute to the faculty association pension plan, but only while on contract (again, two thirds of the year or less for 14 of the 18 per term contractuels). Per-course contractuels had no pension coverage with the university at all. All of the per-course respondents and several per-terms assumed that they did not qualify for pension coverage as contractual employees. Those who raised the issue were confused over how, exactly, the pension system worked for contractuels, particularly when they regularly switched between contractual statuses each year. Even after decades of service, their coverage was minimal and they had to strategize.

Every year I tried to put a little bit on my mortgage – just so I can be mortgage free. If I'm mortgage free and something happened like I didn't get a contract, it's not going to cause the stress. There are financial decisions I have to make to prepare for that possibility.... And maybe the time will come, like when I'm 60? When I'll be lining up in the soup kitchen [laughs]. Cause I hardly got a pension.

I've only been paying into the pension in the last two years. It was always per-course before that (Frances).

Despite the growing trend of hiring older contractual faculty in Canadian universities (Statistics Canada, 2006b), participants in this study suspected they were less employable as they aged. Several cited 60 as a benchmark age for retirement, perhaps because they did not expect to continue getting contracts much after that. Frances pointed out the logic in this: "You can't expect employers to hire you after 60 because then you're more of a risk to their health care plans – you could go down at any time after 60 and they don't want to get stuck paying it out." Of the 27 interviewees, only one planned to "work until I'm old" (Joanne), two were already working past 65, and one was a retired schoolteacher in his late 50s. Two of these four respondents were drawing full pensions from their previous careers as secondary school teachers and were not as job insecure as were those whose future pension income would be primarily from contractual university teaching. A few of the younger interviewees felt it unfair that these retirees continued to apply for teaching contracts, but one woman defended the practice. One of her colleagues who taught per-course after retiring from the school system was better able to take a political stand on the unfair treatment of contractals because he was not depending on per-course income.

The experience of financial strain, then, varied by participants' contractual status and social locations, such as marital status, number of dependents, and type of contract. The majority of per-course participants worried about the immediate financial impacts of their low pay. All participants worried about the long-term financial effects of teaching on contract. Pay differentials at least partly designate status in the academic hierarchy and

facilitate undesirable social comparisons for participants. This social comparison was intensified by academic status, the third most frequently cited aspect of job insecurity for participants and the subject of the next section.

4.d Source 3: Negotiating Contractual Status in the Academic Hierarchy

It's a caste system and we are the untouchables of academia (Seattle adjunct of 17 years, quoted by Finder, 2007).

The metaphor of caste is frequently used in descriptions of contractual academic work. While none of the participants referred to themselves as “untouchables,” the majority would agree that a significant source of their job insecurity was this marginalization in the academic hierarchy. No longer part of traditional sponsorship into the academic hierarchy, contractual teaching is now markedly differentiated from tenure-track and tenured positions. This section presents (1) participants’ descriptions of the ensuing marginalization; (2) their inclusion and exclusion in departmental decision-making and committee work, both sources of academic capital; (3) the assignment of office space and location, symbolic of position in the hierarchy; and (4) participants’ teaching work, through which they responded to this marginalization. As an occupational identity, teaching work was particularly important in participants’ dealing with job insecurity, a point that will be taken up again in Chapter Six.

4.d.i Marginalization in the academic hierarchy

Twenty of the 27 interviewees identified their marginalized status in the academic hierarchy as a significant source of job insecurity and stress. Sixteen discussed how their lower status as contractual lecturers was an issue in the critical workplace incidents

described in their narratives. The other four alluded to it. In addition, the five respondents who did not do a second stage interview still spoke of status issues in our first stage meetings. These status issues might have contributed to their reluctance to complete both stages. Of the 32 respondents, then, all but seven indicated that their status was defined by marginalization and job insecurity, especially in comparison to the status and security of tenured faculty. Social comparison is important and has been strongly related to health in research elsewhere (e.g. Demakakos, Nazroo, Breeze and Marmot, 2008; Dunn et al., 2006; Silla, Gracia and Peiro, 2005).

The academic hierarchy is far from new. Its European and American precedents span centuries, built from elite cultural and academic capital that once translated into power throughout the institution of the university (Bourdieu, 1988; Nisbet, 1971). Many participants like Renée were well aware of it in their *feel for the game*:

People at this university critique the hierarchy. It's not just accepted as "the way it is" – it's really seen as a problem here. Although people live it, organize it. ... But I have spoken of [power] in my classes –When we talk how power is exercised in non-coercive ways, through influence and where you fall within a hierarchical system... And this is what it can look like within professional disciplines. We look at that because sometimes people think of power as only coercive, controlling others through threats ... but how does it play out when they got that big old smile on their face?

Participants were unanimous that as contractuales they occupied the lowest but one teaching position in the academic status hierarchy. Only graduate student teaching assistants commanded less authority and they were often warned by supervisors against getting mired in contractual teaching, a "dead-end job" (Jenny), at the expense of doing their research.

Jon eloquently articulated how this marginalized status creates stress. This was echoed throughout the interviews of 20 participants who found their contractual status in the academic hierarchy particularly problematic.

I do feel the stress of the big picture of insecurity, the year to year insecurity and the stress of maintaining the sets of relations. We haven't really talked about this but my sense of being a sessional or contractual is [that it is] always walking a thin line. It's always a feeling that it's better not to stir things up too much, strategically, but at the same time, you don't want to be withdrawn or ... [seen as] not standing up or isolated. So it's an odd feeling and I think that that's the issue more often than any other thing. That day to day question of where do you fit in at any given time in terms of the overall politics and relationships in the department? ... you run into the problem of a sense of powerlessness, which is a structural thing, right? Because *we have no institutional existence* (emphasis mine) in a sense. It's just not a real [position]... in the long term. You have to weave your way on a daily basis, although you don't really think you should have to, because there isn't a lot of structure there for us.

And as good as my faculty members are, it's an issue for them too because depending on what's going on, it's fine to talk to them or run into them in one setting but then in other settings, there's a social distancing taking place. You know? Even with people [with whom] I'm surprised it happens but it does. And I'm talking about tenured faculty. They don't need to do that. But it happens, that's the way the stratification system is acknowledged and consented to ... and we have to be a part of that. Some of us are probably better at working around it and resisting it.

Personally ... that's quite important to me in terms of an overall sense of mental [and] social wellbeing in my department. It's the low noise, the background day to day tensions, or potential tensions, that exist that are the most stressful part of this job, certainly as much as job insecurity in some ways. So it's not so much control over your course as the really marginal position in the institution that we occupy. And what that does to relationships, at least with some people [at work] (Jon).

Marginal status is manifested in a multitude of small daily occurrences. Six respondents complained of unfair or arbitrary ranking for contractual jobs. Several described being undervalued or disrespected in deliberate and casual ways such as being ignored and "snubbed" (Sylvie) by faculty in the hallways, or suspected of lying or exaggerating "because I'm a contractual" (Christine).

Contractual teaching is also defined by an internal hierarchy evident throughout the interviews. Teaching “in the [trades and feeder] colleges,” whether private or publically funded, held less status than teaching on the main university campus, even when the college teachers held tenure. Janice compared the perceptions of college and university teaching, noting how this affected self-esteem.

I remember when a couple of people with PhDs were hired in [the trades and feeder college system]. Most didn't have a PhD then. I had a Master's degree and everyone else had a bachelor's degree. So when we hired a couple of people with PhDs, they were extremely frustrated at the limitations of [the colleges] and they felt it was an insult for them to be there with their qualifications, but that's where the openings were, right? So eventually, when those college programs were amalgamated [into the university's degree programs], they felt a lot better, ... and they were a lot nicer to be around. Even though they had the same full-time, tenure track position, that inequality of status was very, very difficult.

And it's like [contemporary] contractals [on campus] now, have an inequality of income, of status, feeling invisible and feeling that they really deserve something better. Those are the ones I would focus on in your study. I wouldn't focus on per-course people who teach business or lawyers or doctors – they already have great incomes right? ... And it's usually men who are in those positions.

Status differentials between teachers are evident in position titles, as mentioned before. At ARU, tenure track and tenured faculty are divided into assistant, associate or full professors. ARU contractals are per-course, per-course distance (paid per student enrolled) or per-term instructors. Per-terms are further designated as either lecturers or visiting assistant professors, depending on their level of education. Only a few PhD prepared participants, however, tried to sort out the terminology.

It's the only time I ever had a **term** contract, where you're teaching two semesters and you do research in the third. And a term contractual only teaches five courses over those 12 months whereas a **teaching term** contractual teaches three or more per semester so in theory, nine per year. Really, with teaching term contractals, there's no upper limit. And when you're teaching as teaching term, you're called a 'lecturer'. Unless you have a PhD – then you're called an assistant professor but

paid as a lecturer. Whereas if you're a term contractual, you can be a 'full professor'. ... it doesn't happen, but in theory it could (Peter).

In this dissertation, I refer to the 18 teaching term contractals as *per-term contractals* because that is what they called themselves. However, only four respondents had term contracts of 12 months or more in 2008.

An internal hierarchy between per-term and per-course contractals became evident in the course of the fieldwork. Per-course contractals thought that those on per-term contracts not only enjoyed a better pay scale but also had seniority and protection from the faculty association. They did not realize that the seniority was only applicable to a per-term contract in the year immediately following the last one taught. But per-course contractals were also misperceived by per-term respondents as classics in Rajagopal's (2002) sense, as not really needing the extra income. Roy distinguishes himself from other per-course classics, implying that he is a better contributor to the university community.

Many per-course instructors in my department work outside as professionals and think of themselves as separate and apart, even above the university people. They have little interaction or interest in the university community... I'm not even sure why they even want to be teaching for the measly pay – I'm thinking it's just the prestige? They're hard to take ...

The hierarchy among contractals depends in part on departmental ranking for hiring decisions, described in the last section. Stephanie, for example, complained that she was unfairly placed with "the per-course people" instead of with per-term contractals because she had recently switched statuses. She argued that per-term contractals were "closer to the faculty" and consequently "more secure." Two interviewees believed they were unfairly denied positions to teach advanced courses

because of their per-course status. Communication within their departments was sparse and involved a lot of “second guessing”, which exacerbated the internal ranking and discord among contractuels.

All these things are [up in the air]. The worst thing [is that] we’re really in the constant position of [guessing] “What would happen if things got real nasty?” You know, someone might say “I’ve got a PhD, I get first choice [of what course to teach].” It’s not a completely unreasonable argument but it’s not an argument I want to see made.

And the reality is that for all the courses any [Arts] department offers, it wouldn’t take long to pull together the necessary people. I could teach [a particular undergraduate course that] I never have before because they are all pretty much basic courses. It’s easy to change. And it’s hard to say it but if there was any tension between contractuels, it’s because we’re so very easy to cut. And [that competition makes it] all the worse. It ultimately screws everybody, the winners too. But that wouldn’t stop me or anyone else from [pulling rank]. It’s all so secretive, it’s like “luckily, it’s not me” (Dave).

The hierarchy described, I now turn to markers of marginalization in the daily work of these contractual teachers: participation in decision-making and committee work, office space, and the teaching work itself.

4.d.ii Marginalization in departmental and committee work

At ARU, teaching contracts for both per-term and per-course work specifically exclude administrative service. Participants in this study were hired only to teach. On the surface, this exclusion is reasonable; as did Feather and Rauter (2004), members of the ARU faculty association argued that expectations of unpaid administrative and committee work from contractuels is exploitative, creating higher workloads for contractuels with little formal reward or acknowledgement. Such exploitation would benefit employers most of all.

Study participants agreed with the first part of this argument, but added that it effectively excluded them from departmental processes and blocked opportunities to advance their careers. Without volunteer committee work, they could not develop social and academic capital through networking, nor would they be integrated into the professional academic and university community. Again, this varied by contractual status. As temporary members of the faculty association when on contract, per-term contractuels were officially allowed to vote in departmental meetings, barring any conflict of interest. They could not vote on hiring decisions or sit on search committees for new faculty, presumably because this would affect their own chances of procuring future contracts. Among the per-term contractuels in this study, six felt relatively well treated and welcomed in departmental meetings, “like all other (faculty) members” (Janice). Six others strategically attended whatever meetings they could for career or interest. They did not feel “muzzled” (Brad) at all. When I mentioned that several respondents did feel excluded, or reported last-minute invitations too late to attend, Brad replied:

Oh, really? Yeah, it’s silly. I really wish there was more action taken by [per-term] contractuels with respect to the collective agreement because no one should say that as a contractual I’m not entitled, right? I mean on what grounds do they decide how things can go. I don’t get it. ... We’re all in the same collective agreement and we all have the same, well, privileges really, except for tenure. It’s not the same if you’re a per-course appointment and only teach one course. But if you’re on a teaching per-term, that’s a full-time job itself, for eight months of the year. So you don’t even necessarily have voting rights on certain things. Being able to attend the meetings, I think it’s very important. ... It’s enough that these people who are [on] teaching contracts are not in a tenure track position... but it’s another thing to say that on top of that you can’t come to departmental meetings. I don’t think that all contractuels would go anyway. So why not extend it to them? They can just sit and listen in.

Four interviewees spoke of meetings in which they felt personally assaulted and could not respond because of their contractual status. Eleven participants did not attend

departmental meetings or sit on committees at all, five of whom were excluded as per-course contractuels. Six of the 11 found the meetings tiring and ineffectual. For many, departmental expectations were ambiguous:

It's really not clear whether [per-course] contractuels are supposed to be invited to those kinds of meetings or is free to go ... if they're interested, or really whether they belong at those ... meetings. If they said "you don't [belong]," that would remove the ambiguity (Ian).

Even when they did attend, some interviewees complained that as contractuels, their contributions were ignored.

Committee work was a different story and 18 of the 27 interviewees were volunteering at the time of the fieldwork. Some hoped to advance their careers, others to try out new and potentially interesting work. Eight of the 18 volunteers sat on interdisciplinary committees where contractual input was welcomed more because faculty input was lower. Only seven were invited to sit on committees in their own departments and then because of a shortage of tenured faculty who could do so. Eleven of the 18 volunteers sat on teaching committees with tenured faculty, generating a co-operative work atmosphere and ensuring course continuity. Three of these 11 ran university programs at the time of the case study and four others had done so previously.

These circumstances likely enhanced their workplace status and defined them by more than contractual teaching. Remember that seven of the 27 participants did *not* say or even imply that they felt marginalized. Instead they focused on freedom and co-operation with others in their narratives which involved working together on committees. Two of these seven participants ran programs in addition to teaching and five PhDs had research agendas.

Committee work was occasionally frustrating for the 18 volunteers. Some were asked to do outwardly irrelevant “grunt” work or were “dropped from the committee altogether” (Frances) when they disagreed with the majority. Some cited email “tone” as a problem, seeing innuendo in the sentence construction of messages. This is difficult to verify, however, because tone is not always properly conveyed in online communication.

One respondent speculated that when more contractuels assume administrative work, full-time faculty start to feel threatened. Three long serving respondents were insulted when their offers to do university-wide committee work were refused because of their contractual status. “[They said] there are no guarantees that [our] contracts would be renewed or that [we] would return to continue [our] duties in the following year” (Janice). Only tenured faculty could sit on these committees.

Exclusion from departmental meetings and committee work compromised contractuels’ work and ability to move towards promotion. It reflected their job insecurity by revealing their marginal integration as members of the department. They had very low academic capital. This marginalization was also evident in their teaching work, discussed in the following section. To bolster their academic capital, their *self-made security* (an internalization of workplace capital), and their future prospects for work, many participants turned (paradoxically) to the departmental support they could rely on because of the quality of their teaching work.

4.d.iii Symbolic marginalization in office space and location

From informal complaints and my own symptoms of eye strain, repetitive stress injuries, and allergies, I assumed that interviewees would consider office space an

occupational health issue. Only a few did so, possibly because scarce office space and equipment is normatively assigned according to hierarchical status in most bureaucratic workplaces. This section, then, is largely based on my observations during the 26 (of 32) first stage meetings that occurred in respondents' offices. I recorded their office locations, access to an operable window, and assigned computer equipment. The other six first stage meetings were conducted out-of-office or by phone, so I asked respondents directly for this information.

The Canadian Center for Occupational Health and Safety guidelines (CCOHS, 2003) dictate that requirements for working space can vary by the nature of the work, the corporate climate, cultural and individual perceptions, and body size. At ARU, the physical attributes of contractuels' offices were usually adequate. Contractuels' offices met the CCOHS minimum space requirements of 5.78 m² for occasions when two people had to meet, as with student and professor consultations. Most offices had permanent walls and a reasonable level of acoustic and visual privacy. Respondents could personalize the space but not all did so, which speaks to perceptions of status. The CCOHS recommends natural lighting and to my surprise, 17 of the 28 who used offices on campus had a window with good natural light and operable sashes. Most of these 17 were longer serving per-term contractuels.

The location of contractuels' offices, however, did not meet the CCOHS recommendation that office location should allow collegial contact. It is generally understood that an office on "contractual row" (Della) in an "out of the way" (Christine) or inaccessible corridor signifies social rank as a contractual, set apart from regular faculty members. Twenty-four of the 32 contractuels were located off the main corridors

of their respective departments. A few had to give me detailed directions to different floors or even buildings from their departments. Some were housed in converted closets or offices newly carved out of the corridor itself. I had to reschedule one meeting after walking right on by such a corridor office. The respondents who were housed separately from regular faculty felt isolated, “invisible,” and excluded from departmental social life. A few complained of not having a common room to meet in or regular contact with coworkers, but this had advantages for others:

I’m a black sheep ... because [of] the way it’s structured here. Our department is in a separate wing, but... I didn’t go into that nucleus where all the others are because I wanted to be close to the room where I teach a lot. I had a choice! There’s good and bad things with that. In their wing, the walls are thin, so they can all hear each other and they’re all kind of paranoid but I’m fine over here. Another advantage is that I have my own space, I’m not breathing down other people’s necks, and they’re not breathing down mine. I guess the disadvantage is that I’m not allowed to politic but then the advantage is that I don’t have to politic! (Brad).

Temporarily hired, contractuels are by definition temporarily housed. Frequent moves are instigated within departments to deal with the short supply of office space and most respondents accepted this as inevitable. Four, however, felt compromised when they were unexpectedly moved to a shared space: “I got an e-mail, an email! After three years of being full-time! Saying that I had to be out of my office by the end of the week because I was back to being a per-course sessional” (Catherine).

Aside from the issue of collegiality, the CCOHS (2003) did not deal with the perception of status implicit in an inferior office location or in sharing space. Fifteen respondents, six of whom were per-term contractuels, shared an office with at least one other contractual. Six of these 15 shared with two, four and even five others. Multiple names on office doors distinguish contractuels from tenured faculty at ARU.

Everyone who shared tried to accommodate their office mates when negotiating office hours. Sophie provided an extreme example:

No it's actually not that bad because Elise and I teach on alternate nights and Perry and Daniel teach on the same days but one is morning and one is afternoon. Marian is director of the xxxx program so she just shows up and crashes the office whenever she feels like it, which is usually once every couple of weeks for a day or two. So it sounds horrible when you see five names (on the door) and when you're trying to meet students, it is. It's a struggle to get an hour in here sometimes, but other than that, we manage pretty decently.

[Cohen: Do you think it's a matter of status, of physically showing your status in the hierarchy?]

Yeah, definitely. Like if someone had to share mailboxes because there aren't enough mailboxes, it would be the per-course instructors. It won't be the full-time faculty. God forbid. I mean they're very nice to us and if we need office space because ours is being used and they're not using theirs, they may offer it for an afternoon to meet students or something. I've had that happen [when] there was nowhere else to go except the broom closet! (Sophie).

Many of the 15 who shared space restricted their occupancy to office hours but this didn't always work. Most of the first stage meetings for this research occurred during respondents' office hours and I recorded eight meetings interrupted by office mates. I did not count student interruptions because these were, after all, office hours for students. When asked, most respondents assumed that students did not pick up on the status implications of their inferior offices, but Gerry voiced concerns.

What does it really say ... when students see that I share an office with someone who is now retired but is ... teaching a per-course. And when you're teaching a per-course, it's a little different than a per-term contractual [who is here more often]. It's easier to blow off your office hours. Students come by [looking for them] and they're never here.

As noted earlier, the ability to personalize the space is one of the CCOHS' (2003) requirements for occupational health, so I took notes on respondents' personal effects as well as computer equipment and furniture. Occupational and esteem objects are status

identifiers or dis-identifying and, as Riggins (1994) argues, “It might be hypothesized that the more information a(n interior) ... environment conveys, the higher the status (but not necessarily in purely economic terms) of the occupants” (p. 115). Significantly, 10 of the 26 respondents whose on-campus offices I observed did not display any status or esteem objects at all because they always expected to be reassigned space. In nine of these, the departments also used the offices to store items for tenured faculty. Because contractual status is always tentative, the level of comfort, commitment, and ownership necessary to bring in personalizing items was just not there for these 10 respondents. They felt marginalized as workers. The other 16 had at least a few small personal or occupational objects: social facilitators, such as joke calendars, book posters, dishes of candy, or computer art; allusions to social networks beyond work in photos of family and friends; and relevant and current books in their discipline.

Out-dated computer equipment can be occupational objects that indicate low social status (Riggins, 1990, 1994). Seven respondents were assigned reasonably good computers but the other 19 had to make do with out-dated and previously used equipment. Those who worked at home provided their own equipment. Seven told me they were “not comfortable enough” to complain.

Computers just move down the food chain – it has absolutely nothing to do with what people do or use or need but entirely to do with seniority. The senior person who can barely open Word still gets the fancy new computer ...ever since I’ve been here I’ve had hand-me-down computers, really slow at the beginning, then they break and I get another one. I know that some people get new ones so I suppose if you went off and complained, or if you asked, [you would too] (Bruce Wayne).

So while the office space of most respondents in this study met the CCOHS physical requirements for occupational health, they did not meet the recommendation for

location that can encourage collegiality. Participants' needs for updated computer equipment were also set aside. It bears emphasizing that few respondents voiced concerns over this – they simply accepted it as part of the job. Participants were more concerned with how their marginalized status played out in their teaching work, the subject of the following section.

4.d.iv Teaching and self-made security

Participants described teaching as a source of both identity and ambivalence because of how it is perceived and structured differently for contractuels and tenured or tenure track faculty. In defense of tenure and against rationalization in academic hiring, some faculty and faculty associations give a number of reasons why they consider contractuels to be inferior university teachers. The first is a concern that contractual teaching is un-invigorated, even uninformed, by the research process because contractuels often do not have funded research projects (Donoghue, 2008). They also worry that contractuels are more susceptible to student pressures for better grades (Brown, 2010). One participant responded to this argument that one must do research to teach. On their demographic surveys 21 of the 32 respondents reported *moderate to intense* course preparation or revision which required extensive research. The work of teaching is immediate and most of it cannot be postponed. Only five participants reported *minimal* course preparation and did little research elsewhere and four of these (one man, three women) were actively looking for non-academic work because of the insecurity of contractual teaching. See the next chapter for how this translated into job strain.

A second rebuttal to the argument that contractuales do not do research is that more Canadian contractuales than ever before hold doctoral degrees (Tamburri, 2010). Remember that 7 respondents in this ARU sample of 32 had completed PhDs and 12 were working on Master's and PhD degree programs which involved extensive research on top of their teaching load. A few argued that teaching enhanced their research by invigorating their faith in the academic process but seven of the 12 pointed out that the "effort, worrying, and fretting" (Jenny) of teaching displaced more than proportionate time spent on their degree programs.

Teaching was central to participants' professional identity, so several were upset by faculty innuendoes that contractual teaching provides an inferior experience for students. In this discourse, a sure sign of deterioration in academic standards is when first year students are taught by contractuales instead of by tenured or tenure-track professors who, by implication, are superior teachers (Brown, 2010; Nisbet, 1971; Stripling, 2010). Terry remembered how she saw this as a student:

Well, it's funny. When I was a student and doing courses with sessional instructors and I got a good mark from them...and I feel bad even saying this but I used to think maybe they're just not as intelligent as full professors. You'd get that idea from other profs too. But looking back on it now, I'm thinking "oh, it was their job, they needed to keep their job." So now I wonder if students think we're just not as "on the ball" as someone who has a PhD. When you're younger you have no idea what's going on but of course then you get into that situation.

This argument was familiar to participants. Teaching is devalued in academic hierarchies where research and publication are persistently rewarded at its expense. A related assumption is that teaching is unnecessary at the university level and that university students should construct their own learning experiences after attending lectures by professors. This devaluation of teaching was identified as an aspect of "class

ethnocentrism” among the French professoriate of the 1960s by Bourdieu et al., (1965/1994, p. 6). Organizing student work and correcting exams constituted the lowest of jobs in France’s university hierarchies, relegated to “assistants” who ran “practical classes” or tutorials, while full professors gave “magisterial lectures” (Bourdieu et al., 1965/1994, p. 21). Rejecting explicit teaching practice, these professors offered students little direction in learning content.

The devaluation of teaching is evident in the fact that many academics do not train as teachers at all. Contractuals in this study provided exceptions. Only two did not discuss how they trained for teaching in their work histories. Five of the 27 interviewees had teaching degrees in addition to their academic specializations and three others taught in the Education faculty. These eight were also among the 15 who regularly attended professional development workshops offered by the university. Ten of the 27 interviewees described themselves as self-taught teachers. They drew on their observations as students to develop their initial teaching strategies and then used their initial “baptism by fire” teaching experiences as benchmarks for improvement. Only three tried to limit their teaching to distance education: one because of scheduling and two because of public speaking anxiety, a common phobia. An interesting point for future research on teaching pedagogy in the academy is to compare these figures with those of tenured and tenure track professors, who also have little training as teachers. In graduate school, teacher training soon becomes secondary to the demand for research and publication, especially under academic capitalism and the rationalization of faculty work (Donoghue, 2008).

The devaluation of teaching in North American universities is further evident in the assignment of courses, according to Nisbet (1971). As experts who could initiate and inspire students in their fields, full professors taught introductory courses up to the 1960s in North America. Under academic capitalism, such introductory courses became “feeder courses” that were increasingly allotted to more junior professors, and eventually to contractuels. At ARU, as elsewhere, contractuels are frequently assigned the first and second year courses with larger class sizes than at other levels of the undergraduate program.

Few participants actually objected to the size of their classes. Only six (three men, three women) complained that they had too many students altogether, even though others had larger classes. More were concerned with the volume of grading, especially in Arts-related disciplines where grading students’ writing constitutes a significant part of the teaching load. Several interviewees would only give inexperienced teaching assistants the “quicker” things to mark such as the multiple choice portions of exams. In classes of 40 to 80 or more first and second year students, written assignments and essay exams take significant time to grade properly and this is in addition to regular teaching responsibilities. In scheduling my own work, for example, I allot at least 30 minutes to grade a 10 page, double-spaced student paper. This involves evaluating the paper on the usual academic requirements of proper structure, referencing and grammar, and content. Such a paper is worth 15 to 25% of the student’s total mark in a semester course, so other assignments and exams must be graded as well. Four seasoned contractuels in this sample (three men, one woman) overtly complained that student writing had deteriorated over

the past few years and was now “extremely poor” (Hal). This made grading even more labour intensive. Beyond the time needed, two men alluded to a psychic cost:

Yesterday I realized that with so many—80—first year students I had an enormous number of badly written papers to get through, so I worked on a handout instead. Those task diaries [completed for this study] made me note the time involved, and even that ... was a good hour and a half this morning. Just doing a little handout as opposed to thinking seriously about content. Plus I’m lying awake and worrying about the state of the student. My idea of teaching is not what I’m doing anymore. Now it’s more like “remedial teaching.” Like if you gave them something to do in class, they just wander. They can’t put their eyes to the paper, they don’t know how to work. So dealing with that all the time, you’ve got to think of strategies ... which takes more time... It’s not like you’re dealing with the stereotypical good university-level students anymore. I hardly ever see that now. When I taught in the mid-nineties, the general level of student ... wasn’t good ..., [but] it’s gone down another 30% easy. So this takes a lot of time ... you have to have more office hours because you have to tell students to “come see me, I can’t deal with this in a few notes.” Some of them just won’t come, or just don’t care and even when they who do come, it’s extra time. But the biggest problem is, they have a terrible time focusing, concentrating (Phillip).

Three other men and eight women circumspectly attributed the quality of student work to “neediness” or a lack of basic knowledge. They all “enjoyed working with students, there’s just too frigging many of them!” (Renée). They believed the support they offered students was an essential part of their job. They also worried that meeting the higher classroom demand by reducing the number of papers and written work assigned to students was affecting the quality of their teaching.

When I first taught the first year course, it was capped at 20 or 25, then 35 ... and I think it’s about 50-something now. It’s just...ethically wrong to do that, it’s wrong for the students. And it’s incredibly stressful because you look out at this sea of people and all the [pedagogical] theory says, “they should be doing small group work,” but it would take you 20 minutes to get them into groups in a 50 minute period. It’s a very, very tight curriculum, so there’s no choice. The exams are set, you’re told how much to get through, how to mark, where to be on this day or that. So I can’t decide that I’m going to spend some time on what this class really needs. It’s more like “ok, I have to teach this much and I have twenty minutes to do it!” (Maeve).

In 2008 some ARU departments would only award per-term contracts for four (or more) courses a semester, even though the faculty association designated three courses as a full load for its members.

I don't think I could do four, do you think you could do four? ... the job satisfaction would be gone. Yeah, I just don't know if I would have what it would take to do that. It's just processing then, not teaching. I do love teaching but ... just because you love something doesn't mean that you do it 16 hours a day. There's no joy in it, it's just too much. And even now with additional enrolment, I really feel the difference of those extra students. You can hardly breathe. I find that overwhelming and I'm making compromises, and I don't like that. The joy ... is being slowly eaten away. And so far I haven't been able to cut down on the grading but ... it's getting to be too much. And I used to know at least 70% of their names but because the classes are so much larger, I don't anymore (Frances).

An important part of the professional identity of most study participants was to be a "good teacher." In addition, contractually are frequently asked for evidence of effective performance as a teacher in the hiring process. To these ends, a large majority of participants concentrated on upholding academic standards and spoke of how some elements of contractual work, such as little acknowledgement of this from their departments, undermined their efforts. One ARU per-term contractual described how vague performance standards exacerbated her feelings of insecurity:

I know there's people who think that I'm doing a good job and want me back, they asked me to apply! But there's still uncertainty there. What would really irritate me if I don't get that [contract], is that I won't know what I could have done differently. Nobody told me what I was supposed to be doing when I got here. I just did what was thrown at me and I dealt with difficult situations as best I could, for my first year here. But nobody told me I wasn't doing a good job and this is my other issue. With any other job that I've been in, there's always been an evaluation, whether it be after your probationary period or yearly. Something to let you know if there are any areas that you need to improve and then give you a chance to do it. But that's not in place here. I don't know how they would be able to evaluate my teaching... Obviously, there [are] your course evaluations but that's the opinion of the students, not the opinion of colleagues. If they're having

an issue with me, like I'm not meeting the standards or my job description which were not communicated to me in the beginning anyway, what can I do? (Jessica).

From reviewing the literature on academic capitalism, I expected that participants would complain about the administrative requirement that students evaluate their teaching. Instead, many welcomed these evaluations as an opportunity to improve and as evidence of their effective teaching (see Cohen, 2011).

Thirteen of the 27 interviewees were aware of how student evaluations of their teaching might be used in hiring decisions by the university administration, thereby affecting their future prospects for work. All 13 received good results in their teaching evaluations overall, but 11 were still "highly stressed," "anxious" and even "panicked" during the distribution of the surveys to students and when they looked at the results afterwards. Nine of the 13 were skeptical about the validity of teaching evaluation surveys because they frequently failed to achieve statistical significance when distributed near the end of term, as attendance drops off. A few objected to the intra-departmental comparisons in which their teaching evaluations in "mini-theatre classes of 110 first year students, [are compared to evaluations by] seminars of 15 fourth year majors, where [the professor] can pay attention to each of them" (Roy).

Without using the term, a few interviewees speculated on how *academic capital* could ease the impact of teaching evaluations for tenured faculty who "don't stress out about what students think. They [don't have to] because they're tenured" (Hal). Tenure track faculty, like contractuales, are more vulnerable to bad course evaluations than tenured faculty but they are better able than contractuales to effectively mitigate the circumstances. For example, one participant described how a tenure-track colleague

would avoid teaching night classes when “students give you really bad evaluations” (Jenny).

This begs the question of whether or not contractuales pander to students more often than tenured or tenure track faculty. Several participants reiterated insinuations from colleagues that they inflated grades, lowered academic standards and were generally lacking in professionalism. Only three of the 27 interviewees, however, admitted to “bumping up the grades to keep the[ir distance education] students coming” (Hal). Those among the other 24 who discussed this were adamant that they would not lower their standards, no matter what pressure they received from students or the administration. “I teach more or less what I want as I think it should be taught”(Dave). Some identified this as an aspect of academic professionalism: “Who would want to hire me if I teach like it’s a popularity contest?” (Renée). “My department chair would hire me over someone who drops the level ... it’s not good to make it easier, there’s no ‘easier’ after university!” (Christian).

The 13 who spoke of student evaluations of their teaching were particularly upset by the online publication of the results where potentially thousands of students and other faculty could see them. At the time of this research (2008), per-course contractuales were in the unenviable position of having no control at all over this. Per-term contractuales could withdraw permission for such publication while they were temporary members of the faculty association. One woman found this decision difficult. She argued that the university’s teaching evaluations from her large classes were a better measure of her teaching than the online professor rating websites, where the evaluation is done by self-selected students and possibly by people who had never even taken her courses. All 13

participants agreed that the near public access to what was essentially their job evaluation was grossly unfair and further heightened their experience of job insecurity. Rather than indicating their professionalism, teaching evaluations resembled performance audits and consumer satisfaction surveys with arbitrary and potentially stressful repercussions for those audited. Despite these problems, the 13 participants who spoke of teaching evaluations appreciated the feedback from students and the documentation of their teaching work. They used them as evidence of their good teaching in job applications for the following semesters. Such teaching evaluations can be an instrument of “professionalization from above” (Evetts, 2003), as instituted by administrations to improve productivity among workers. When their results were good (as they usually were for this sample), teaching evaluations also provided participants with a benchmark for professional identity and social comparison, both significant elements in good mental health.

Participants complained of other teaching issues related to their marginalization, including not being allowed to supervise honours or graduate students, dealing with expectations of “just-in-time teaching,” and issues in collaborating with full-time faculty.

Contractuals were discouraged from supervising advanced students because their contracts might not be renewed in the following semesters. Working with honours and graduate students carries more status in the university workplace than teaching first and second year courses and such supervision also provides a potential pool of assistants for research funding proposals. One interviewee lost a research contract because she did not have any honours students to list as research assistants on her application for funding. This problem affected the relationship another contractual had with her students:

The other thing that's really frustrating is that most faculty have a following of students. And I remember being there. I took ... nearly every single class [this one guy] offered, mainly because we connected. I knew what his style was like and could learn from him. I really enjoyed his classes. So, now I have students asking what I'm teaching this fall and I have to say "Well, I won't be here." So they want to be sad for me and I'm like "Oh don't, I knew that when I came" and blah blah and they say "Okay. Ummm. Well now what am I going to do?" And I would like to do honours work with them but I can't. There are no options for the "what if" [they need an extension] factor. So that's really tough (Gerry).

Last minute hiring frequently led to "just in time teaching," another point of contention among these contractuales. Many had been assigned at least one contract at the last minute, so they had to "walk into a classroom cold" (Peter), without time to prepare. This problem was exacerbated by the late allotment of graduate teaching assistants (TAs) which was based on a critical mass of student enrolments for each teacher. These could not be determined until after the late registration dates and after TA funding was awarded to the departments. Respondents could not plan their courses to include teaching assistance and, as a consequence, did not effectively "get much out of" the assistants later assigned to them (Naomi). A few departments did not assign TAs to contractuales at all.

Five participants prepared courses in advance, only to have them cancelled at the last minute or assumed by tenured or tenure-track faculty. Knowing that course registrations had met the minimum levels of enrolment, they attributed the last minute changes to their contractual statuses.

I was asked to prepare a course by the chair and I did, all one summer when I was unemployed. But then a new faculty person decided she wanted it so [I didn't get the contract] ... You see, that kind of stuff creates stress. It doesn't create health problems like I'm vomiting in the toilet or anything like that but I feel offended by it and disrespected and that has an effect on your relationship with those people. But you're treated that way because of your position, right? (Renée).

Course cancellations also affect tenure track and tenured faculty when class enrolments do not meet the institution's quota but full-time faculty do not lose income, as do contractuels. When sections of a course were cancelled, some departments directed those students affected to ask participants to add them into already full class sections. A few respondents felt exploited by this because they did not want to refuse these students.

The five participants who were most affected also spoke of the inconsistency that just-in-time teaching engenders within programs. Because they were hired just before the semester started, these participants did not have an opportunity to plan curricula with others in the department,

[To create] a natural progression through some of the skills. That's the kind of stuff we need the time for and we don't have time during the semesters... We [teachers are] not communicating [with each other] and we're not here during the summer preparing so we don't know what each other is getting ready (Jessica).

A minority of five other participants interpreted this from a faculty perspective, that people on short term contracts might not be as "committed" or "invested" in ensuring the success of their departments' academic programs as are tenure-track and tenured faculty. All five were relatively young and actively looking for full-time faculty positions.

[A] big problem with contractual teaching at any university really is that there's not as much, not loyalty, but dedication to the institution because as we're all aware, they may be working at the university this semester and never work there again. There are certainly exceptions, but the average contractual teacher doesn't really see it as being pertinent to his or her own work to do things like ensure consistency course to course. Maybe if he's teaching one course and expects to do a sequel course, he'd make sure that what he's teaching will dovetail smoothly into that sequel course. And he'd make sure that he's aware of university policy which may at some point affect him, that kind of thing (Ian).

This was not a majority position, especially among those teaching contractually for more than 10 years. Many saw continuity in their own teaching over the years and had

a better idea of how they contributed to students' progress overall. Most of the longer serving per-term and per-course contractuels in this study were dedicated to their students and to teaching as a profession.

Finally, fifteen participants engaged in consultation and collaboration with faculty on teaching issues, with mixed responses. This consultation and collaboration was "essential" for some, *ad hoc* or "misleading" for others, depending on the faculty consultant and the contractuels' status.

I found not having anybody to coordinate the sessionals difficult. Nobody's looking to see what you're doing or to offer guidance and unless you take it upon yourself to see what are other people doing and unless we [contractuels] got together ourselves, we were just winging it. Now the last departmental chair who came along tried to organize us and he was very supportive of us, which was good but before that, no (Catherine).

The implication that full-time faculty were the senior partners in these collaborations worked well for seven of the 15 who felt that they were, indeed, junior. One of these seven was co-teaching as a retirement job, two self-identified as "under-qualified," three graduate students were more focused on their research, and one contractual was just beginning to teach again after a few years' hiatus. They were happy to have the mentoring that co-teaching afforded and through it, experienced "more connection to the work and the environment. Professionally that brought me a lot of confidence" (Joanne).

Ten of the 15 collaborators complained about their faculty partners' attitudes towards the collaboration process. Six described serious incidents in which they were "railroaded" by their faculty partners or their inputs into their co-taught courses were simply ignored. The other four complained about the logistics of organizing to co-teach,

requirements to teach with materials or methods they did not approve of, and the issue of copyright ownership over the course:

One [problem I have] is about the ownership of the course; other people designing the course that I teach. I don't really think that's right. If you go to the webpage it'll say copyright Dr. Soandso and Dr. Soandso did design *that version* of the course. But I was not invited to participate in the development of that version at all. I was just brought in afterwards to teach it. Although I did design the earlier versions of the course with Dr. Andso (Roy).

Even the three co-teaching participants who had a significant role in course development were compromised by their contractual status because they did not have any ownership rights over the courses they helped develop. In a work environment where output and products are regulated by copyright law, non-ownership affects academic capital. A singular case that illustrates the lower academic capital of contractals was that of Barbara who was asked by one supervisor for teaching materials copyrighted by another faculty member. It became evident that she was the one who was expected to violate copyright law. She successfully refused to do so.

It was probably the only time that I did feel threatened or uncomfortable about being contractual ... that this could affect me. And I know it sounds really mean, but [the professor who owned the copyright] was very honest, very open. I knew how he felt and he told me, "it doesn't matter, I respect you, but if you do this, I will sue you." So ... ultimately it would have been my responsibility. I don't think she [the supervisor who asked for the materials] ever would have stood with me or backed me up (Barbara).

The issue of course ownership is complex and related to status, even for contractals who have taught the same courses for a number of years. It came up as a critical incident for eight interviewees who were excluded from committees that decided on textbooks and other aspects of course construction. Five discussed how their work with students was compromised because of this exclusion. Control over course

construction and delivery (i.e. teaching) varied considerably in this group. It made a difference in how they viewed their work and whether or not they experienced job strain (see Chapter Five).

For one course in particular, [the faculty member] was actually changing everything throughout the term. And [initially] I wasn't aware that ... she was going to be ... taking such an active role in it. That really wasn't communicated to me, by her or by anybody else when they hired me. And I mean, all her ideas and plans were great, I'm not saying that anything wasn't good. It's just the way it was done. I guess it was a lack of communication. ... Like I framed the course for [the students at the beginning of semester] and they were coming to me because I was supposed to be their primary instructor last term, but then things obviously shifted. So I wasn't really sure what exactly I was responsible for. Students were asking questions that I couldn't answer effectively because I wasn't fully aware of everything going on I wasn't in on the planning (Jessica).

Although most participants felt treated with respect, eleven interviewees explicitly described incidents with faculty co-workers "higher on the totem pole" (Hal) and who "pulled rank" (Hal) in particular situations. These occasional incidents of disrespect were aggravated by their low status as contractuales.

The biggest problem I've been facing for a number of years is this co-worker of mine who is like a supervisor and is consistently devaluing my work. The chair of the department told me that she said that my duties didn't warrant a promotion [in contractual status]. Even though I've taught the same courses and did the same things as all the other instructors who have been promoted. It was obvious that she was trying to maintain control of the course, although she wasn't working at it at all. One year I taught all of the sections of one course alongside this woman and she only ordered the supplies. I revised the manuals with other faculty, I ran the classes, I made up the exams, I marked the exams. I basically taught the course alone. Then she told the chair that I wasn't doing it all (Natalie).

Such incidents could be interpreted as covert workplace bullying for the eight respondents pressured to act against their conscience, or excluded from collegial understandings, or demeaned on a day-to-day basis. They felt vulnerable because of their

job insecurity and their job insecurity, in turn, made it difficult to deal with the incidents.

This issue will be revisited in Chapter Six.

4.e Conclusion

Insecurity defined the work experiences of participants in this case study, from the moment of being hired in a system of academic capitalism, to the low monetary value given to their work, to their marginalized status and treatment in the academic hierarchy.

That this chapter reads like a litany of complaints is mainly due to the nature of the interview process and its analysis. Complaint was not the intention of most of these participants. They loved their work and were simply answering my questions.

Nevertheless, problems could not be understated in their descriptions of the reality of day-to-day contractual teaching. For example, when asked to describe a positive or negative critical incident, only a few men chose positive stories.

At the end of their interviews, some respondents worried that they appeared to be venting when they only intended to discuss the reality of their situation. However, when I volunteered to remove anything they found uncomfortable from the interview transcripts, they replied “no, this is an important piece of research to complete” (Sylvie). Participants generally emphasized the joy they found in teaching and that they worked as university teachers by choice and vocation. Some appreciated the fit of contractual teaching with family or research responsibilities. They were willing to trade job insecurity for work flexibility. None considered this trade-off necessary for cost-effective faculty staffing, though. They knew that their contracts could be “regularized” and their contributions acknowledged without incurring exorbitant additional costs to the university. They fully

recognized how job insecurity was affecting their health and that institutional support for dealing with the ensuing health issues was lacking. Participants' health and the connections they see between job insecurity and health are the focus of the next chapter.

Chapter Five: Stresses and Strains: Job Insecurity and the Health of Contractual University Teachers

Tremendous stress. Tremendous stress. From wondering where your next pay cheque is coming from and whether or not you're working next semester, to making your deadlines, getting through the exams, wondering about my own [PhD] work and when I'm going to get a chance to have that submitted? So it all makes a really big impact. *I think my health is a lot worse now than what it was before I started teaching* [emphasis mine] (Stephanie).

Job insecurity frames the experience of contractual university teaching at ARU for participants in this 2008 study. As shown in Chapter Four, this job insecurity stems from at least three sources. The first is the combination of traditional hiring practices based on sponsorship and goodwill with a rationalized hiring system. Concern over income and finances is a second source of job insecurity and status inequality in the academic hierarchy is the third. This chapter explores the relationship between this job insecurity and participants' self-reported health.

Participants revealed how their job insecurity affected their health in the mixed methods used throughout the research. The semi-structured interviews were particularly important for documenting and understanding the relationship between participants' health and their levels of job insecurity. This chapter begins with a discussion of participant's definitions of health and their self-rated health from these qualitative narratives. The interview data was then triangulated with data collected from a demographic survey, two SF-12v.2® *Health Surveys*, and two sets of task diaries. The results of the SF-12v.2® *Health Survey* were extended in SPSS Student Version 14.0

(SPSS Inc., 2006) to look at changes in health over the course of the semester and at other potentially influential variables.

Altogether, 26 of the 27 interviewees discussed how their health was currently or previously affected by job insecurity. This chapter details the specific challenges participants identified for their physical and emotional health. In the last section, data from the task diaries, the demographic survey, and the interview narratives are used to explore the intersection of job insecurity and job strain. The quantitative findings from this convenience sample cannot be used in inferential statistics, but the cross-tabulations provide insights into how participants' health is affected by job insecurity.

5.a Defining and measuring health

5.a.i Participants' definitions of health

What is health? I don't know... more than the absence of disease? High level wellness? I have no idea of what health is until I'm dead! My health is actually good. I mean, considering (Dave).

Advocacy organizations in agreement with the Public Health Agency of Canada (2011) define health holistically by including physical, social and emotional indicators of health and well-being. Nevertheless, empirical studies like the Canadian Institute for Health Information's (CIHI, 2010) *Canadian Community Health Survey* primarily measure quantifiable physical health problems like diabetes, heart and circulatory conditions, rates of smoking and obesity. This emphasis is pragmatic. Physical health conditions are presumably easier to measure and manage. Even the World Health Organization's holistic model of health was "really very physiological," according to respondent Damien who used it as a teaching tool. In the *SF-12v.2® Health Survey* used

for this research (Appendix 1-D), the composite measure of *physical* health included respondents' answers on self-rated health. This implies that most people equate physical health functioning with overall health.

The emotional or mental aspects of health were as important as the physical in daily functioning, comfort or life balance for 21 of the 24 participants who defined health in their semi-structured interviews. These informed answers might have been affected by their having completed at least one *SF-12v.2*[®] *Health Survey* before the interviews or by their sensitization to the public discourses around health. Half of the 24 who defined health had previously worked in health care or used health-related material in their courses.

Well, health is an optimal status, it's not just the absence of disease. It's feeling mentally and physically like ... you have energy, you have 'joie de vive'. You feel like you can tackle things and that life is great and you're happy to be alive! That is health. Now, absence of disease is good if you can't have that optimal health. Absence of disease is a minimum. Uhhh, I teach ... and I read all the surveys and it's really funny that people, older people, even if they have arthritis and high blood pressure and heart disease and diabetes, they say they're in good health! (Janice).

The only three interviewees who focused primarily on physical health in their definitions had recently overcome fairly serious physical health problems and were concerned with reoccurrence. Two of these three adamantly maintained that their health problems were not derived from contractual work. The third later speculated that the depression associated with her physical condition was worsened by the stress of job insecurity.

Most participants' answers were articulate and scholarly. They carefully distinguished between the physical health conditions they did not associate with job

insecurity and the emotional health conditions that they did. Their responses revealed the minutiae of how job insecurity had negative consequences for their health.

Health encompasses more than just what's going on in the physical body. It's also emotional, mental, spiritual ... [it] is more than the absence of an illness, it's also an invigorating feeling, or a happy feeling. There are many days when I don't have a headache, I haven't stubbed my toe, I'm not really in any pain, but I just feel like crap! And part of that is emotional because the end of the semester is coming and then what? Will I have a job? So stress plays a part in health and in order for it to be more than just the aches and pains and high blood pressure or whatever, that ... [feeling of] life security comes into play and then you're happier. It's like, oh, I have 10 bucks, do I need to save it so I can pay rent? or "I can go to the movies!" (Gerry).

Participants' definitions of health were similar overall, but a slight gender difference was evident in emphases. Sixty-three percent of the men emphasized functional ability, hinting at an instrumental view of health, while the same proportion of women added overall "balance," "contentment," "calm" to their definitions. Brad provides a response typical among the men:

Oh boy. I guess feeling well, as in feeling good about yourself, feeling as if you have energy. Like you're not just tired and *you're not inhibited from what you want to do* [emphasis mine]. That's how I would describe health.

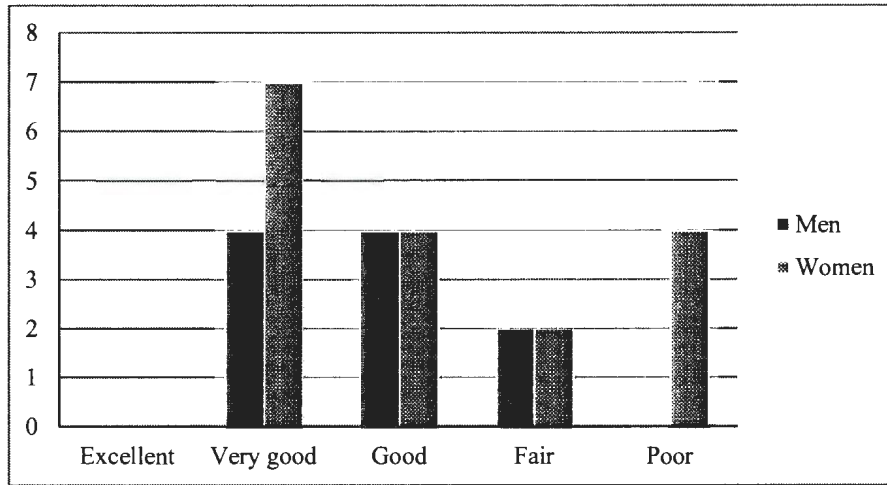
Catherine's definition is similar to those of many women in this study, alluding to problems in work-life balance typical of Canadian women in general (Higgins, Duxbury and Lyons, 2010):

Hmm, I think health is *balance in your life* [emphasis mine]. Really having enough [time to] ...balance your work with ... the things that are important to you like family, friends, spirituality, recreation, exercise. I get none of that at the moment, which is bad.

5.a.ii Participants' self-reports of health

Global self-rated health, the overall rating of one's own health, is widely used in social science research as a good proxy measure for mortality. This is despite subjects' tendencies to define health in relative terms and to respond positively on health surveys (Jylhae, 2009; Laszlo et al., 2010; Wolff, Subramanian, Acevedo-Garcia, Weber and Kawachi, 2010). In accord with National Population Health Survey data (Denton et al., 2004), I found little discernible gender difference in self-rated health in the "good" and "fair" categories but more women than men in the "very good" and "poor" categories (see Figure 1, p. 157). Population health surveys of Canadians' self-rated health, however, do find a strong *social status* gradient and a moderate gradient on self-esteem and self-mastery (Denton et al., 2004; Statistics Canada 1999). ARU participants' narratives of the sources of job insecurity demonstrated that social status, self-esteem and self-mastery are influenced by contractual status in the academic hierarchy. When asked the question, "Please describe what you consider 'health' to be and rank your own health status," 19 of the 27 interviewees (70.3%) said they were in "good" or "very good" health. None used the term "excellent" (see Figure 1, p. 157). This compares with approximately 88% of all Canadians (and 85% of all Americans) who reported "good", "very good", or "excellent" health in 2006 (CIHI, 2010; Prus, 2011; Statistics Canada, 2009).

Figure 1: Self-reported health in the interview transcripts, n= 17 women, 10 men



Fourteen of the 19 participants who self-identified as being in good or very good health also described health problems that are enumerated in Table 4 (p. 170) and Table 5 (p. 174). Physical health problems include lack of exercise, sleep disorders, poor diet.

Emotional health problems include stress, feeling out of control, frustrations in the workplace, and so on. As Janice noted above, this is a common finding in health research.

For Renée,

I think health is really how you define well-being and I'm in pretty good shape. I did have a god awful injury from the gym and I've been in and out of physiotherapy ever since. But it's pretty good now, it's not perfect, but it'll get better, it'll just get stronger. And I'm not a great sleeper. And then with the headaches and stuff, I won't have a television in my room. I need lights off, that sort of thing.

Four participants claimed to be in poor health and four were in "fair" health. This was a total of 29.6% of the sample, compared to the 11.2% of the general Canadian population who said they were in fair or poor health in 2006 (CIHI, 2010; Statistics Canada, 2009).

In the following section of this chapter, I begin with a summary and analysis of the results of the *SF-12v.2® Health Survey*. Next, I compare these quantitative findings with my categorization of respondents as *high, medium* or *low on job insecurity* that were derived from the semi-structured interviews.

5.a.iii General results from the SF-12v.2® Health Survey

The *SF-12v.2® Health Survey* was chosen for this study because it allows a quantitative norm-based comparison of respondents' health, useful in studying small non-representative samples. It is designed for clinical use by doctors to gauge the extent to which individual patient's health compares to the age- and gender-adjusted norms of the 1998 US population. If a patient or respondent completes two or more surveys at successive points in time, it measures the approximate change in their health over that period. When the results of these surveys are keyed into the Quality Metric software, the data are compiled into individual health reports and group summaries. Thirty-two respondents are needed to detect a difference of five points or more between a group mean and a fixed norm (Quality Metric, 2007), so 32 respondents were solicited for this study. For software data entry, "February 15" was designated as the date of the first survey because most respondents in the first fieldwork semester completed it during that week, approximately one month into the semester.

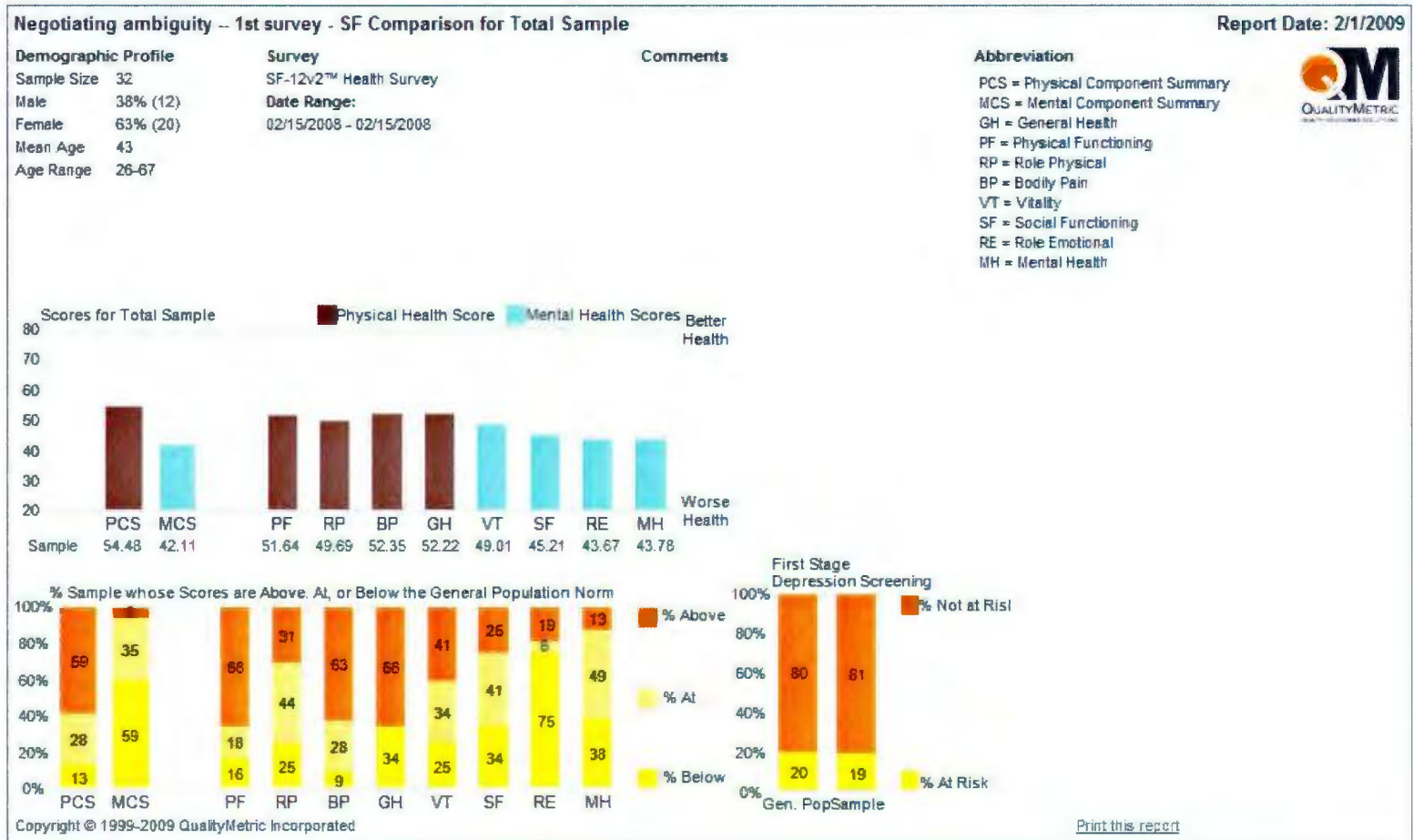
Overall, the contractually employed respondents in this study compared favourably on the physical component summaries (PCS) of the *SF-12v.2® Health Survey* and poorly with the 1998 US population norms on the mental component summaries (MCS), both as individuals and as a sample group. The physical component summary is

compiled from questions on general health (GH), physical functioning (PF), role physical (RP), and bodily pain (BP). For example, respondents were asked to what extent did physical health affect their roles at work or elsewhere? Were they able to climb stairs? The mental component summary is derived from questions on vitality (VT), social functioning (SF), role emotional (RE) and mental health (MH). These questions gauged the extent to which emotional health interfered with engaging with others or work roles, feeling depressed, et cetera. See Appendix 1-D for the survey questions. The age and gender adjusted norms of the 1998 US population used as comparisons in the *SF-12v.2® Health Survey* are set near, but not quite at, 50. The US 1998 PCS norm, for example, was 50.60 for men and 48.72 for women.

The *SF-12v.2® Health Survey* comparisons for the total sample on the first administration of the questionnaire are illustrated in Figure 2 (p. 160). The physical component summary (PCS) average of the study sample is 54.48, above the standardized 1998 *SF-12v.2® Health Survey* US population norm set near 50. On the components for physical health, more than 60% of respondents were above the US 1998 norms for physical functioning (PF), bodily pain (BP), and general health (GH) and 75% were at or above the US norms on role physical (RP).

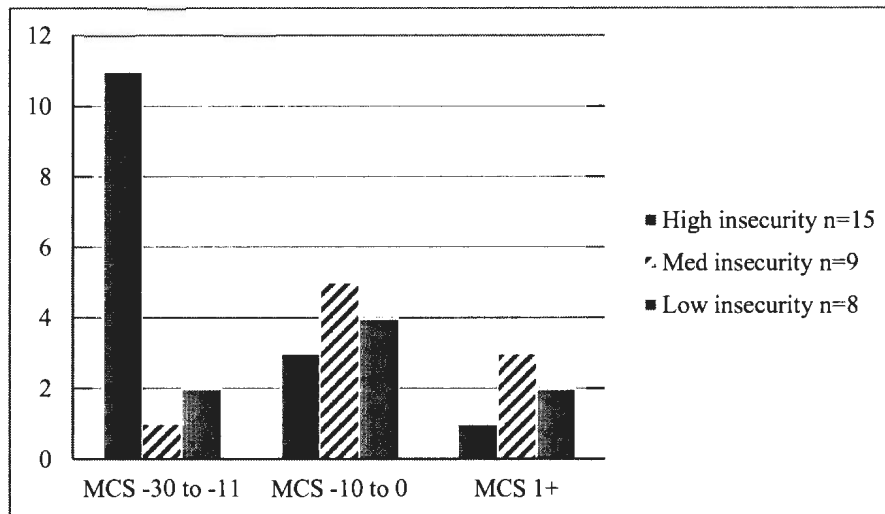
The mental component summary average of the sample (42.11) is significantly below the US 1998 population norm, also set near 50. The percentage of the sample above the norms was a reasonable 41% for vitality (VT), but only 25% scored above the norm on social functioning (SF), 19% on role emotional (RE), and 13% on mental health (MH).

Figure 2: SF-12v.2® Health Survey, 1st stage



The second administration of the *SF-12v.2® Health Survey* is not included in Figure 2 because I did not have enough follow-up surveys to meet the quota of 32 required for comparisons over time. I did a manual comparison instead, entering the results from each individual's last *SF-12v.2® Health Survey* into *SPSS Student Version 14.0* (SPSS Inc., 2006) to find out how far each varied from their comparison norms. These variations from the norms were cross-tabulated with the qualitative categorization of participants as *high, medium* or *low on job insecurity*. Figure 3 (p. 162) illustrates this for the mental component summary (MCS). For example, when each participant's last variation from the US 1998 norms on mental health was cross-tabulated with their level of job insecurity, 12 of the 15 who were *high on job insecurity* were 10 or more points below the norms. Those *low* or *medium on job insecurity* generally had better mental health: six of the eight with *low job insecurity* and eight of the nine with *medium job insecurity* were within 10 points of the US norm, compared to only four of the 15 with *high job insecurity*. Nevertheless, the majority of all respondents were still well below the US 1998 mental health norms in their *SF-12v.2® Health Survey* scores (See Figure 3, p. 162). These findings suggest that any level of job insecurity can have negative mental health effects, a point to be explored in future quantitative studies.

Figure 3: Level of insecurity and MCS scores, n=32



I found a few anomalies in the *SF-12v.2® Health Survey* data. Despite the low overall score on mental health, 75% of both men and women in the sample were at or above the norms on vitality (VT). In comparison, their group scores on social functioning (SF), role emotional (RE) and mental health (MH) components were five or more points lower than the US 1998 population norms (see Figure 2, p. 160).

The most remarkable result of the *SF-12v.2® Health Survey* related to scores on role emotional (RE) where 75% of the sample was below the U.S. 1998 population norm. The RE score was compiled from answers to question 4 “During the past 4 weeks, how much of the time have you had any of the following problems with your work or other regular daily activities as a result of any emotional problems (such as feeling depressed or anxious)?” “(a) Accomplished less than you would like ...,” “(b) Did work or other activities less carefully than usual.” My qualitative data show that 23 of the 27 interviewees linked their overall stress and anxiety to job insecurity (see Table 5 p. 174).

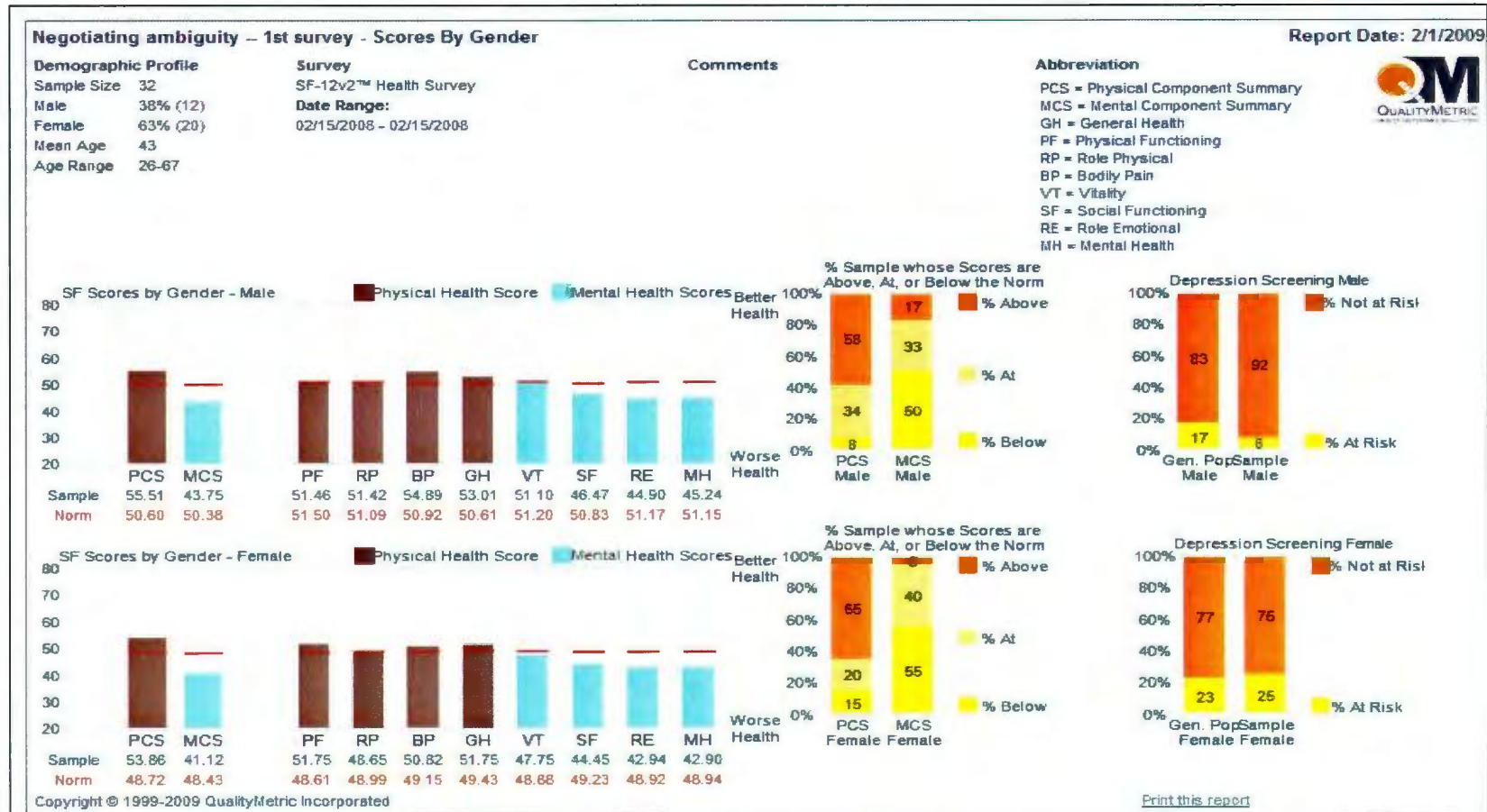
A few like Naomi found it extremely difficult to deal with it at particular points of her career.

I do think my health has been affected by working as a contractual ... in the early years there were three or four years when it seemed like I could never get rid of the anxiety, the racing heart thing. I guess it was before I started getting term contracts and I was still on per-course. ... I was really very anxious all the time, almost having panic attacks. Because of teaching, trying to please students, to please the department, trying not to say anything that would get me in any trouble, keeping under the radar and so on and so forth. That really took its toll in terms of my mental, my *emotional* health [italics mine].

5.a.iv Gender (sex) distributions in the SF-12v.2® Health Survey scores

The results of the *SF-12v.2® Health Survey* are consistent with recent findings that the gender gap in health is narrowing among men and women in similar occupations (Cummings and Braboy Jackson, 2008; Emslie et al., 2002; Schnittker, 2007). The scores of both women and men in this sample were higher on physical health (PCS) than the 1998 U.S. norms, as indicated in Figure 4 (p. 164). The men averaged 55.51 on physical health, compared to the US population norm of 50.6 and the women averaged 53.86, compared to the US population norm of 48.72.

Figure 4: SF-12v.2® Health Survey, comparison by gender



Both men and women had substantially poorer health on the mental component summary (MCS) than their comparative 1998 US gender-adjusted population. With a score of 43.75 points, the men were 6.63 points below the US norm of 50.38. At 41.12 points, the women were 7.31 points below the female norm of 48.43.

Overall, only one of the 20 women and two of the 12 men scored above the US 1998 population norms for mental health in the first administration of the survey. The “risk of depression” scores were interesting. The sample men had much less risk of depression (8%) than the general US population (17%) on the first survey but had a similar score in the second survey administered later in the semester. The sample women had a slightly higher rate of risk of depression (25%) than their counterparts in the general 1998 US population (23%) on the first survey. These results raise the question of why sample women had a higher risk of depression on the first survey than sample men. Why isn’t the risk of depression among sample men higher than the US population norm, given that their scores on mental health were so much lower? In the qualitative interviews, men tended to equate health with functioning. They may have been understating their risk of depression if they did not see it as interfering with their work early in the term. Participating in this study may have sensitized them to answering the second *SF-12v.2*® *Health Survey* a bit differently later in the term. In general, their health worsened over the semester.

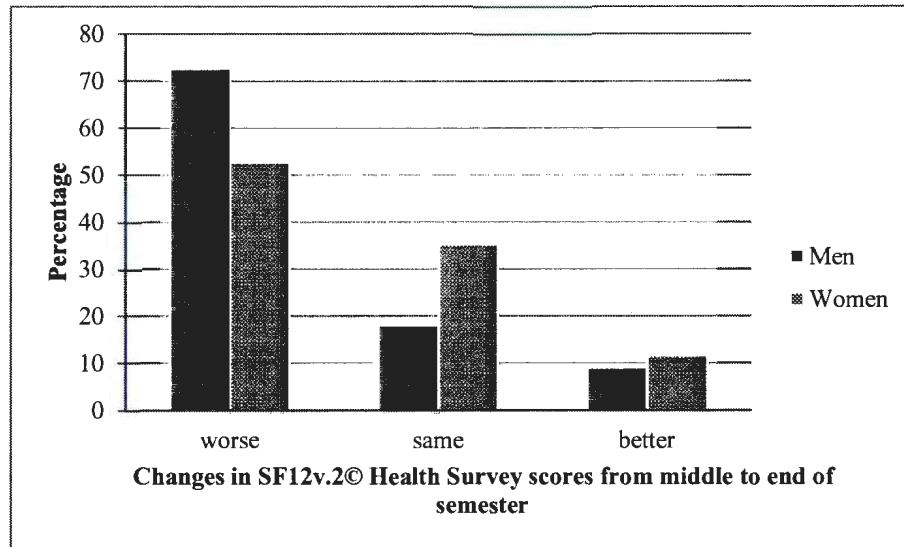
Data on the *change* in mental and physical health that occurred during the semester was categorized in the *SF-12v.2*® *Health Survey* as *better*, *the same* and *worse* and recorded in the individual health reports. These changes in health were cross-tabulated in *SPSS Student Version 14.0* (SPSS Inc., 2006) for the 28 respondents who

completed two *SF-12v.2® Health Surveys*, one at the end of the first month of the semester and one after the second month or later in the semester when all were approaching the end of their contracts. Four of the 32 respondents in the sample completed only the first survey, therefore could not be counted.

When the mental health results of two *SF-12v2™ Health Surveys* taken at different times of the semester were compared for each participant, 61% of all 28 respondents and a greater proportion of sample men (72.7%) than sample women (52.9%) had *worse* mental health scores towards the end of the semester (Figure 5, p. 167). Again, most were approaching the end of semester and several associated heightened feelings of insecurity with the end of their contracts. Twenty-eight percent remained *the same* in mental health, which was proportionately more of the women (35.3%) than the men (18.2%). Only 11.8% of the women and 9.1% of the men were in *better* mental health by semester's end.

This did not extend to physical health. Only 11.8% of the women and 9.1 % of the men experienced a decline in physical health over the course of the semester. A greater proportion of men (54.5%) than women (29.4%) were in *better* physical health towards semester's end.

Figure 5: Changes in mental health over the semester

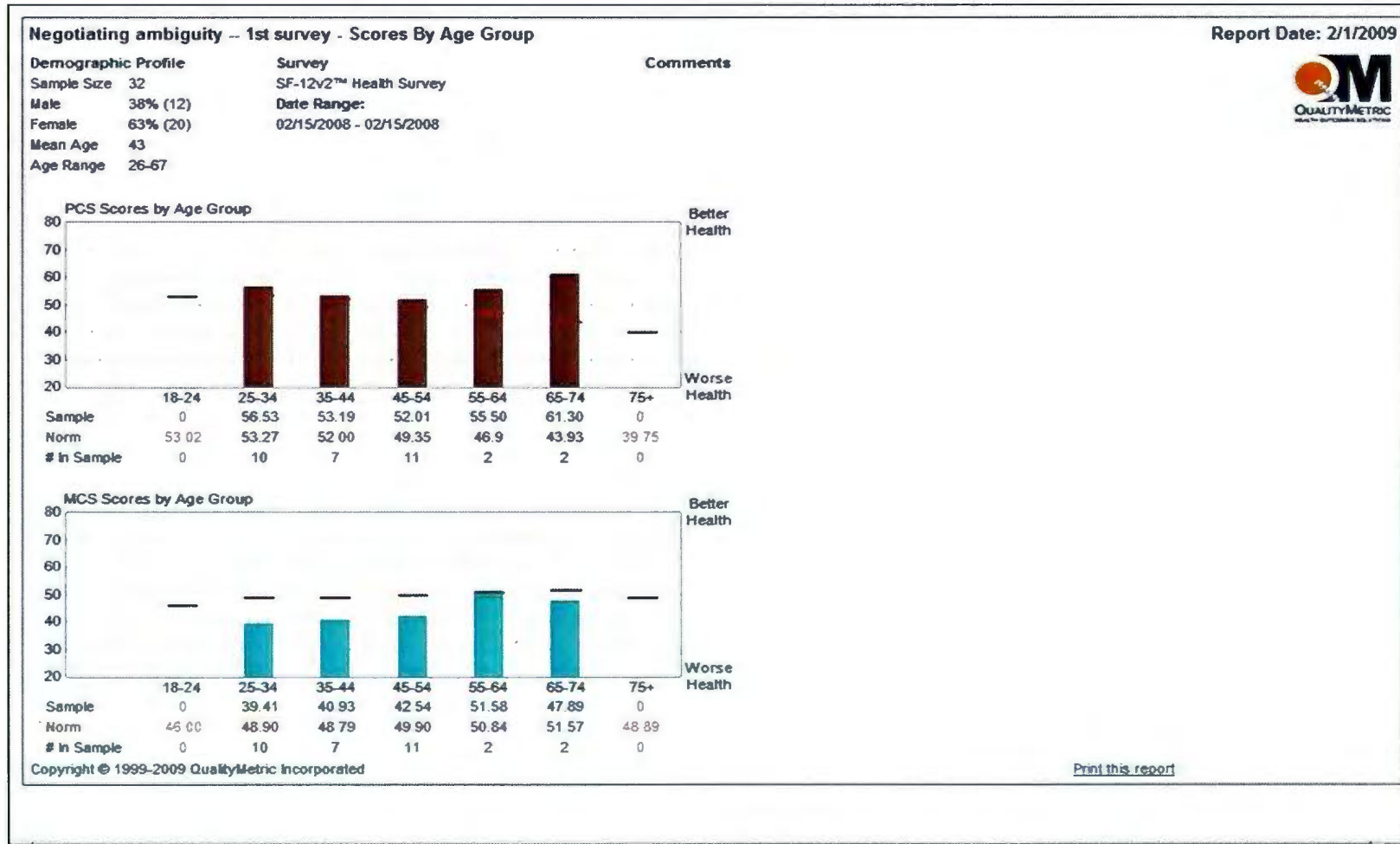


5.a.v Age distributions in the *SF-12v.2*® Health Survey scores

When the sample scores on the *SF-12v.2*® Health Survey were compared to the US 1998 population norms on age, all respondents scored at or above the norms for their age groups on the physical component summary (PCS) (Figure 6, p. 168). The physical health scores of those in the 55-64 and 65-74 year age groups were the highest relative to the norms for their age groups, at (respectively) 8.6 and 17.37 points above their comparative US 1998 norms.

The mental component summary (MCS) scores were, on average, at least 7 points below the US 1998 population norms for those in the 25-34, 35-44, and 45-54 age groups. The MCS scores averaged approximately 3.7 points below the norm for those aged 65-74 and 0.75 points *above* the norm for those aged 55-64.

Figure 6: SF-12v.2® Health Survey comparison by age



5.a.vi Potential influences of other variables

To explore other potential influences on health, I first calculated the sample means, which were 4.94 points above the US 1998 norm for physical health and (minus) -10.41 points below the US 1998 norm for mental health. These and respondents' *SF-12v.2*® *Health Survey* scores were cross-tabulated with other variables. The results showed no clear relationship between mental health scores on the *SF-12v.2*® *Health Survey* and years of education, household income, marital status, number of years working as a contractual, or switching contractual status. I found no appreciable associations between respondents' changes in health over the semester and education, age grouping, whether or not they switched contractual status, or estimated household income.

More patterns emerged when these variables were cross-tabulated with respondents' categorizations as *high*, *medium* or *low on job insecurity* (see Table 3, p. 97). For example, on types of contract, only 14% of the per-course participants compared to 33.5% of the per-term were *low on job insecurity*. Nevertheless, a sizable proportion of both groups (50% of the per-course participants compared to 44.5% of the per-term) were *high on job insecurity*. Fifty-two percent of those who switched contractual status compared with 29% of those who did not switch were *high on job insecurity*. All respondents were job insecure with respect to the requirement that they reapply for their contracts on an annual or semester basis.

Unexpectedly, the number of years working as a contractual appeared to have a negative, rather than positive and cumulative, association with job insecurity. The cross-

tabulations indicate that only 30% of those with over 10 years of service were *high on job insecurity*, compared to 66% of those with less than 2 years.

These patterns suggest areas for future research. For this small sample of contractual university teachers, job insecurity affects mental health regardless of income and education, the usual variables associated with the health gradient.

5.b Challenges to Physical Health from Contractual Teaching

None of my health issues are related to my teaching situation. Compared to people working 9 to 5 or 9 to 6, I've got good health. I can take off in the middle of the day, go running. Most people can't. But you can't separate it from where I live, for example. And lots of people have jobs that I'm sure hurts their health far more than mine. I mean the job itself, *separate from being contractual* [emphasis mine], is about as healthy a job as any (Bob).

Like Bob, almost half (13 of 27) of the interviewees in this sample did not associate any physical health problems with contractual teaching.

Table 4: Physical health issues described by interviewees, n=27

Physical health issues	# of respondents
Chronic or pre-existing condition, not related to contractual work	11
Weight gain or loss because of contractual work	6
Cholesterol problems worsened by stress of contractual work	2
Blood pressure problems worsened by stress of contractual work	3
Not exercising well because of contractual work	6
Problems with IBS, nausea, digestion attributed to contractual work	5
Muscle tension, carpal tunnel, sciatica attributed to sedentary work	4
Viruses from interactions with students	5
Sleep problems associated with contractual work	6
Other (eye strain 2, alcoholism 1, headaches 2)	5
Exhaustion	4
In good physical shape or not impeded	13

Many participants agreed that their teaching work is “relatively healthy” (Joanne). However, 14 (eight women, six men) did relate one or more physical health issues to the work of preparing for classes, grading examinations and assignments, and sitting at computers for extended periods of time. The exponential growth in the use of computers in American workplaces has led to increases in “upper extremity musculo-skeletal disorders” of the soft tissues in the neck, hands, shoulders and arms, from 18% in 1982 to 66% of all reported occupational illness in 2002 (Gerr et al., 2005). Most participants in this study observed that the same could be said of tenured faculty, but four specifically attributed their carpal tunnel syndrome, sciatic nerve damage, and eye strain to extra work they associated with contractual teaching. None of the participants spoke of being offered an ergonomic assessment of their work station, even though several were allocated “ancient” (Bruce Wayne) computer equipment and furniture as contractuels. Only a few sought out this information for themselves.

Teaching also exposes the teacher (and students) to flus, colds, viruses and bacterial infections, and even pandemics (Temple, 2009). Five participants speculated that contractuels “may suffer more than [full-time] faculty” (Frances) from such adverse physical health problems because of last minute contracts and larger class sizes. They felt more exposed because they had more “front-line” (Della) and day-to-day interactions with students.

[laughs] My health is very different now than it was at the beginning of the term, that’s for sure! Over the past 2 weeks I’ve been on antibiotic for a sinus infection, a-gain! Which always comes up at midterm exam time and then again for finals. ... I think it’s because all the students are sick, they pass papers in and those are just balls of infection. So ... it’s kind of hard to escape it. Plus the physical strain of having to grade so many papers. I’ve had very little sleep in the past 3 weeks for sure. And that all impacts your physical well-being (Stephanie).

The lifestyle and work habits of sedentary academics can affect their physical health. Four participants directly linked weight gain or increased eating to sitting at a desk or working at home because they had more access to food and tended to “stress eat” (Terry). Two others said they lost weight because of the stress of the work. Six felt that they needed to exercise more and noted how working contractually affected the level of physical activity they could schedule.

Part of the problem for me is that I never feel like there’s a stable sense of routine. I’m always having to worry and scramble about this, that and the other thing, to ensure that there’s going to be another semester of work. That’s taken away from even just scheduling physical activity. I was always a runner, a skier, a skater ... but the more I got into this kind of work, the less I did those things. ... I mean there’s time, it’s not to say there’s no time to do them. It just doesn’t seem like there’s a coherent schedule, from term to term, to be able to get back into a routine. [You never know what will come up.] Yeah. And then *when you’re feeling worn out for other reasons* [emphasis mine], it’s harder to get physically active then too. I guess that sounds like a bit of an excuse (Jon).

None of the physical (or emotional) health problems identified by respondents were officially recorded in workplace incident reports before or at the time of this research. This mirrors Jaskolka, Andrews and Harold’s (2009) finding at another Canadian university in which contract and casual workers were the lowest proportion (1.1%) of workers filing incident and injury reports over a five year period. As discussed in Chapter Six, their job insecurity meant that most participants in this study were reluctant to officially report such health problems.

5.c Challenges to Emotional Health from Contractual Teaching

In this study, the term *emotional health* refers to respondents' symptoms of mental illnesses that are not diagnosed or treated with medication. I argue that the components of the *SF-12v.2® Health Survey* that make up the mental health scores (vitality, social role, role emotional) are emotional issues that people often manage without medication. To be consistent with the research, however, I use the term *mental health* when it is referred to in the literature, for example, when discussing results of the *SF-12v.2® Health Survey*. Remember that respondents' sample mean on the mental component summary (MCS) for the first *SF-12v.2® Health Survey* is 42.11, which is significantly lower than the 1998 US population norm set near 50. The qualitative data offer a richer picture of what was behind this low mental health average. Of the 27 interviewees, only one man with a physical health (PH) measure of 59 and a mental health (MP) measure of 47 said he had no mental or emotional issues and did not allude to anything in the rest of the interview. Three interviewees acknowledged the emotional health effects of job insecurity in the past and for others, but they themselves no longer had to worry about this. For 23 interviewees and five first stage respondents, nothing had a greater effect on their emotional health than the insecurity of their work as contractuels (see Table 5 p. 174). The number of interviewees reporting emotional health symptoms was: 10 with anxiety, four with symptoms of depression, 18 who felt out of control, eight who were overwhelmed by workload, eight with occasional panic attacks, and 21 who felt frustrated in their workplace interactions because of their contractual status. Only two respondents

cited pre-existing problems with anxiety and depression that worsened with the stress of contractual work.

Table 5: Emotional health issues described by interviewees, n=27

Emotional health issues	# of respondents
Chronic or pre-existing condition worsened by, contractual work	2
Stress associated with job insecurity, reapplication	23
Feeling out of control over work	18
Feeling overwhelmed by workload	8
Exhaustion	4
Occasional feelings of panic (mostly in reapplication process)	8
Frustrations in workplace interactions because of contractual status	21
Anxiety associated with contractual work	10
Symptoms of depression associated with contractual work	4
No emotional health issues	4

Many interviewees recounted details of how aspects of their contractual work, such as the pressure to be available to accept any contract, had a negative impact on their emotional health. Jon echoed the sentiments of many who could not concentrate on improving their emotional health by taking time off to recuperate because in doing so, they would lose whatever implicit rights to work they had so carefully built up:

There's never been a semester that I haven't wanted to [teach], but if I did take time off to recuperate, ... there's always the issue of what happens to your courses? We're not in an institutionalized position, really. We get reassurances from people around—oh, we value your work, we wouldn't screw you, but two semesters later, when there's new people around or new situations financially ...[it can all go out the window?] Yeah. And what was said doesn't mean anything because we have no official rights in the matter.

[Cohen: a tricky situation.]

Yeah, well it is all there but never all in focus at one time. All those tensions that we all gripe and worry about are still there (Jon).

While speaking of emotional health, several participants described how some physical symptoms were exacerbated by the stresses of working contractually. These included the six who reported sleep disorders, six reporting weight changes, four who suffered from exhaustion, five with elevated cholesterol and/or blood pressure levels, five with digestive problems, and four with muscle pain or tension (see Table 4, p. 170).

Oh yeah, like a few times I'd get up in the morning and I'd be brushing my teeth – I'm not sure how this is going to translate on the tape because I never throw up and I didn't throw up then. But I'd be brushing my teeth and I'd feel like... [nauseous?] yeah. I'd urge, or retch, like I'm going to be sick but I'm not sick. So I went to the doctor saying 'I think there's something wrong with me.' ...so she asked 'well, what's going on in your life?' It was the stress. That was when I found out my contract would not be renewed. They promised it and I was just feeling physically and emotionally rotten about how that all went down (Sylvie).

Most of the participants in this study, then, connected their mental and emotional health problems to job insecurity and the status associated with working as a contractual university teacher. For many, the emotional health effects of job insecurity worsened as the semester went on:

And then it has a tremendous impact on your emotional well-being. I've been crying a lot and I don't normally cry. I'm usually pretty solid, I don't let too many things bother me to the point where I'm not able to function properly. But you know, the past couple of weeks with the lack of sleep, the physical strain of knowing what you have to do and the time constraints you're under, along with all that business over whether or not you get your contract next term or next year. It just beats you down all the way around (Stephanie).

As discussed in Chapter Two, research in occupational health explored job strain more often than job insecurity when examining the health effects of work restructuring in the 1980s and 1990s. Job strain exists in almost every job at some point or another and may pose a different set of health challenges than job insecurity. The intention of the next

section is to find out how job strain and job insecurity intersect to challenge the health of study participants.

5.d The Intersection of Job Strain, Job Insecurity and Health

Past occupational health research tested *job strain* using Karasek and Theorell's model of high task demand, low control over the pace and types of job tasks, and low support in the workplace (Karasek and Theorell, 1990). To explore the extent of participants' *job strain* and whether or not it was associated with their job insecurity and health, this section begins with the study findings on workload. I first asked participants to estimate the amount of time spent on teaching work and the level of preparation required for each course. Their responses were recorded in the demographic surveys and later compared to the data in the task diaries. To reiterate from Chapter Three, those who agreed to do both stages of the research completed a task diary at approximately the end of the first month of the semester and then another closer to the end of semester (see Appendix 1-F). Twenty-five of the 27 who completed both stages of the research did the first task diary and 13 did the second. Participation in the second task diary was the lowest of all the research components because participants found it difficult to remember and then to find the time and opportunity to record their activities for each hour throughout the day. They certainly had high task demand. References to these task diaries during the semi-structured interviews allowed participants to explore whether or not they would interpret this as job strain.

Teaching a university course involves time for research and preparation, in-class teaching, office hours for meeting students, and grading throughout the semester. The actual workload for each individual varies according to class size, the number and type of evaluations done, the amount and difficulty of new materials introduced in the syllabus, and the teacher's experience with that course. Class sizes for this sample ranged from 15 to 300 students, depending on the department and level of the course. Grading for the larger classes could actually be less than for the smaller if the larger classes only tested using multiple choice exams and had few assignments needing comment (see Chapter Four for a brief description of grading assignments). Most contractuals in this study taught the larger first and second year courses, but several included writing assignments as part of their "good teaching" strategies. Twelve respondents taught smaller classes in the more advanced courses. These teachers had many written assignments to grade.

Teaching time also depends on the number of courses in the contract and on other off-campus work obligations. Among the 32 respondents, seven had contracts to teach only one course during the research semester, eight taught two, 14 taught three courses, and three respondents taught four or more courses as part of their contract.

As a proxy measure for their workload, I initially asked respondents to estimate the time per day they spent on teaching. This was later compared to the results of their task diaries. During the initial meetings, many participants told me that they tried to confine their teaching work to "teaching days" when they actually met students in class. Eight wanted to preserve non-teaching days for research and ten others worked on degree programs or other activities unrelated to their teaching.

Many calculated that altogether, they spent approximately eight hours per week for each course they were assigned, and more during the peak grading periods of the semester. I extrapolated workload by multiplying participants' estimates of teaching hours per day by the number of courses in their contract, both reported in the demographic surveys. I estimated the sample's mean teaching workload to be 25.5 hours per week, median 22 hours.

These figures were then compared to the actual time spent in teaching work that participants recorded in their task diaries. The mean number of hours per teaching day in the first task diary was 7.4, median 7.5, with a range from 4 to 12 hours. For the second task diary, near the end of semester, the mean number of hours per teaching day was 7.6, median 7.5 and the range was 4 to 11.5 hours. Work activities included preparing for classes, meeting students, replying to student and administrative emails, preparing course-related materials such as hand-outs and exams, grading, and maintaining records.

In the final calculations of the task diary statistics, the mean weekly teaching workload was 24.2 hours, median 22 hours. A comparison of these task diary results with participants' estimates of workload in the demographic surveys showed that only three had initially under-estimated their teaching time by six or more hours per week. They did not count the time spent checking email or planning the next teaching day outside of their regular work hours. This hidden work surprised them when they saw the results of systematically recording their activities in the task diaries. All but two participants completed these task diaries on a "typical teaching day," so they did not capture the grading overload that can happen at particular times of the semester.

Interestingly, the number of hours per teaching day was constant for the 13 participants who completed two or more task diaries over the course of the semester. The actual tasks changed from a concentration on teaching preparation earlier in the semester to a heavier grading load later. Most respondents put in a normal work day of between 6.5 and 8 hours and found their workload reasonable.

After completing the demographic survey and the task diaries, 27 participants were later asked the following questions in the semi-structured interviews (see Appendix 1-G):

From the task diaries, please describe a typical day's activities. Are these activities affected by either job strain, with high demand and low control over tasks, or by the overall insecurity of working as a contractual? Or by any other factors relating to home or work?

The answers were well considered, articulate, and detailed. Sixteen participants said they had *no job strain*. Again, for all but one of the participants, job insecurity at any level was the more pressing issue. Unlike many other precarious jobs, contractual university teaching can afford some control over job content and scheduling depending on departmental policies, teaching and research workloads, and teaching experience. However, among the 16 participants who said their teaching work was *not* characterized by job strain (70% of the men and 53% of the women), six still described the demand in the last half of the semester as overwhelming because of grading. They found ways to deal with it. Jon was perhaps more candid than others:

Yeah. You can't do it over a long period of time. I dread those spots in the term when I know I have 80 term papers to mark. To be honest this summer, I've eliminated it, for my xxxx course. I've always had them do a major paper but I've decided that one way to take some of the stress off is to give them something else [that was quicker to grade but] that might actually be useful.

Control over tasks was not mentioned as a problem at all by 12 of the 16 who were *not job strained*. These 12 had full or near total control over the content of their course material and methods of teaching and all self-identified as a good teacher.

I don't have "lack of control" (Bob).

[Cohen: So you feel that you do have control in your work?]

Oh absolutely. I mean if I didn't, I wouldn't take the job. Working on contract, you get an offer, you set your hours, you can work from home, in theory. But you can't in practice. You [still] have to come in and see the students [laughs] (Bob).

Eleven of the 27 interviewed (six per-term contractuels and five per-course contractuels) said they did experience *job strain*. The sources of this job strain centered on loss of control over interactions with faculty for course collaboration or co-teaching and over task demand in preparing new courses, teaching larger classes, and combining teaching with other activities. This job strain varied. For example, four of the 11 participants who were involved in co-teaching found that as contractuels, they had little to no control over the decisions or the division of teaching labour within the course.

Well, there's definitely job strain. I'm multi-tasking all the time ... just squeezing it all in. ... the course co-ordinator does very little of the actual grading or teaching work. And I'm finding that the changes I suggest don't always get done because they have to be passed on to somebody else [for approval], so there's certainly a lack of control there (Natalie).

The other seven applauded their formal collaboration with full-time faculty or the routinization of their first year courses because both of these lowered their job strain, providing them with teaching standards and allowing them to share some tasks:

"We [first year instructors] all make up a common midterm, a common final and common tests. We have some input. Like it's the same six chapters but you can teach it whatever way you want so in that sense, we have control" (Rachel).

They were treated as colleagues in the co-teaching environment. Any tension that came up was usually a matter of inadequate communication rather than their status as contractuels.

Course preparation was a significant source of job strain. Fifteen participants taught relatively new courses in 2008 and several pointed out that the course preparation required to teach a course the first time is far more time consuming than revising for second and subsequent deliveries of that course.

Job strain was surprisingly high actually. It was two courses that I had taught before, but I was far more comfortable with one because [it's more in my area of research]. And I knew about it in July, so I had a good heads-up on it. ...[but] I didn't know that I had a TA [teaching assistant] until the end of September, which really changes the way I organize the course, so I didn't feel like I had control, but I still felt fairly well prepared for [it].

With the other course, I found out I had it about three weeks before arriving here and I was just behind the eight ball the whole time. Yeah, I didn't really enjoy teaching that course, I found it quite stressful. I have a background in it but that's going back a ways so I was refreshing for lectures all the time, which is not the case if you teach a course two or three times. And then doing additional reading to make sure that I've got my theories right. ... my expertise didn't span all those. So, yeah, I found strain quite tough. It was only two courses per-course, but it ended up being a lot more work than I [anticipated]. It was too much in that [both] were fairly large classes and [one was] a course I hadn't taught before. That caused quite a bit of stress (Damien).

Course preparation did not inevitably lead to job strain. One question in the demographic survey had respondents evaluate the level of their current course preparation as *minimal*, *moderate* or *intense*. The only obvious pattern when matched with declarations of job strain (or not) was when two of the eight interviewees with *minimal* course preparation said they were *job strained*. Five of the 15 interviewees with *moderate* preparation and all four with *intense* course preparation were *job strained*.

Class size is important here. Six participants did not initially anticipate the magnitude of the workload in their first year courses and found this particularly stressful. All six were *job strained*.

[Cohen: Are your teaching days defined by job strain?]

Absolutely! ...low control is definitely guiding everything I do here. And it all has to do with teaching. And I don't know but for whatever reason, I seem to have a higher course load all the time, in terms of numbers and I know that it doesn't make a big difference (to in-class time) but if you have 3 first year courses with over 80 students in each ... So, as I said on the task diary, I get off at one and go home and usually the whole afternoon and evening are spent on grading. As of right now, I haven't gone out with my husband in about a month. You know? And this weekend again I have about 150 papers to do for Monday. ... I feel that everything in my life is strained ... and I feel that I have very little control over that aspect of my work. It doesn't just create lack of control in other areas but this, in and of itself, is out of control (Stephanie).

For many, low control related less to job tasks and more to job insecurity in terms of access to the work and the threat of under- or unemployment. The end of semester and the termination of teaching contracts were associated with the greatest stress for all of the participants. As noted in Chapter Four, contractuales do not get paid between contracts and the hiatus can last from three weeks to whole semesters or even years. For some, this downtime was fraught with worry over whether or not they would be hired in the following semester. One participant dreaded an upcoming Christmas season for this reason. Most per-course participants preferred to teach throughout the year because of the financial stress of unemployment for any length of time.

Participants had other demands on their time in addition to teaching, as detailed in their task diaries. Ten interviewees spoke of how the flexibility of contractual work meant they could dovetail teaching with family and other roles, to alleviate the strain: "It's one of the reasons why I'm here and not anywhere else" (Barbara). Four of the six

participants who had dependents less than 12 years of age were *not job strained*. In the task diaries, most participants reported 0.5 to 3 hours per day devoted to family, with the exception of two mothers of young children who reported 5.5 and 8 hours. Both were *job strained*, which they attributed to their inability to plan their day. Their daily schedules were dictated by children's needs and the availability of babysitting and daycare.

[Teaching work] could be anywhere from six to eight hours to zero hours [in a day or evening]. It's just so all over the place. Some days I might only spend 15 minutes checking emails and then other days it could be five hours if I get [baby]sitting, I really have no idea. I'm afraid to sit down and calculate it because I'm sure I'm getting paid 2 dollars an hour, or something like that, for teaching (Terry).

Separate from committee work, one woman and two men in this sample performed extra administrative roles within the university. Five men and six women volunteered in union or community groups, most at less than two hours per week. Among the four men and eight women enrolled in advanced degree programs, 10 recorded an average of 2.9 hours, median 2.2 hours per day on studying in the first task diary. Several found that contractual teaching wreaked havoc with the time and energy they could devote to their studies and their health. Damien, for example, was

[Trying to find a workable balance] before the dissertation comes to a complete halt. You can't sacrifice everything for a job that is not permanent ... Where the stress [of job insecurity] really manifests itself, though, is not ... in the teaching but in that it detracts from my other work. Because I know that, as far as my C.V. and my career goes, these two courses aren't going to matter [at all]. My dissertation, publication, research proposals, conference networking and grants are, and I'm not doing those things.

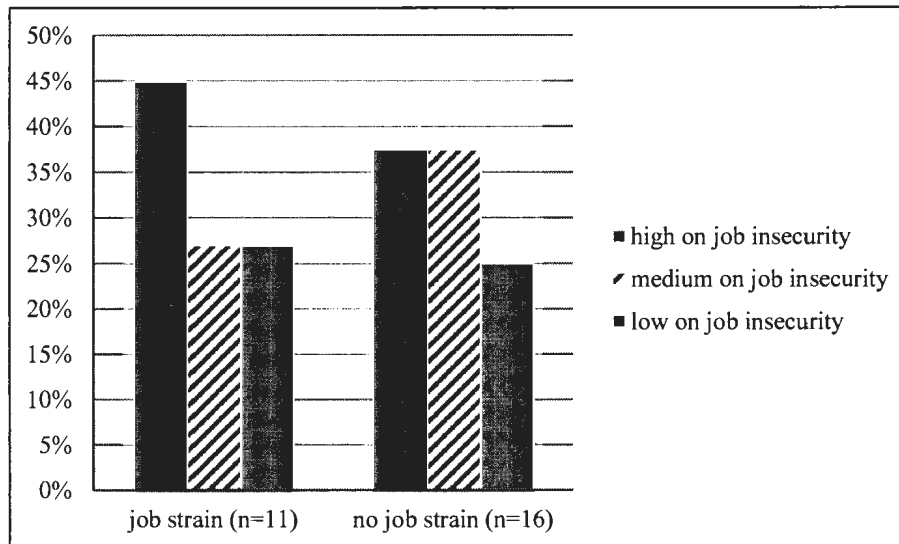
From the demographic survey, six per-course respondents worked at least 10 hours or more a week in outside jobs, four of whom were single and unable to rely on a

partner's income. The strain they felt was affected by juggling two or more jobs and the low pay in each was stressful. Striving for perfection added to this stress.

When I woke up I could feel my heart and knew before even taking my pulse...this is the first thing in the morning, like I never had five coffees or anything. But I was just a little shaky, I was feeling a little bit down and thinking I've got all these papers from these ADD kids to look at, you know what I mean? And I have to [work] tonight [at my other job] and I haven't really had time to prepare for it. I mean I can get through it, but I like to be perfect (Phillip).

How did the job strain (or its absence) intersect with job insecurity for these participants? Remember that job insecurity affected the teaching experience for all but one of my 32 respondents to varying degrees. Among the 27 interviewees who were asked, 11 described being *job strained*, 16 were *not job strained*. When their narratives were categorized, 11 of the 27 were *high on job insecurity*, nine were *medium on job insecurity*, and seven were *low on job insecurity*. When job strain was cross-tabulated with job insecurity, 45% of the *job strained* was also *high on job insecurity* (Figure 7, p. 185).

Figure 7: Percentage of *job strained* and *not job strained* by category of job insecurity, n=27



Seven participants responded to job insecurity by intensifying their teaching practice and tasks.

Yeah, there's definitely a high demand. But there's a bit of control over that. I know that I give out more assignments in the first and second year courses than most of my colleagues do. ...But ... having taught a lot, my feeling is that the students ... need a few assignments and quizzes to keep them on track and I'm willing to do that. And I know it takes a lot of time, I spend a lot of time grading. And they don't like it at first. But I tell them as I go along, "this isn't happening in your other classes, is it? And see how well you're doing in this class because you know you're going to have a quiz, or ...an assignment, so you are prepping for the exam and you know you're doing better."... I could just say, you're having a midterm and a final and that's it. But what kind of a teacher is that? Does that really help the students? No. That's why I do [a lot of] grading, but I do have control over it (Gerry).

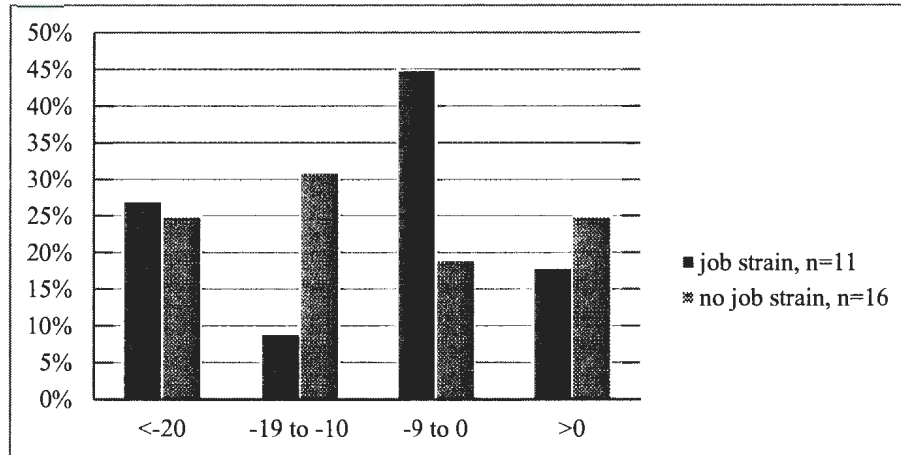
For these participants, job strain was an indication that they worked hard, even that they were doing a good job. Because of their tenuous contractual hire and their understanding of what "good teaching" entails, they were compelled to "go above and beyond" and assign extra written work to help struggling students. This added to their

grading load but tempered their perception of job strain by helping them feel in control and able to choose their assignment and evaluation schemes.

How did job strain and job insecurity intersect with participants' health? Again, the sample is too small to make definitive statements, but the data were triangulated to find patterns that can be investigated in future quantitative studies. From the research instruments, I found that job insecurity appeared to have greater effects on health than job strain. For example, the 27 interviewees were asked to self-report their health. When these findings were tabulated, 50% of those with *no job strain* and 55% of those with *job strain* were in "good" or "very good" health. The other half in each group were in "fair" or "poor" health. The balance was more skewed when self-reported health was cross-tabulated with job insecurity. Only 27% who were *high on job insecurity* reported "good" health. This compares to 88% of those *medium on job insecurity* and 43% of those *low on job insecurity* who self-reported being in "good" or "very good" health.

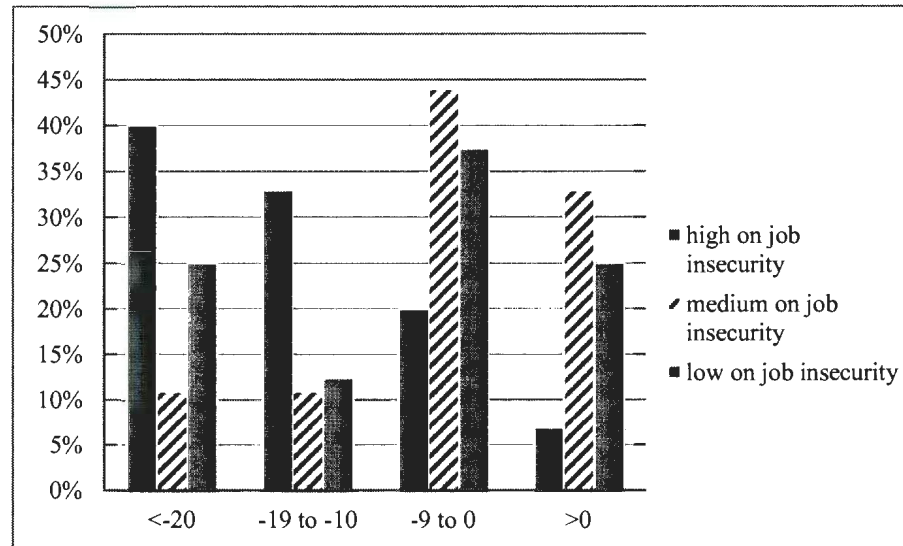
Similarly, those who were *job strained* had slightly lower variations from the MH norms in the *SF-12v.2® Health Survey* than those who were *not job strained* but the distributions for both did not show a clear pattern (see Figure 8, p. 187).

Figure 8: Variation from MH norms, cross-tabulated with job strain



More of a pattern was evident when job insecurity was cross-tabulated with all 32 participants' variations from the MH norms in the *SF-12v.2® Health Survey*. For example, 40% of those who were *high on job insecurity* were 20 points or more below their comparative mental health norms on the *SF-12v.2® Health Surveys* and another 33% were 10 to 19 points below the norms. Compare this with 25% of those *low on job insecurity* who were 20 or more points below the mental health norms and 12.5% who were between 10 and 19 points lower. Figure 9 (p. 188) illustrates this breakdown.

Figure 9: Participants' variations from the MH norms, cross-tabulated with level of job insecurity



For most sample respondents, job strain was more a result of their lack of control over access to the work, their job insecurity, than of low control over the work or high task demand. Those with *no job strain* did not teach any less than those with job strain; in fact, two thirds with *no job strain* taught on term contracts with three or more courses whereas five of the 11 *job strained* respondents taught one or two per-course contracts. Remember that fewer per-course contractuals were *low on job insecurity* (14%) than per-term (33.5%), though a relatively equal proportion in each group was *high on job insecurity*. Joanne explained this anomaly:

The irony, of course, is that when I'm teaching one course, I put way more energy into it. I take it much more seriously because I can. When I'm teaching a full plate, I don't have the energy to put into each one of those individual courses, right? So yeah, as a contractual, I've learnt a lot about the importance of scheduling.

Like Joanne, many participants controlled job strain through personal regulation, an internal locus of control that is discussed in the next chapter. Job insecurity, an externally determined factor, was beyond their control. Dealing with job insecurity was often a matter of endurance.

5.e Conclusion

Not surprisingly, these highly educated participants were very articulate about their health in relation to their work as contractual university teachers. Their initial definitions of health reflect current government discourses on health and the academic scepticism surrounding this discourse. Most argued that health cannot be defined solely as physical or emotional health, that the two must be combined. Insecurity affected participants' emotional health regardless of education, teaching experience, or contractual work history. While gender had some effect, it was not as consequential in this study as expected from past research. Women were only slightly farther below the US 1998 norm for mental health on the *SF-12v.2® Health Survey* than were men (see Figure 4, p. 164) but women had a higher risk of depression. Men's mental health declined more than women's over the course of the semester. As expected, the physical health of these contractuales was better than average, especially for the men. But most women were also in good physical health according to their narratives and the results of their *SF-12v.2® Health Surveys*. Those men and women who voiced concerns about physical health spoke of the effects of working contractually on lifestyle (diet, exercise routines) and of managing health problems while on contract (discussed in the following chapter). Overall, however, physical health complaints were few.

The emotional health of this small sample, on the other hand, appears to have been compromised by working contractually. The norm-based comparisons of respondents' mental health scores on the *SF-12v.2® Health Survey* were far lower than the US 1998 averages. Twenty-three of the 27 interviewees, both men and women, confirmed that their job insecurity challenged their emotional health. Ninety-six percent of respondents expressed some degree of job insecurity at some point in their careers. In this research, job insecurity was defined by several factors, notably uncertainty over whether or not one would be hired in the near future. Interviewees described how job insecurity elicited stress, anxiety, feeling out of control over their work, frustration due to their lack of power, and occasionally panic. The greatest stress occurred between contracts, while waiting to find out if they had contracts for the following semesters. Respondents spoke of how their emotional reactions to job insecurity sometimes manifested in physical symptoms like muscle tension and strain, panic attacks, migraine headaches, and weight gain.

I was curious to see whether or not job strain was an issue among these contractual workers, as it is among so many other precariously employed workers. Job strain was defined in the interviews as a lack of control over work, combined with high task and time demand and lack of control over related decision-making. Forty-one percent of the interviewees described themselves as *job strained*.

Job strain and job insecurity appeared to be related in unexpected ways for this sample. Job strain was associated with high demand from the larger classes assigned to contractals or the combination of contractual work with other endeavours such as working on advanced degrees (or both). Only six of the 11 with *job strain*, however,

found this workload overwhelming. The other five located their job strain in their lack of control. Low control was associated not so much with job content as with not knowing whether or not one would be hired in upcoming semesters, again a defining feature of job insecurity. A majority of interviewees (23 of 27) identified job insecurity as having a greater and more negative impact on their emotional health than anything else related to their work. It bears repeating that the majority of interviewees developed strategies for dealing with their fluctuating workload and found the work of contractual teaching flexible and manageable. They could deal with the job strain of contractual teaching but this did not lessen the impact of job insecurity on their emotional health.

In the narratives, participants related the health challenges of contractual teaching to the sources of job insecurity identified in Chapter 4. In the next chapter, I discuss their individual strategies for coping with these challenges and their evaluations of the institutional supports available to them.

Chapter Six: Managing Job Insecurity and its Health Outcomes

The psychic task which a person can and must set for himself *is not to feel secure, but to be able to tolerate insecurity, without panic and undue fear.* (Fromm, 1955, 190)

How did participants in this study tolerate their job insecurity and cope with its challenges to their health? This chapter presents the coping strategies evident in their descriptions of critical workplace incidents during the interviews. Their interviews revealed how participants drew on either internal or external loci of control to deal with the challenges to health posed by these incidents and their job insecurity. The coping strategies with an internal locus of control were varied and individual. They are reviewed next. Those with an external locus of control follow. They include seeking support by collaborating with others, both informally and through unionization; drawing on ARU's health benefit system; and appealing to three workplace programs that are related to health issues. Participants were close to unanimous in their views on the accessibility and effectiveness of these programs for contractual teachers in 2008.

6.a Individual Coping Strategies Using an Internal Locus of Control

Most of the 27 interviewees gave me at least one strategy for coping with the health challenges of job insecurity; a few described several. These strategies were largely individualized and contingent on situation, attitude, and perception of control. Participants primarily relied on an internal locus of control by drawing on their psychosocial (cognitive, emotional, and relationship) resources to deal with health challenges. They created a sense of *self-made security*.

Taking a positive attitude was the first line of defense for these participants who understood how it can enhance health (Clarke, 2008; Raphael, 2010). Twenty-one of the 27 interviewees had one or more good things to say about contractual teaching, as described in Chapter Four. For example, all eight participants who had taught for five years or less were happy to get the academic work experience. They felt it was an excellent start for an academic career. A few also spoke of how teaching invigorated their research. Fourteen participants repeatedly emphasized how much they “love teaching: You make that human connection” (Renée) and “It’s what keeps me coming back to this sessional work” (Sylvie). Several found it emotionally uplifting to discover the positive effects they had on students. This enhanced their occupational identity as good teachers and their sense of self-made security.

Contractual teaching was appreciated by a dozen participants because of its autonomy, creativity and control. These factors are correlated with better health in occupational health research (e.g. Dressel and Langreiter, 2008; Karasek and Theorell, 1990; Mirowski and Ross, 2007). The degree of autonomy, creativity, and control varies in this sample with departmental expectations and the courses assigned. Job insecurity and job strain were not as problematic for those participants who had control over the content and teaching methods in their courses. Many reasoned that the flexibility of contractual teaching helped as well. They decided where and when they did the preparatory work, the grading, and the online communications with students and the administration. This flexibility allowed 14 respondents to work elsewhere, study, write books, play music, and raise children.

The benefits of using a positive attitude to cope depended on participants' circumstances, as Janice observed.

The crucial variable [why some contractals feel more positive about this work than others] would be why each individual is in this contractual position. Because for some people, that's all they want. They have day jobs and they do this for prestige or fun or whatever. The ones that are really suffering are those who don't want to be in this position, but they have no alternatives. They would like a full-time position, they are qualified and they have no choice. Those are the people who are really, who must be having a very stressful life.

Only a few participants referred to hobbies like reading, playing music, or volunteering as individual strategies to enhance health. As an avid novel reader, I found myself commiserating with one respondent who no longer felt a balance in her life because her work-related reading had displaced all reading for pleasure.

Lifestyle is an individualized coping strategy that draws on an internal locus of control and it is a significant determinant of health (Public Health Agency of Canada, 2011; Raphael, 2010). Sixteen of the 27 interviewees coped with the stress of job insecurity by eating well and exercising when schedules allowed.

Well, I'm very aware of my health and how it is affected by the work. I know if I don't take care of myself and do things to get that stress out, it will have a longer term effect on me. So I've managed to keep it [the stress] at bay, because I'm in really good shape, I'm running 22 miles a week, I keep my weight down and on top of that I play [a musical instrument], ...so I have these great things in my life that many people don't have. And I don't smoke, I don't have a whole lot of bad habits. I have a couple of beer on Friday night and I like a glass of wine with my meals if I have it. I don't have anything wrong with me so I don't worry about it that much. But this term in particular I've been feeling physically a little bit shakier when I get a little bit stressed thinking about this stuff. Last night I felt it. I worry about the unforeseen, what happens if I get hit by a bus, what happens if anything...because ...everything is just month-by-month and if I go through months where I don't get any work, I can't make my rent (Phillip).

Only one man worried about exercising too much, not because of its physical effects but because of the time it detracted from his graduate study. Thirteen interviewees

exercised regularly by attending a gym, walking, running, attending exercise programs, and engaging in seasonal sports such as skiing, skating, curling, and swimming. The sample's overall physical health scores on the *SF-12v.2® Health Surveys* were close to five points higher than the U.S. 1998 population norms, indicating that these exercise strategies were effective.

There was a slight gender difference, here. In the task diaries (discussed in Chapters Three and Five), "personal hours" when exercise could be scheduled ranged from 1 to 9.5 hours per day. Of the eight participants who recorded 8 to 9.5 personal hours per day, six were men. Of the five who reported 3 or less personal hours, four were women. Men in this study either had more work-life balance or could more easily employ individualistic lifestyle solutions like exercise to problems of work scheduling and job insecurity.

A significant coping strategy drawing on an internal locus of control was to "vent" or "talk out" stress with spouses and other family members or friends or co-workers: "I do a lot of therapeutic talking (with friends)" (Brad). Thirteen participants spoke of how this helped.

There are a lot of behind-closed doors complaints where we per-course instructors are just getting together ... and we vent. We'd never talk about it to anyone outside of that, about the frustrations of things like [our critical incidents] (Sarah).

Interestingly, such social supports like marriage may have helped participants cope with stress, but it did not alleviate the job insecurity. Forty-five percent of the married respondents were still *high on job insecurity* in the qualitative narratives, compared with 50% of the single respondents.

“Being organized” was an internal coping strategy for 11 interviewees. It was also the most frequently cited strategy for avoiding job strain. These participants felt they had more control and self-efficacy at work if they can “keep things in order” (Sylvie). They believed that their emotional health was compromised when they lost this internal sense of control. Rachel described how her lack of organization fed her anxieties over the demands of contractual teaching:

I have really high levels of anxiety ... because of all the things that I have to juggle ... I'm constantly in this race to get things done and when I get them done, there's something else, so I never have that feeling of completing tasks. There's always a pile, I'm always behind. It gives me a lot of anxiety and a lot of panic and I feel like much of my productivity comes from that panic, that energy. ... I'm not really well-organized or efficient. I sort of race around and flail around and work at night. That's the only way I can get things done. I think it affects my emotional health [being so disorganized].

Participants regulated their workload in part by relying on the cyclical nature of the semester. Parts of the semester with excessive demands were balanced by periods of lower demands and they looked forward to the compensatory slow periods within, and sometimes between, semesters to regroup. Seven of the nine interviewees who talked about their use of this work cycle described themselves as *not job strained*. Five of these seven had described their course preparation that semester as “moderate” or “intense” on their demographic surveys. They considered the cyclical nature of teaching and grading “just part of the job,” something that “comes with the territory” of teaching, whether one is tenured or not.

I definitely [have a fair amount of control over my teaching work], yeah, absolutely...Again, nothing more than you'd expect in any job. Occasionally, when you get busy, like in midterm week, you have to find a way to deal with that and sometimes it's not a whole lot of fun, but it never builds up to the point where I'm tearing my hair out or I just go and huddle in a corner and cry, or something like that. Yeah, it's all just part of the job (Ian).

Contractuals are rarely paid for time to do research or preparatory teaching work, so a few participants coped with the ensuing job strain by cutting back on their grading and committee workload and pacing their workload throughout the semester.

“Stay[ing] under the radar” (Rachel) was a coping strategy with an internal locus of control for eight participants. Some withdrew from departmental activities to avoid conflict, but this further exacerbated their marginalization within the department. Because goodwill is so uncertain, many contractuals tempered their workplace requests to avoid appearing too demanding: “You’re only here to teach ... and [they] don’t want complaints” (Dave). Rachel would ask the janitors for classroom supplies rather than “bothering” the department secretary.

There has been this fear that once people start expecting a lot from their departments, the departments get uncomfortable and want to let them go, get someone else who doesn’t really expect a long-term employment relationship. You don’t get a lot of complaint because of that (Sarah).

A few respondents told me stories of contractuals who lost contracts because they complained, despite having done a good job of teaching. Some, like Gerry, worried that complaining was ineffectual and might even worsen the circumstances:

There’s an added dimension when you are both contractual and a woman. You don’t want to be seen as one of those unstable women or you may never get hired back. So emotional management is really important on the job, more so than it would be for others who are more secure.

Some older participants stayed positive by simply accepting their circumstances as a contractual worker. One third of the sample was over 50 years of age. Many of these, and a few in the 40-49 year range, no longer expected permanency in their work.

I’ve dealt with [job insecurity] all my life so I’ve learned how to deal with it. I’ve come to the realization that that’s what I am, a contractual employee. ... I just

honestly do the best I can while I'm here and what happens after that is out of my control. I'm not going to worry over what the effects or results of that would be. If something happens, I would be ok too (Barbara).

Teaching is the primary work role of contractals and can provide a measure of self-efficacy as well as a sense of *self-made security*, an important coping strategy among this group. Self-made security occurred in Phillips' (2012) study when workers internalized and promoted their own workplace capital in defense of their jobs. Sarah illustrated workplace capital:

We per-course instructors certainly aren't [told of] any rules [around how we are ranked for hiring], but I know from experience that it's who's working the hardest, who's doing the most work for the department, *who's giving it more than they need to be*, those are the people who get the higher ranking, end of story.

Almost all of the participants echoed Renée that teaching "is a big part of who I am." Fourteen interviewees (four men, 10 women) said they "loved teaching" because of their "interactions with students." Participants' self-made security was evident when they emphasized their dedication to teaching. For example, four women insisted that they spent more time helping students than did tenured faculty.

We genuinely care about the students who we teach and we really want to improve and do a good job with what we do. Maybe it's because we know we don't have a research career path that we can focus on doing a good job (Christine).

In anecdotal literature (see Chapter Two), contractals feel they are designated as the emotional labourers of the academic process because they work so closely with younger or newer students. This may be a gendered experience. Among the participants in this sample, several women but only one man spoke of student needs and five of the women were happy to comply with expectations of nurturing. Still, it was exhausting work:

There's always something, somebody grossly failing, or some issue that you need to spend a lot more time with outside the classroom. So I do do a lot of tutoring [and counselling]. I find that you just get exhausted. If you do your job well and give your students what you believe you should be able to offer them, you end up paying a price, an exhausting price. Like sometimes I leave feeling pretty bad (Frances).

I have written elsewhere about the perceived gendered expectations among some contractual teachers (Cohen, 2013, in press). Eight women but none of the men in this study alluded to gender when speaking of student disrespect and having less departmental support as a contractual.

Oh, if I was a man [this student would have treated me differently], most definitely. Do you think she would be going to Dr. John Doe and saying I'm getting SoandSo to reread this paper because he's a much fairer grader than you are? I don't think so. He doesn't get that from students. He's been here for however long and I've only seen him have one problem with one student... yeah, if I were a man they would never treat me like that. I don't think having a PhD would really affect it as much as [would] being a man (Terry).

When they spoke of it, men described maintaining a balance between student demands and the time and emotional work they would devote to meeting those demands. They tried to limit themselves.

Nevertheless, several interviewees alluded to institutional pressures on contractals to devote more energy to teaching work than is expected of tenured faculty:

[Cohen: Is there anything you do during the day that you do because of the insecurity of the work?]

I don't know, doing a good job, I suppose. You know, if I got tenure, I wouldn't have to worry about teaching, would I?

[Cohen: Or you would worry less about teaching?]

I wouldn't have to worry at all. ... the contract [for tenured faculty] says it's 50% teaching and 50% [research and administrative service] but you know, the reality is that 90% is spent on research and admin and 10% is spent on teaching. And even then, we contractals get the larger classes with the "harder to please"

students [in the junior years]. Students from a whole series of backgrounds, many of whom don't really want to be taking this course, or it's not really the course they were thinking it was. So [tenured faculty] teach about 10% of their working time, unless they completely screw up teaching, get complaints about bizarre behaviours in classroom, [and then] all that happens is they get less teaching (Dave).

Five participants felt that to keep working and prove themselves as "good teachers," they had to prevent students from dropping their classes and produce favourable student evaluations of their teaching at the end of semester. These pressures of job insecurity added to their job strain, as noted in Chapters Four and Five. They added more than the usual number of tasks to their daily workload in a bid to be good teachers. Three qualified their statements by saying that they "would make the effort anyway" (Della) or that it was "part of my normal work ethic" (Barbara). A few others were unapologetic. One itinerant contractual spoke of how continually moving on to the next contract at another university meant always putting her best effort forward. She would soon need good references. For another,

I know I have to keep my enrolments up or I don't have a job. So yes, [job insecurity] definitely impacts on how I relate to the students. I know I have to cater to every student in order to keep my job and that is always in the back of my mind. It's not that I'd be a completely mean person and just would not bother otherwise—I would. But it's because I'm worried about getting the contract again, that I give as much personal attention and detail to each student as I possibly can (Terry).

Even participants who "loved teaching!" were ambivalent about contractual teaching as a long-term commitment: "Teaching has taken out some good instructors in this department!" (Jenny). Its marginalization and insecurity affected their work in numerous ways, but only three spoke of how the emotional effects of anxiety, depression and apathy might carry into the classroom.

Once I realized this [permanent] position wasn't going to happen—I guess it's a bad attitude but I just wondered, why am I doing all this work? It's only been the last couple of weeks that it's really been bad and part of that is because it's the end of the semester, the students are being crappy and I'm trying to ... be professional, but I just haven't wanted to put as much work into getting things prepared and marked. I've been a bit slack in the last couple of weeks, I must admit... And it's the job insecurity that is affecting my daily teaching... It's also affected me at night. I used to do more reading for classes and marking at night and I haven't been able to bring myself to do these things the way I would have before (Della).

From personal experience, the efficacy of internal coping strategies is related to length of service as a contractual. Time certainly helped me in learning how to deal with the repetitive stress injuries associated with sedentary work that commonly manifest in the wrists, neck, and sciatic nerves. More importantly, the longer I taught, the less stressed I became. Phillip agreed:

I'm only willing to do so much. So I don't find that [insecurity affects my daily work] because I do try to put it into perspective. I might be upset that I have to do certain things but I don't worry about it—I know [from experience] that these essays that I get today will... be tedious but the [students] will get them back. I will do my best to deal with the students and their problems. So I focus on the idea that some of them will learn a few things, that I would have brought a couple of them along their way. I put that into perspective and I don't lose too much sleep about that.

Remember that 66% of those with less than two years of service in this study were *high on job insecurity*, compared to 30% of those working as contractuels for more than a decade. I believe this is because more years of service leads to more effective coping skills or possibly to a *healthy worker effect*, where those better able to cope and therefore in better health, last longer in the job (Dahl, 1993; Garcia and Checkoway, 2003). Newer contractuels in this study, however, had a different perspective on the health effects of a long period of service.

[T]hese are more than just jobs for us. They're our careers and our passion and I can see where being a per-course or even a contractual at the same place for years on end would just sap the life out of you. Then it turns into just a pay check, instead of that passion for what it is we do (Della).

Coping strategies with an internal locus of control are not always positive. Four participants in this study took anti-anxiety medications, though with trepidation. Two of these four had a prior history of using anti-anxiety medications. Three of the four found them helpful in getting "a good night's sleep" (Joanne). Only one interviewee admitted to alcoholism but a few spoke of using alcohol to medicate after particularly unsettling incidents.

So you asked me how I coped with it; many times I would leave here crying, [feeling] 'I've got to get out of here, I'm so uncomfortable' and my way of coping would just be to...leave. To go. Because if I tried to interact or ask questions I'd just start to cry [laughs uneasily] because of the hardness of it all and all the conflicts that were happening [during that incident]. All the conflicts of interest ...so during that time, there were days when I would go home and say 'oh I think I'm going to drink a bottle of wine.' Right? And numb out (Sylvie).

Participants were well aware of the external structural reasons for their job insecurity, such as hiring policies and their place within a multi-tiered academic hierarchy. Nevertheless, their coping strategies drew primarily on internal resources and personal strengths rather than on external, institutional resources, the topic of the next section. One reason for this is the institutional discourse that demands individual solutions. Participants regarded internal, individualized strategies as the only effective tools available for dealing with their critical incidents. In 2008, union representation was uncertain for many participants and non-existent according to the others.

6.b Coping Strategies Drawing on an External Locus of Control

Few participants believed they could change the structural basis of their job insecurity, but 15 did refer to some coping strategies with an external locus of control. Christian, for example, dealt with his critical incident by “consider[ing] other options” and “looking elsewhere for work.” Several spoke of having good departmental support but little confidence in their unions or association, and little trust in the university administration’s workplace health and crisis programs. They did not want to publically self-identify as emotionally or mentally unstable. The remainder of this chapter examines these participants’ problems in detail.

6.b.i Collegiality and departmental support

Social support is vital in coping with stress. Support through social capital and collegiality in the workplace varies with social location and circumstance (S. Abbott, 2009; Public Health Agency of Canada, 2011). For the majority of contractuels in this study, the most important forms of departmental support were information about upcoming hiring, collegial treatment, and autonomy in deciding on their own curricula and teaching methods. These aspects have already been described in Chapter Four.

Departmental support also included practical help from administrative assistants for teaching, and for seven participants at various points of their careers, help in managing programs. Help from administrative assistants was a source of contention for four participants and applauded by four others (again, see Chapter Four).

The men in this study spoke more often of positive forms of departmental and collegial support than did women. Fifteen of the 27 interviewed, both men and women, felt they had support from contractual and faculty colleagues on day-to-day teaching and other workplace issues. Their colleagues were encouraging and helpful when participants engaged in research projects. Some qualified this support by saying it was specific to the situation, such as when making up common examinations for several sections of a course. Most of the 15 suspected that the support from faculty was subject to change or “mostly on a personal level and not on a job level” (Sophie). Nine of these 15 later complained of wavering support, such as when promises of work, interviews, or support for a point of contention never materialized.

Jon again articulated the trepidation of many contractuels when speaking of departmental support.

I have to say, that on a day to day basis, I sincerely think that there's a lot of support from people in my department. But over time, situations change, people change and relationships change. And then, you know, that's really all that we depend on. We have no piece of paper. Well, maybe in a limited way, but not to defend our position. Most people in my department are really supportive of contractuels and are happy to have us here. We fill important functions for them. But they want us there as contractuels, not as 'equals' within the departmental system.

Twelve interviewees described their departmental support as ambiguous, three of whom felt “exploited.” Several others complained of simply being ignored for the most part.

And it rankles me so much that I've worked so hard to make a name for myself and show [the faculty] how good I am and how deserving I am of this position and the only positive feedback I get is from the students. I want to continue teaching and my happiest time is teaching, because the other parts of my working life [being shunned by co-workers] are absolutely miserable (Natalie).

Because collegial and departmental support was ambiguous at times and beyond participants' control, they did not depend on these as coping strategies. Even those who were comfortable in turning to colleagues were not sure that this would help:

Even so, what could they do? Some of them were contracts and some weren't tenured yet, so they had to be really careful too. I had some pretty stressful times yeah. I ended up going to the doctor to talk about it. It still makes me very emotional ... I did find the [faculty association] very supportive (Catherine).

They preferred strategies based on their own internal locus of control, which they controlled. The next section explores the external locus of control further, with a review of respondents' reactions to collective efforts such as unionization and to the health promotion programs offered by the university administration.

6.b.ii Access to health benefits and programs

Like many other large workplaces in Canada, ARU has a variety of wellness and health related programs for some but not all employees. Contractuals had limited access to these programs in 2008, depending on their contractual status and membership in the collective bargaining associations of the university. For example, the Wellness Program consisted of activities to support lifestyle change such as "quit smoking" groups, running teams, and preferred rates for gym membership. As with the group pension plans, medical, dental, and long-term disability benefits, it excluded the 14 per-course contractuals in this study altogether and only admitted 17 of the 18 per-term contractuals who had been on contract for at least six consecutive months of employment. Only then were they officially eligible for membership in the faculty association.

More than half of the 27 interviewees (17) counted medical, dental, pension and other insurance benefits as income gained or lost (see Chapter Four). Again, many considered their lack of coverage simply a part of contractual work and 10 interviewees did not mention medical or dental insurance at all. Among the 32 respondents in this sample, 12 had access to benefits through spousal plans. Six of these were per-course contractals who would not otherwise have benefits but six were per-term and three of these had contracts of 12 months or longer at ARU.

So it's hard to separate out what [contractuals] get as individuals and what they get as spouses. I'm covered because of my [spouse]. But I wouldn't be covered if I was per-course [or] if I was on a teaching term appointment of four months. I *am* covered on an eight month teaching term contract but only for those eight months of the year and then [for the other] four months, no coverage, other than from my wife's plan (Dave).

Per-term contractals had access to benefits as members of the faculty association while they were on contract, but not between contracts. Provisions for privately extending the coverage over the third semester did exist for those who had a guaranteed contract coming up in the next school year, but the few who checked into this option concluded it was "more expensive than it was worth" (Barbara). One respondent did not take it because it would cost between \$350 and \$400 a month to pay for medical and dental benefits for herself and her family, all young and healthy. Most participants decided to live without benefits for that one third of the year when they were not on a term contract.

With sporadic access to medical and dental insurance, a few per-term interviewees strongly resented paying into the related long-term disability plan. It was expensive, completely worker-funded, and mandatory after six months of contiguous service. It had

to be paid by anyone on an eight month contract. They speculated that they would not be able to draw from it as contractuels if they were disabled between contracts and it could not be claimed as a medical expense on their taxation forms.

Two participants were immigrants without citizenship or landed status. They could not access medical support at all, even when on eight month contracts, because they did not qualify for provincial Medicare, the precondition for participating in the workplace group medical and dental plan. They had better coverage as graduate students in Canada than they did as contractual university teachers.

I need new glasses, desperately need new glasses. Of course I read a lot, grade a lot, and I've been on contract for five years and I haven't had new glasses since. Prior to that I was a grad student [here in Canada] and we had fairly good vision and really good dental coverage in the student union plan. So now I need to have blood work done for the prescriptions that I take but it's not covered, I have to pay for that. So I've been able to convince the doctors that as soon as I'm covered, I'll get the blood work done. And because I keep moving to get contract work, it hasn't caught up with me yet. ...by the time my records from [the last place] get here, I'm already gone.

[Cohen: So you've been able to continue the prescriptions anyway without having the tests done?]

Yeah. But you know, I do think about that because the medications are for cholesterol and blood pressure. They need to be monitored (Gerry).

Because of the variation in eligibility and costs of health benefits plans, one coping strategy for several per-term participants was to get as much "work" done as possible while eligible on teeth, eyes, medications, and even counselling. Per-course contractuels hoped that the upcoming (first) contract being negotiated by the per-course contractuels' union would address their want of health insurance. One participant who moved back and forth between per-term and per-course contracts could not see why benefits could not be prorated in the same manner as pay:

There's a number of us who move from contractual to sessional status depending on the department's need, which is fairly reasonable ... from an organizational perspective [and] I get that, ... but from an employee's perspective, there's no continuity in benefits. We need something we could pay into at the level that we're working, so that we could have continuous access. Even something as simple as that, for those of us who are between those two worlds, would be really helpful. But ... the reality is that I'm going to end up trying to get a job somewhere else for the healthcare insurance because I can't get it from the university (Joanne).

Even those happy to work as contractals wanted to have some sort of proportional access to benefits. For them, "Part-time working is not the issue. It's the fact that if you're working part-time, you are losing all those social benefits" (Christian).

In 2008, per-course contractals did not have any effective provisions for either short or long-term sick leave. None of the per-term contractals who could take sick leave as members of the faculty association took it during their teaching semesters. In anecdotal literature, contractals worry that they will not be rehired if they take too much time off work on sick leave (Gadbois, 2002; L. Parsons, 2006).

Of course, you'd never let them know if anything is wrong or you're out of a job! They wouldn't even have to give you a reason, they just wouldn't rehire you if they thought you'd get sick or go on disability or not finish out the term. So you just suck it up and keep going (Jenny).

In fact, only two participants mentioned sick leave at all but a number described working through injuries and illness, such as flu symptoms. Some participants described teaching through fairly serious conditions, such as bronchitis, incipient migraines, or when recuperating from surgery. Undoubtedly tenure track and tenured faculty also teach through various ailments, but few do so because they fear losing work.

In 2008, a representative of the new per-course contractals' union who was interviewed for this study wanted sick leave included as an institutional issue for

contractuals because it indicated different occupational health policies in a multi-tiered labour force.

It would be interesting to look at sick leave in terms of [how much do faculty and then] per-course appointees or per-term appointees get... and then look at the difference between people who teach during intense [6 week] or regular [13 week] semesters. Because if you're teaching the intense term, you're teaching absolutely every single day but if you're teaching a regular semester you might be teaching once, twice or three times a week. So if you are entitled to at least a week of sick leave, how many hours, teaching hours, contact hours can you be sick for? You know, a week is a week is a week. If you have something bad and you need to take a week off, you're sick for a week. You can't change the amount of time that you're sick based on whether you're teaching during the intense or the regular semester. That really...speaks to the perceptions of our ability to even get well or get sick based on the fact that we're short term, non-permanent, part-time.

[Cohen: Is the administration worrying about how people might manipulate a week of sick leave?]

Yeah. But really it's the people working part-time on contracts who are saying, "I can't cancel my class, I've never cancelled my class." One woman I talked with ...threw out her back once and taught sitting in a chair. It seems completely absurd but there's this fear of cancelling a class (per course contractuals' union representative)...

Sarah was the only respondent in this study who contemplated taking time off work because of a long-term illness but she did so by forfeiting her contracts for the semester. For her, "My job didn't cause my health to be poor but my health caused my job to evaporate." With no health insurance, she relied on Employment Insurance to get through:

There's nothing in place. It's just, "Well, if you get sick, [even though you've been] a per-course instructor for the past five years, too bad, sorry, bye." I got flowers from the department when I was in hospital but you know, if I hadn't qualified for Unemployment Insurance, which I only did because I had two per-term contracts in that five year period, then I would have been in trouble. I don't think my family could have afforded to help me keep my house and car going completely (Sarah).

The practical benefits of medical and dental insurance and sick leave were only intermittently offered to contractuels, depending on their contractual status and the provisions in collective bargaining agreements that applied to them or not. The broader workplace programs relating to health issues were available to all university employees, but knowledge and the consequences of using these programs differed substantially for contractuels, as shown next.

6.b.iii Workplace health programs

In 2008, ARU offered three workplace programs that provided assistance for dealing with the stress and other health challenges associated with job insecurity. One was an Employee Assistance Program (EAP) and two were mediation programs that targeted disrespect and sexual harassment in the workplace. These policies appeared to externalize the issues but they ultimately emphasized individuals' responsibility for handling workplace conflicts and situations and dealing with any repercussions these had for health.

At the outset of this research, I wanted to find out how useful these programs were for contractuels, so a question on how much they knew about and used them was added at the beginning of the interviews (see Appendix 1-G). Almost all of the 27 interviewees knew of the long-standing Sexual Harassment Office. A slight majority also knew of the more recent Respectful Workplace policy. Surprisingly, only 11 of the 27 knew of the Employee Assistance Program (EAP). When interviewees finally evaluated all three programs, by far the most preferred and least threatening was the EAP.

The Respectful Workplace policy at ARU was only recently initiated at the time of this research. It was designed to ensure collegial, fair and respectful interactions throughout the university's workplaces. Available to all employees and students, it dealt specifically with any form of harassment that did not come under the mandate of the Sexual Harassment Office. Those targeted had to make a formal complaint against the perpetrator and then present their case to the same perpetrator and a mediator appointed by the university.

The Sexual Harassment Office at ARU was established for much longer and was more publicized than the Respectful Workplace policy in 2008. Its mandate was to deal with any issue of sexual harassment, again for all employees and students. Like the Respectful Workplace policy, complainants had to appeal in writing to the office and attend an in-person session as the injured party with the perpetrator and a university-appointed mediator.

Only three interviewees thought that contractuales would use the Respectful Workplace policy and six said they would use the Sexual Harassment Office if the situation and context allowed, such as if the complainant was a long-term contractual or was somehow more secure because they did extra administrative work or had "that type" of personality. The far greater majority gave a resounding "NO!" to the question of whether or not they would use either the Respectful Workplace or Sexual Harassment services. They were unequivocal:

I wouldn't do that. That would be suicide! (Barbara).

Yeah ... things could go quite nasty depending on who's involved (Damien).

I'm sure that they would never say you wouldn't get any more courses because you laid a complaint ... but if they don't get you one way, they'll get you another. So I would hold it in (Stephanie).

Well, [laugh] you know ... if I knew that my contract wasn't going to be extended then pft yeah, let's go. But...it's very easy to burn bridges here. The bridges are not built very sturdily. [laughs]. Especially for contract folks. Yeah, no, I would definitely worry about that. For sure (Sylvie).

Well ...it's administered and designed by the university ... so that's a conflict right there (Rachel).

I think contractals are too intimidated to use it. ... Unless it's a situation where you could no longer continue in the job without some sort of a resolution. Other than that I think there's just too much of a fear of losing your job, or losing your position or losing your course or losing students or something. You're employed at the whim of the employer which sucks (Roy).

From all of the 27 interviews, only four contractals actually did appeal to official venues to redress the injustices they encountered. Two of these four resorted to the mediation services. As longer serving contractals, they were willing to risk their jobs to take a personal stand against what they saw as "grossly disrespectful" and inappropriate behaviours. These two did not have faculty association protection while between contracts and one did not even ask them for help, expecting that little help would be forthcoming to any contractual. The other two filed formal grievances as members of a union. Though in relatively secure "permanent temporary" (i.e. repeating) jobs as laboratory instructors, they still "felt very threatened" as contractual employees.

By the end of all four mediation cases, the complainants found that little to nothing was gained except an airing of the issue among their colleagues.

Because of this grievance I think this is where everything in the department really started to go wrong for me. The chair wrote a letter in my permanent record stating I had [done this and that] ... and then added a paragraph on my need to be "fully conversant with the material" and the idea that the "[tenured] professor

needs to be in charge at all times,” implying that I was overstepping my role. Things got really miserable after that (Natalie).

The mediators ruled in the complainants’ favour in one of the two mediation cases which resulted in a guarded apology. The union found in favour of one grievance but again, the only result was an apology. The issue itself was not addressed. The other union grievance was ongoing at the time of the interview.

6.b.iv The Employees’ Assistance Program

I had to describe the Employees’ Assistance Program (EAP) extensively for 16 participants who had not heard of it before. By way of introduction to this topic, here is that description taken verbatim from one of the transcripts:

[Cohen: The Employees’ Assistance Program is described on the university website. There’s a phone number you can call and an online email address if you need personal counselling for anything: crisis situations, financial advice, career development, maybe even pointing you in the direction of legal assistance. It’s set up as a triage system by a counselling service outside of the province. So you phone them up, tell them what your problem is and they ask you if you’re willing to do a counselling session online or on the phone or if you want to see somebody in person. Then they give you a name and contact number and you set it up. I tried it at my university before doing these interviews. The counsellor took my personal information but said she didn’t give it to the university. I asked how she got paid and she said the counselling business bills the university for a certain number of visits and then it pays her from her invoice to them. I think I was only eligible for four sessions but at the end of the four, the counsellor said she could figure out something else if I needed more. So it’s anonymous, but you have to identify yourself as an employee and say what department you are with and what your work status is and they’ll bill the university without your name on the invoice.

So have you ever used any of those services or would you feel comfortable using any of those services?]

Only a few participants thought this service was available to contractuales and then only to per-term contractuales while on contract. Ten of the 11 participants who knew

about the EAP were on per-term contracts and four of these were eligible as spouses of faculty. The majority had no idea that this service was available to them because the university did not make it widely known. One per-term contractual woman paid hundreds of dollars for therapy after her critical incident and was upset to learn that she could have had this service for free. None of the per-course participants thought they would qualify:

Well no I had no idea that existed... and I have had friends who could have used it ...I am always amazed that we get hired back every semester and that all that comes in the mail is 'have you changed your address?'. There's never any 'welcome to the university' as a per-course instructor. Here's some programs that...' I mean, we don't even get e-mails like that. These are the things available for new faculty but not us. ... we get some (information) from our secretary if she thinks it's relevant to us but nobody ever seeks out per-course instructors and says "this is what's available to you" (Rachel).

In answer to the question of whether or not they or other contractals would use the EAP, 18 of 24 replied "yes," depending on who they were, their need and the situations at hand. They took comfort in the fact that it was administered by a company outside of the university administration and that the "very ethics of counselling and psychology is that everything should be confidential. And I don't think that my job position would have anything to do with their ethics, which they would have to uphold" (Maeve).

Even with guaranteed confidentiality, job insecurity makes participants vulnerable and several worried about the potential for misuse of the personal information. I also worried about this when I signed up with my university's Employee Assistance Program in advance of this research in 2007. I was even more concerned when I registered for it online in 2010 amidst growing concerns about online privacy. After my first registration with my university's EAP, I received a phone call at my home asking for an evaluation of

the counselling. My name had been sent to them by someone in the EAP system. I also found that while the service was indeed immediate, its quality was suspect. The first face-to-face counsellor suggested I read "Dr. Phil" (a popular pop psychologist). The responses from the second online counsellor were mechanistic: "I hear you say that you are feeling insecure about your future job prospects. Have you tried our resume website?" Undoubtedly these services are helpful to many but under the circumstances, the responses sounded trite. For at least one participant in this sample, ARU's EAP was not enough.

[Employee] counselling. Oh. Right. And you want to hear the joke of it? I called somebody, I guess it was the benefits people, asking, what is it we have as [contractuals]? And the only thing we had ... was this mental health stuff. I said "We break our bones, need that extra physio stuff, you're going to help us in zeros, as long as our mental health is good!" That's basically so we can keep on going in the classroom! That's the only thing they would provide us, our mental health. To hell with your drugs, your teeth. They don't care about any of that. What a joke! (Renée).

6.c Conclusion

Study participants considered the stress engendered by their job insecurity to be an individualized health risk of contractual work. This does not mean that they defined themselves as the source of the problem. They acknowledged the external and structural sources of job insecurity and its implications for their health, but were less inclined to seek solutions with an external locus of control such as unionization or workplace employee programs because they seemed ineffective or unavailable. These services were not included in per-course teaching contracts and were only intermittently available to per-term contractual teachers. Participants turned to individualized coping strategies over

which they had internal control, like staying positive, maintaining a healthy lifestyle and creating a sense of self-made security and occupational identity. Participants did not trust the administration's programs to mediate workplace incidents of disrespect or sexual harassment. Many suspected that complaining to the administrators of these programs could eventually do them more harm than good because they were contractually employed. Some told corroborating stories of colleagues who did not get rehired after making such complaints. Only a few had faith that the faculty association would represent contractuels in grievance procedures.

Participants did trust the Employees' Assistance Program because it was based on the principle of anonymity, but many did not know of it and only a few had used it. All participants wanted medical and dental insurance and sick leave. These were counted as workplace rights, fully available to full-time and permanent workers but only available temporarily to per-term contractuels while on eight month (or longer) contracts and not offered at all to per-course contractuels. Participants knew that making health benefits accessible to all contractuels year round, even on a proportionate basis, would go much further in creating a sense of security than would the verbal discourse of workplace respect which did not reflect their experience.

This concludes the presentation of the data collected during this study. In the next chapter, I assess the original questions for this research using the findings reported in Chapters Four, Five and Six. I conclude with my recommendations and future questions for research.

Chapter Seven: Concluding Thoughts and Recommendations

This research focuses on how contractual university teachers experience and cope with job insecurity and its challenges to their health. I conducted a mixed methods study with a self-selected sample of 32 respondents at one Canadian university over the course of two semesters in 2008. Twenty women and 12 men agreed to complete the first stage of the research by meeting with me and filling out a demographic survey and an initial *SF-12v.2® Health Survey*. The 27 who went on to the second stage did one or more task diaries, a second *SF-12v.2® Health Survey*, and a semi-structured interview. The findings of the demographic survey and the *SF-12v.2® Health Survey* provide descriptive statistics that were triangulated with the qualitative data. During the end-of-semester interviews, I asked participants to recount their career histories and discuss their daily work as contractual teachers. I also asked for one or more critical incidents that occurred at work and how they dealt with these incidents. These narratives, the task diaries, and my observations illustrate the nuances of participants' experiences that are difficult to capture in quantitative surveys.

The primary finding of this study is that the ambiguity of contractual hiring, income, and status in the academic hierarchy provoked anxiety and stress for most participants, regardless of gender and other aspects of social location. They used their participation in this study to elucidate this issue for posterity.

In this chapter, I first discuss how the data address my research questions. Because this is a mixed methods study based on a small convenience sample, the findings are exploratory and cannot provide definitive answers to these questions. Nor can they be

generalized to a wider population of contractual university teachers. However, they indicate the potential depth of the repercussions of job insecurity for workers with higher levels of education and provide recommendations for workplace change and future research.

7.a Question 1: How and To What Extent is Contractual University Teaching Job Insecure?

The question of whether or not contractual university teaching is job insecure stems from the common assumption that professional workers are protected from the worst effects of neoliberal work restructuring by their educational and occupational status. This research finds otherwise.

With overtures of a culture of neoliberal work restructuring and *academic capitalism* (Slaughter and Rhoades, 2004), contractual teaching work at ARU has become part of the rationalization of faculty work. Temporary cost-effective contracts are offered to one tier of workers while those in another tier continue in standard and secure employment relationships. The administration's rationalization of hiring practices, alongside pay and benefits differentials, was a source of job insecurity for all participants, but with advantages for some. None of the participants in this study were certain that they would be rehired in the following semesters or years. Based on their qualitative narratives during our meetings, I derived a categorization of participants as *high*, *medium*, or *low on job insecurity* (see Chapter Three). These categories were determined by the number of times participants referred to certain sources of job insecurity. They are an approximation

at best, but were useful in analyzing how job insecurity related to participants' health and coping strategies.

Many participants began teaching contractually through sponsorship and chance, which was integral to the traditional process of mentoring candidates into the academic hierarchy. The rationalization of hiring changed this, with paradoxical effects. On the one hand, contractual university teaching is no longer primarily a point of entry into a standard academic career. Contractuals now face more fragmented and boundaryless career paths, fraught with job insecurity (Beck, 1999; Harvey, 1990). Few participants in this study initially assumed that their contractual teaching alone would lead to a tenured position, but some hoped that they would be "regularized" after a span of repeated contracts. None expected to end up as job insecure contractuals in the long-run and none had any assurances of employment after their current short-term contract ended. Most had periods of underemployment or unemployment throughout the year. Under academic capitalism, jobs are easily eliminated by simply not renewing contracts and the risks of job insecurity, competition for contracts, and unemployment are individualized and institutionalized.

On the other hand, the formalization of the application process for contractual teaching at ARU created security for some participants by ostensibly removing goodwill and nepotism from hiring decisions. Unlike the traditional academic system of sponsoring graduate students or spouses and partners into contractual teaching, rationalized hiring protocols were standardized and regulated. Applicants adhered to specific deadlines and fully disclosed their qualifications. They were rewarded with contracts (or not) in a more timely fashion. Ultimately, the job of contractual teaching now existed because of the

rationalization of hiring, especially for those who had Master's degrees and would not qualify for tenure-track positions.

Job insecurity meant income insecurity for these participants. In 2008 at the time of the fieldwork, the 18 per-term contractals in this study were paid on a lower scale than that of tenured and tenure track faculty but on a higher scale than their per-course counterparts. Seventeen of the 18 per-term contractals had access to medical benefits and the university pension plan while they were members of the faculty association, which was only for the duration of their contracts, two thirds of the year for most. They had limited seniority and thought the language in the collective agreement was vague, providing little protection. The 14 per-course teachers felt they were overtly exploited because they were paid far less than their sessional counterparts elsewhere in Canada. Their recently formed union had not yet brokered a collective agreement with the ARU administration in 2008. There was no recognition of their seniority and they were not eligible for any medical benefits or pension plan contributions. Everyone, including those in the higher household income brackets, felt that the pay differentials for contractual teaching and the requirement that they reapply for successive contracts every year or semester were symbols of their lower value and status in the university hierarchy. These were significant sources of job insecurity that participants related to stress.

The effects of academic capitalism were exacerbated by participants' marginalization in the academic hierarchy, another commonly cited source of job insecurity in this research. As in European, American and Australian universities (e.g. Cavalli and Moscati, 2010; Donoghue, 2008; Currie, 2004), the rationalization of hiring at ARU has exacerbated the traditional academic hierarchies of tenured, tenure track, and

contractual faculty. There was an additional polarization of status between per-course and per-term teachers at ARU, significant for many participants despite the fact that the majority frequently switched between these statuses.

In theories of academic capitalism, the growth of contractual teaching indicates a process of deprofessionalization. It is seen as undermining the academic capital, power, and freedom of the tenured professoriate (Aronowitz, 1997; Rhoades, 1998). One problem with this theory is that contractual teaching is far from new. It was and still is part of the formal socialization of academic professionals and it supplements the work of tenured faculty. Another problem is in the use of the deprofessionalization argument by faculty who lobby to preserve academic capital and freedom. They declare that contractual teaching is inferior and un-invigorated by research. The majority of participants, however, did not consider their work a degradation of academic teaching at all. They argued that the conditions of the contracts offered them was problematic, not the quality of their work.

Participants insisted that they did the same (and sometimes more) teaching work as tenured faculty and the majority volunteered to do unpaid administrative and research work. Rather than opposing full-time faculty, many argued that they provided much needed support in the academic labour process. They resented being undervalued, marginalized or considered less professional because of their teaching role. Nineteen of the 27 interviewees felt that the faculty association did not support contractals at all and no other collective agreement was yet in place to represent them.

Perceptions of marginalization were inconsistent among participants because of their varying workplace situations. A physical (though unspoken) indication of

marginalization for a small majority of the 32 respondents was shared office space, compromising privacy and office scheduling. Significantly, three quarters of respondents' offices were located in areas that did not allow "collegial contact," even while meeting the other minimum recommendations for space and privacy set out by the Canadian Center for Occupational Health and Safety (CCOHS, 2003).

A more important indication of marginalization that participants did refer to was their exclusion from departmental decision-making regarding their teaching work. They felt more or less excluded according to departmental protocols and their contractual per-term or per-course statuses. This was to be a significant source of stress that created a keen sense of disconnect and insecurity for many, and especially for participants who were newly hired in the past year or two. Newer teachers were also most likely to be *high on job insecurity* in my categorization of the qualitative data. Contractuals repeatedly hired for six or more years were more likely to be *low on job insecurity* and to feel included in departmental and committee activities or to not care if they were excluded. They believed they had control over decisions related to their teaching work.

Some organizational theorists argue that with flexibilized jobs, knowledge workers are free to capitalize on boundaryless careers and develop social networks without ties to any one workplace (Hirsch and Naquin, 2001; Kalleberg, 2001; Pfeffer, 1997). Were participants instead experiencing "breakdown careers," with truncated work narratives and as many set-backs as opportunities to move forward? (Beck, 2000; Sennett, 1998). For the contractual university teachers in this research, opportunities for career development were limited because of their marginalization in the academic hierarchy. Only a few spoke of possible opportunities to build the work networks essential to

creating academic or social capital. Networking is difficult when tenured colleagues see contractals as undermining professional solidarity. Professional integration deteriorates under polarized workplace conditions.

Participants felt marginalized by the combination of academic hierarchy and job insecurity, but social location did moderate this experience. They knew that their job insecurity was not of their own making and that they made the best choices possible in their circumstances. Many engaged in what Phillips' (2012) called *self-made security* and what I see as their own *personal professional project*. Participants defined themselves as professional through their accountability to students and their work as "good teachers."

Based on the results of this study, I do not fully agree with Bourdieu's (1998, 85) observation that job insecurity has become "part of a *mode of domination* ... [in its] creation of a generalized and permanent state of insecurity aimed at forcing workers into submission, into the acceptance of exploitation." Participants' narratives revealed some compliance with the institutionalization of job insecurity, but does this constitute an acceptance of exploitation? I argue "no." All had experienced job insecurity at some point and 24 of the 32 respondents were still *medium* or *high on job insecurity* in 2008. That they willingly came forward to participate in this study indicates that they were not simply accepting this insecurity. Rather than apathy or despondency, participants exhibited markedly more agency by taking a professional approach to their teaching work. And although few of the 27 interviewees openly criticized contractual hiring at ARU, 12 did worry about the wider implications of rationalization and cost-cutting for students, faculty and the academy.

One thing that has always concerned me but I can never get anyone to talk about is that it's cheaper for departments to hire per-course or per-term contractals, but what does it really do, not only to health but to the overall education process? ... I mean, yes, it's saving money but we're not in the business to make money either. We're in the business to educate students (Gerry).

This study looked at both men and women. As in other professional occupations, the gender gaps in income and health among contractual university teachers were narrowing as demonstrated by the quantitative research instruments (the demographic survey and the SF12v.2 Health Survey). However, the qualitative semi-structured interviews allowed some gender comparisons and an exploration of the hypothesis that contractual teaching is a feminization of the work done by tenured faculty. Early researchers used the feminization of work thesis to analyze occupations in which women predominate, such as in service, personal care, clerical, manufacturing, and food processing jobs. Later theorists associated the feminization of work with low paying "flexible" and temporary jobs in which workers had little control. Many of these temporary jobs are defined by the "soft" nurturing skills required of workers and are juxtaposed against implicitly masculine standard employment relationships (Bolton and Muzio, 2008; Vosko et al., 2009). Cranford et al. (2003, 456) use the more appropriate "feminization of employment norms".

Contractual university teaching is temporary work that demands nurturing skills. Participants in this research spoke of how their teaching work in particular was devalued when juxtaposed against the "masculine" standard employment relationship of tenure. However, they did not agree with the devaluation or consider their teaching work at all inferior to that of tenure-track and tenured faculty. Both men and women wanted to be supportive of students, feeling this was a valuable part of their professionalism as good

teachers. Nurturing was less a problem for them than was the lower value accorded to this work.

Few participants thought contractual men had an easier or more difficult time with contractual teaching work than women but some gender differences were evident in the narratives and demand further research. For example, some women in this study expressed a lower level of personal control in their work than did the men. Women more often than men referred to their marginalized positions in the academic hierarchy, to the structural ambiguity of their career paths, and to the repercussions of their “emotion work” (Christine) with students. More women than men worried that they were targets for student retribution, usually for low grades. Proportionately fewer men than women complained of student disrespect. These results call for further research on whether or not students and the administration construct different expectations for women and men, whether contractual, tenured, or tenure-track faculty.

Overall, the results of this study cannot be used to definitively support the application of the feminization of work theory to contractual teaching. Some participants argued that their choice to work contractually and risk job insecurity was structurally constrained by their family or graduate student roles, but they did not agree that contractual teaching itself was gendered. For example, both men and women parents appreciated contractual teaching as “a good fit” with their responsibilities for child care. The standard academic career involved more sacrifice, time and angst than some participants could muster under personal circumstances. Both women and men described the positive aspects of contractual work: its flexibility, their love of teaching, the lack of pressure to publish. None thought it fair that they were penalized for making this choice.

Their main issues were with the marginalized status of contractual teachers in the academic hierarchy, the disproportionately lower pay, and the ambiguity around hiring. They argued that the university administration should regularize their positions and institute proportionate remuneration, benefits, and pension plan participation for all contractuales.

7.b Question 2: How is Job Insecurity Related to ARU Contractuales' Health?

Throughout the interviews, participants described contractual hiring processes, the inequality of income, and their marginal status and exclusion in the academic hierarchy as sources of job insecurity. For most, these were associated with stress and other negative health effects. Some spoke of how contractual teaching was stigmatized in comparison to tenured faculty work. They argued that contractual teaching limited collegiality and created both chronic stress and job dissatisfaction. As noted in the literature, *collegiality* and *social comparison* affect emotional health and stress (Demakakos et al., 2008; Dunn et al., 2006; Silla et al., 2005; Statistics Canada, 2006c).

Self-esteem and *self-efficacy* are positively linked to health, especially for women, in research by Denton et al. (2004) and Spitzer (2005). Self-esteem and the sense of efficacy are worsened in situations of marginalization and job insecurity, and in extremely hierarchical organizations (Lewchuk et al., 2006, 2008; Siegrist and Marmot, 2004). Several study participants described how their sense of efficacy was constricted by the structural framing of contractual work, including administrative demands to teach larger classes. Most, however, had good self-esteem and a strong occupational identity as

“good teachers”, despite increasing class sizes and the suspicions of colleagues that their teaching was inferior.

Among the 27 participants who completed the semi-structured interviews, 26 directly related the stresses, anxieties, and marginalization of contractual work to varying emotional and physical health disorders. These disorders included insomnia, depression, anxiety, exhaustion, greater susceptibility to colds and flus, repetitive stress injuries, lack of exercise and weight gain (see Table 4, p. 170). Many felt it was unfair that they had to deal with the health repercussions of job insecurity as individualized risks.

Participants’ narratives triangulated well with the results of the *SF-12v2™ Health Surveys*. A majority of the 32 respondents’ individual norm-based comparisons on mental health in the *SF-12v2™ Health Surveys* were much lower than the average US 1998 population norms for age and gender. However, their physical health was better than average in the *SF-12v2™ Health Surveys*.

The results of the men’s *SF-12v2™ Health Surveys* did not differ substantially from those of the women. In fact, the triangulation of the data from all of the research instruments in this study supports the findings of other studies, that gender differentials in mental health, stress, and sense of control are narrowing for men and women in similar occupations and for those who face the threat of job loss (Denton et al., 2004; Hayward and Colman, 2008; McDonough and Walters, 2001; Ross and Bird, 1994). By the end of this study, women did not have substantially higher levels of depression, distress or undiagnosed conditions than men.

From this research, I argue that job insecurity affects health at all social locations. Little difference was evident when these *SF-12v2™ Health Survey* results were cross

tabulated with household income, marital status, and education. This defies expectations from past research showing an income and education gradient in relation to health, and better health for the young and married. Though not generalizable, the narratives do support a few studies of highly educated workers facing job insecurity in which higher education was associated with greater anxiety. The stresses of underemployment were exacerbated when measured against the years of investment in education, now seen as a loss (Domienighetti et al., 2000; Pelfrane et al., 2003; Tremblay, 2004). This was especially evident among the more than half dozen participants who were extremely stressed about their finances and still owed substantial amounts in student debt.

Job insecurity was linked to health in several ways in this research. Interviewees pointed out that because they were contractually employed, it was difficult to engage in long-term financial planning, a measure of security with a stabilizing effect on health (Schellenberg and Ostrovsky, 2008). This problem was exacerbated for 25 of the 32 respondents who regularly switched between per-term and per-course contracts, depending on departmental need. Fifty-two percent of those who switched compared with 29% of those who did not switch were also *high on job insecurity*.

When participant's level of job insecurity from the qualitative interviews were cross-tabulated with their *SF-12v2™ Health Survey* results, 73% (11 of 15) of those who were *high on job insecurity* were more than 10 points below the norm on the mental health scores, compared to 25% (2 of 8) of those *low on job insecurity*. Similarly, 73% (11 of 15) of those *high on job insecurity* self-reported to be in "poor" health.

Participants maintained that job insecurity had a greater impact on their health than did job strain, although 11 of the 27 interviewed also self-identified as *job strained*.

While they had slightly lower mental health scores on the *SF-12v2™ Health Survey* than those who were *not job strained*, there was not as strong a pattern here as occurred with job insecurity.

Experience and length of service appeared to lessen the effects of job strain and job insecurity among participants. Seventy-five percent (six of eight) of those participants who were *low on job insecurity* had worked as contractuels for six or more years. Sixty percent (nine of 15) of those *high on job insecurity* were contractual teachers for five years or less. Further quantitative research with larger samples is needed to confirm this relationship. Contrary to expectation, contractual status (per-course as opposed to per-term) did not make much difference. In the categorizations of job insecurity from the qualitative narratives, 50% of per-course contractuels and 44% of per-term contractuels were *high on job insecurity*.

No discernible gender differences were evident in the self-rated health of participants. The total 2008 sample was less likely to claim to be in “good” or better health (62.9%) when compared with the 2005 Canadian population (88.8%) (Statistics Canada, 2006d).

There were, however, some indications of gender difference elsewhere in the research. Both men and women defined health as a combination of the physical and mental components, but with different emphases. Proportionately more men emphasized functionality and more women highlighted emotional balance or calmness. Being more socially and economically vulnerable than men, women are more risk-aware according to Lupton (1999). Though not obvious in the quantitative data, this gender difference was apparent in participants’ narratives. When their qualitative data was characterized as *low*,

medium, or high on job insecurity, 55% of the women compared to 33% of the men were highly job insecure. Only 20% of the women but 33% of the men were low on job insecurity. One of the measures for job insecurity was anxiety associated with contractual teaching. While the men did not emphasize high anxiety, they did mention it. Women in this study disclosed the health effects of their job insecurity more often than did men, but a few pointed out that admitting to anxiety and stress is risky in and of itself when in a precarious working situation. They did not want to appear “too feminine” or “always emotional.” This pressure and the generalized assumption that stress is a female complaint (Messing, 2006; Spitzer, 2005) is worth exploring among both women and men in future research.

In answer to the second question that informed this research, 23 of the 27 interviewees described how job insecurity had a significant impact on their emotional health and stress levels. Fourteen described the repercussions of job insecurity for their physical health. Length of service and the creative quality of teaching helped ameliorate the negative health effects of job insecurity for many participants. Participants who were less stressed by their marginal position as contractals alluded to the *creativity* and *autonomy* of teaching work and the fact that they had chosen this work over other alternatives. They continued to upgrade their teaching skills and volunteer for committee work without formal credit as part of their own professional development process. These activities contributed to a sense of *self-made security* and had the potential to create *bridging social capital* with others outside of the immediate workplace. Both qualities protect health (S. Abbott, 2009; Mirowski and Ross, 2007; Oksanen et al., 2008; Phillips, 2012; Silla et al., 2005). This study provides support for continued research in this area.

7.c Question 3: How did Participants Cope with the Challenges to Health from Job Insecurity?

During the interviews, participants described both the day-to-day and the long-term effects of job insecurity on their health. To answer the third question of this research, I asked participants how they coped with the stresses and health effects of job insecurity. Most of their coping strategies concentrated on an internal (not external) locus of control, even though they understood the health risks of job insecurity to be a structural component of contractual work. Because of their job insecurity, most participants avoided any public disclosure of stress or anxiety that would make them appear incapable of doing their job. They tried to “always look on the bright side” (Naomi).

Those with longer service records and more contractual teaching experience had more coping strategies and a greater sense of efficacy in managing the effects of insecurity. Possibly there is a healthy worker effect, where those able to develop effective coping strategies manage to stay in the job (Dahl, 1993). This is a question for future research.

Job insecurity and job strain had separate effects for health in this study, as was also found by D’Souza et al. (2003) and Eiken and Saksvik (2006). Job strain, defined in part by an imbalance between demand and control at work (Karasek and Theorell, 1990), varied among participants. Eleven of the 27 interviewees were *job strained*. I did not find a clear pattern in the relationship between job strain and self-reported health, or between job strain and the mental health scores on the *SF-12v2™ Health Surveys*, or between job strain and job insecurity. Close to 40% of those with *no job strain* compared to 45% of

those with *job strain* were *high on job insecurity*. Job insecurity is a risk of contractual work regardless of how much job strain exists in the work itself. Job insecurity has the potential to contribute to job strain by limiting contractually's sense of control over their work. A few participants in this study increased their own task demand as a way of coping with the anxiety of job insecurity.

Job strain is evident in all jobs at some point. In this study of academic work, a high level of control over course design and creativity contributed to self-imposed increase in task demand. As in Dressel and Langreiter's (2008) study, control and creativity in the work also deflected the negative health repercussions of high task demand. Control over problem solving has been shown to be more effective in alleviating the stresses associated with job strain than lowering workplace demand (Strazdins et al., 2004). This was evident in this study. Participants took pleasure in the creative aspects of teaching. For the 16 who were *not job strained*, control was crucial to managing the combination of regular teaching duties and high grading loads, new course preparation, and co-teaching demands that occurred at peak periods of the semester. Most coped by organizing their time and work according to the cyclical nature of semesters. Participants' estimates of workload in the demographic surveys at the beginning of semester were surprisingly accurate when compared with the task diaries they completed later in the semester.

Job strain was experienced by proportionately more women than men and men generally recorded higher numbers of personal (e.g. leisure) hours in their task diaries. Both men and women described challenges and benefits in combining contractual work with family responsibilities or working on advanced degrees and research projects. For

many, the flexibility made up for the job strain though not the job insecurity. For some, the perception of choosing contractual work because of its flexibility was an internalized coping strategy. Because they were job insecure, however, few sample participants believed they could cope with the health effects of either job insecurity or job strain by refusing contracts. This could jeopardize their chances of securing future contracts.

Participants weighed the stress and job insecurity of contractual work against its flexibility, (varying) levels of autonomy, and the pleasure they drew from teaching. This became a psychosocial resource for health and an aspect of their self-made security. The majority of both per-term and per-course participants “love[d] teaching!” Both women and men found it to be a meaningful source of professional identity and self-esteem. Most maintained their own sense of professionalism rather than internalizing the devaluation of their work by others, as is frequently the case among marginalized workers (Daiski and Richards, 2007). Participants’ identification as teaching professionals became part of their good work practice, their “feel for the game” and an internal coping strategy by creating a sense of self-made security. This might be cynically considered a rational calculation to build academic capital (Bourdieu, 1988, 1994), so it bears repeating that most of these participants were genuinely interested in good pedagogical practises and felt they deserved validation because of their contributions to the overall good of the university. A significant amount of interview data on this subject was excluded from this thesis in the interest of brevity.

All participants in this research turned to these and other individual coping strategies and their own psychosocial resources to deal with the potential negative health effects of job insecurity. Lifestyle was another example of an internal coping strategy for

13 of the 27 interviewees who claimed to be in good physical shape. Several others related sleep, diet, and exercise problems to their job insecurity. Social support is positively correlated with health (Public Health Agency of Canada, 2011). Marriage was a coping strategy for more than half of the participants who alleviated stress by “talking it out” with their partners. Being married was weakly associated with *the same* or *better* mental health change over the course of the semester. It did not, however, make married participants any more job secure than their single counterparts. In the categorization of the narratives, 50% of the single respondents and 45% of the married ranked *high on job insecurity*. While the majority of the interviewees felt they had support from fellow contractuales and collegial support from within their departments, they qualified it as changeable according to circumstance. One third of the sample tried to minimize the health risks of job insecurity by deliberately avoiding workplace conflicts. Another third withdrew from departmental activities altogether or did not participate in them in the first place.

After looking at participants’ coping strategies that drew on an internal locus of control, I turned to those with an external locus of control. These include actions taken in collaboration with others to address the structural roots of job insecurity, such as unionization or using workplace health programs. Participants had little faith in these strategies. They had limited or no access to health and pension benefits and few considered themselves eligible or secure enough to deal with the adverse health effects of job insecurity by even taking sick leave. Most felt they had limited or no representation by collective bargaining units. Collaboration with other contractuales and faculty was helpful to some participants, but conflicts could and often did arise in teaching situations.

At the end of the interviews, I asked participants how they knew about and used three workplace programs at ARU that might assist in coping with the health effects of job insecurity. The employee assistance program (EAP) dealt directly with health and personal issues. The other two programs indirectly addressed health by mediating episodes of disrespect and sexual harassment in the workplace.

Less than half of the interviewees even knew that the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) existed. Some respondents admitted that it could be helpful because of its anonymity, but many thought that like pension and health benefits, it was only available to per-term contractuels during the term of their employment and not available to per-course people at all. They were not told otherwise by the university administration.

Only four of the 27 interviewees turned to the employer's Respectful Workplace and Sexual Harassment mediation programs as coping strategies. Most had prior knowledge of the sexual harassment program but fewer knew of the mediation process for incidents of disrespect. Accessing either of these programs meant that participants would have to make and defend a public complaint, possibly against tenured faculty. They had little faith in this as a solution to their health problems and most thought that doing so would be 'career suicide.'

In sum, this study found that job insecurity challenged the health of a small convenience sample of contractual teachers at one Canadian university in 2008. For these participants, contractual teaching was part of academic capitalism and the rationalization of hiring in the academic workplace. The health risks of job insecurity and participants' coping strategies were individualized. In neoliberal ideology, employers are rarely held responsible for the health risks of job insecurity. Even so, longer-serving participants in

this study argued that these health risks are best addressed through a more balanced organizational justice that would meet basic workplace standards for health and job security. The next section reviews the recommendations for workplace change and for future research that came from this study.

7.d. Recommendations for Workplace Changes

How might the negative health effects of job insecurity, especially the endemic sense of stress and anxiety experienced by participants in this sample, be addressed? Interviewees recommended introducing **universal labour and occupational health policies with high standards**. Such policies would augment job security and inclusion in departmental processes (allowing them to build academic capital), and provide proportionate health and wellness benefits for all employees.

Multiple tiers of status and differences in access to security in the workplace will not disappear. These are not new with the restructuring of the labour force but the replacement of permanent positions with temporary contracts has been increasing in education and other service professions since the 1990s. An ideal solution is to convert or **“regularize” those jobs repeatedly offered as contracts** into permanent positions. A few of the older respondents in this study remembered stories of contractuels not being rehired in the last year they needed to qualify for such “regularization” in the 1970s and 1980s. In 2008, Queen’s University in Ontario had instituted a similar grandfathering-in process in the form of the “continuing adjunct position” where permanency is awarded after prolonged service (Queen’s University Faculty Association (QUFA) and Fitzgibbon, 2008). This might mean that specialized teaching or research positions would replace

some of the tenure track positions that still combine these roles. For obvious reasons, this is an unpopular position among faculty associations because it jeopardizes the principles of tenure and academic freedom (Turk, 2008). More needs to be done to ensure that upholding academic freedom does not undermine the possibility of a standard employment relationship for those without tenure and with less academic capital.

A further recommendation from this study is to make contractual teaching more secure by **carefully sorting out and crediting contractuels with seniority**. Similar to other universities, teaching seniority at ARU is established through a variety of rules established by the administration, two different unions, and the faculty association. In this study, the majority of contractuels (25 of 32) switched between per-course and per-term statuses, so between a per-course contractuels' union and the faculty association. Length of service was truncated in union, association, and administrative calculations. The system of seniority needs revision and amalgamation, with all contractual service eligible according to its contribution to the university.

Lowe's (2000) recommendation that **unions and administrations strive to establish quality work for all workers**, including those experiencing job insecurity, is worth repeating here. Temporary workers should be unionized across industries to include those who move between workplaces or between statuses. Instead of being tied to one workplace or to a segment of workers, unions and professional associations must amalgamate for all workers. This would allow substantive changes to the objective working conditions of contractuels that are essential to address the immediate and long-term health costs of job insecurity, now displaced to the individual worker. The results of this research confirm that dual organizational policies for permanent and temporary

workers worsen the occupational health of those on contract. The objective conditions needing the greatest change include access to health benefits, proportionate pay, and some measure of seniority to safeguard future contracts. Participating in university pension plans and transferring pension credits and health benefits between jobs and workplaces are objective measures that would create a greater sense of security for several participants in this study, regardless of their age.

Yet another recommendation is to reconsider the traditional academic hierarchy in which contractually hired teachers are judged inferior. Addressing this marginalization by **acknowledging the actual and potential contributions of contractals** to the university process would allow them to negotiate greater participation in the academic workplace.

Finally, participants dealt with the health effects of job insecurity largely through internalized and individual coping strategies. A minority were hoping that the relatively new per-course contractals' union would help in addressing these effects in the future. In 2008, few had faith in any coping strategies that had an external locus of control, especially the three workplace health programs administrated by the university employer. Only four in the sample took advantage of the grievance process or the mediation programs for respect or sexual harassment in the workplace because they involved making a public complaint. More were willing to engage in the anonymous employee assistance program but few actually did so. **Greater information regarding workplace supports for contractual employees is needed.** However, as the chapter on coping strategies and institutional supports for health shows, respect and an emotional sense of security cannot be forced through policies that place the onus on individuals to solve

structurally created problems such as job insecurity. Encouraging respect solely through discourse is not the answer.

7.e Recommendations for Future Research

This mixed methods study raised a number of questions and recommendations for future research, noted throughout the data chapters. It is largely qualitative and exploratory, based on the perspectives of a self-selected convenience sample at one university at one point in time. The findings indicate an inverse relationship between job insecurity and health, regardless of education or gender. This relationship varied somewhat by workers' experience and the nature of their contracts.

Several issues can be studied further in qualitative and quantitative research by using larger samples across occupations. The first is the general issue of defining insecurity related to work. This study focused on *job insecurity* in terms of participants' concrete experiences and perceptions of the conditions of insecurity in their work. Larger studies are expanding to look at employment strain and work-related insecurity, conditions that encompass workers' overall social location and the larger culture of uncertainty in which they live (e.g. Lewchuk et al, 2006; Scott, 2004).

Specific to contractual university work, future comparative and longitudinal research at other Canadian universities with different hiring and workplace health policies is needed. The research for this project occurred before the relatively new per-course contractuels' union had negotiated a collective agreement with ARU. At the same time, per-term contractuels were only partially protected under the faculty association. The problems posed by multiple union and association positions, such as the inconsistent

methods of measuring and enforcing seniority guidelines in hiring, require further study. Future research could compare union policies and protections for contractuels at different social locations to find out which practices produce more or less security as contracts draw to a close. Further comparison with university contractual teachers in other regions of the world would also provide greater understanding of the complexities of the intersection of job insecurity, health, and union or association bargaining.

The results of this research call for extended comparisons of contractuels' experiences with those of tenure track and tenured faculty who have greater academic capital and better work security. Future studies can explore whether or not, how, and why faculty attitudes towards contractuels are changing and the effects this is having for instituting better working conditions and occupational health. A related issue is how job insecurity affects the ability to plan financially for the long term and how pensions are compromised by contractual work. This is a pressing issue in future research, when retirees start coming out of decades of precarious work with few employer-sponsored pensions to their credit.

Turning to the analysis, literature that was useful for interpreting these findings included the theories of professional integration and exclusion (A.D. Abbott, 1988; Larson, 1977), the concept of academic capital (Bourdieu, 1988), and the theory of the individualization of risk (Beck, 2000; Lupton, 1999). These theories can all be extended in future comparative studies that include highly educated contractual workers. Time prohibited a more in-depth consideration of how workers' insecurity intersected with the structures of gendered organizations (Acker, 1990) or interactions based on gender

performativity (J. Butler, 1990, 2004). These are important omissions that should be addressed in future research.

Some contractuales in this study believed that faculty colleagues saw them as part of the overall rationalization of faculty work and as pariahs in the academic hierarchy. At the time of this writing, however, contemporary contractual work was rapidly becoming normal on Canadian campuses and faculty associations were becoming more inclusive (CAUT, 2011; QUFA and Fitzgibbon, 2008). This needs further study as it unfolds.

Occupational health studies are also changing to include a focus on the health effects of job insecurity at all occupational and educational levels of workers. This study mandates a closer examination of what constitutes protection against job insecurity and the practical means for instituting such protections.

Finally, I have a few recommendations for future researchers who plan to work with vulnerable or marginalized groups. If references to a personal health problem are perceived as a risk to future employment, recruitment will be difficult. Disclosure of health problems can easily become a rationale for employers to not rehire the individuals who disclose. Many respondents in this study were reticent about admitting poor health in the first stage meetings.

These highly educated respondents might have suspected other potential risks from participation too. Research subjects, particularly academics, know that interviews are constructed to yield particular data for specific uses and that power is embedded in the data gathering process. Those who feel disempowered may try to sabotage, mislead, or carefully qualify information with disclaimers, or they do not volunteer at all (Becker, 1998; Briggs, 2003). At-risk participants are careful about what and how much

information is divulged and they may offer inconsistent information at the beginning. Echoing Becker (1998), Bergman and Coxon (2005) advise researchers to explore the inconsistencies within interview narratives to reveal the fears, biases and ambiguities faced by respondents. I took this advice in my later analysis and was struck by how little participants wanted to talk directly about their health concerns. Instead, they expanded on the conditions of job insecurity and then later related these to the health challenges of job insecurity. Participants were much more forthcoming on questions of health after I described some of the preliminary results from the *SF-12v.2® Health Surveys*. They were most certainly risk aware.

One contextual issue that affects respondent recruitment is that the narrative interview is no longer just a research tool. It is now a “cultural production”, even an “entertainment”, used ubiquitously in the media to publicize personal issues for commercial gain (Briggs, 2003, 247; Gubrium and Holstein, 2003; Van Maanen, 1988). This is creating problems for social scientists in making the academic interview process suspect and in creating interview fatigue (Miller and Bolton, 2007). Potential respondents now worry that their personal truths might be used against them, especially if they see the interviewers as representing authority. Ambivalence and mistrust are affecting respondent recruitment in diverse areas of research (Reynolds and Nelson, 2007). Participants actively resist academic understandings through silence and misdirection. At the end of this research, several participants were surprised that I offered them the final decision of how their words would be used in the dissertation.

I found that self-identifying as a contractual who is taking the same risk of disclosure helped to ease some misgivings. Sending out the consent forms in advance of

our first meetings also helped reassure potential respondents by showing them what they were getting into before they committed to participating in the study. Contrary to studies finding that the stringent regulation of ensuring consent by Ethics Boards is dissuading informants (Miller and Boulton, 2007), participants in this study responded well when an abbreviated version of an ethics statement and all consent forms were offered in advance of signing up. Only two of the 34 initial respondents did not follow through with the first stage after I sent out these materials. I believe that my academic participants were more likely than lay persons to recognize the protections of anonymity and informed consent. Full disclosure and honesty are imperative in any research study and were keenly appreciated by these at-risk respondents. Self-identifying as part of the group was helpful in this study but this might not always be the case in a competitive labour market. Disclosure really depends on the situation.

Finally, knowing the parameters of the group and having the flexibility to change them was another lesson learned in the early stages of this research. I recommend advertising to the broadest possible group when looking at workers with varying statuses, especially when the risk is high. Ultimately, it made for a much more interesting study by expanding the complexity of participants' experiences and the issues of contractual teaching.

This thesis, "The 'Other' Professors: Job Insecurity, Health and Coping Strategies among Contractual University Teachers" provides a snapshot of how the academic profession is changing in the early twenty-first century and the effects of this change for contractual university teachers. More must be done to provide definitive answers to the questions raised throughout the research. From this study and my experience as a

contractual teacher, I argue that contractual hiring is not going to disappear because it is more or less unfair or perceived as undermining professional academic capital in the workplace. I believe that social and organizational justice is best served by acknowledging the impact of contractual hiring for everyone and by lobbying for greater equality in work and occupational health regulations. To this end, job insecurity must be studied as an occupational health issue and an issue of organizational justice.

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Appendix 1: Research instruments

Appendix 1-A: Initial email / internal mail / advertisement request for respondents

Term contractuals wanted for a study on job insecurity and health

Greetings,

Are you a contractual teacher here at [ARU]? Are you working on a four, eight or 12 month contract? If you are, please consider participating in my doctoral research on job insecurity and health among contractual post-secondary teachers. My name is Linda Cohen and I am a PhD candidate in the Department of Sociology at Memorial University and a long-term contractual university teacher. I am examining ways in which the working conditions of contractual teachers at [ARU] may affect their health. As a contractual, you can help.

Interested? Please contact me, Linda Cohen, by email at linda@mun.ca, or by phone at 709-737-4486, leaving only your name and number on my dedicated message manager if I am not in, or by mail at the Department of Sociology, St. John's campus. I look forward to talking with you!

Respectfully,
Linda Cohen,
Dept. of Sociology,
Memorial University of Newfoundland.

Yes I am interested in learning more about the study _____

My name is _____ and

I can be contacted at _____

Please return this response to Linda Cohen, at linda@mun.ca, or by mail at the Department of Sociology, St. John's campus.

Appendix 1-B: Revised email / internal mail / advertisement request for respondents

Teaching contractals wanted for a study on job insecurity and health, 2nd call

Are you a contractual teacher here at [ARU]? Does contractual teaching provide your primary source of income? If so, please consider participating in my doctoral research on job insecurity and health among contractual post-secondary teachers. My name is Linda Cohen and I am a PhD candidate in the Department of Sociology at Memorial University and a long- term contractual university teacher. I am examining ways in which the working conditions of contractual teachers at [ARU] may affect their health. As a contractual, you can help.

Interested? Contact me, Linda Cohen, by email at linda@mun.ca , or by phone at 737-4486, leaving only your name and number on my dedicated message manager if I am not in, or by mail at the Department of Sociology, St. John's campus. I look forward to talking with you!

All replies are kept in strict confidence and this project has been certified as meeting appropriate ethical standards by the Interdisciplinary Committee on Ethics in Human Research.

Appendix 1-C-i: Consent form: 1st stage

My name is Linda Cohen and I am a graduate student in the Department of Sociology at Memorial University. Please read this consent form carefully before making your decision to participate. I will leave you with a signed copy as well as taking one with me.

Purpose of the study

The purpose of this study is to collect data on the relationship between job insecurity and health among post-secondary contractual teachers. This data will be used for my doctoral dissertation. I am investigating whether or not and how the job insecurity associated with academic contractual work affects health for men and women.

The research process

Your participation in this first stage of the research process consists of completing 2 short surveys (a demographic survey and one *SF-12v.2*® *Health Survey* survey).

The time involved in this first stage of the research process is short: We should be able to complete the briefing on the study and the demographic survey in 20 minutes; The *SF-12v.2*® *Health Survey* takes approximately 10 minutes to complete.

The information you provide in this research will be used as data in academic talks and publications. Your confidentiality will be respected at all times and only pseudonyms will be used when discussing my data from this study.

Your participation in this research is free and voluntary. You can choose to end the interview or decline to answer particular questions at any time. You may withdraw from the study at any point. I will ensure that your name will not be used in the reporting of this data. You will be asked to choose a pseudonym for use in the study. This will NOT affect your employment and only the researcher and an assistant typist will have access to your files. Both the researcher and the assistant typist will be working under a confidentiality agreement. All electronic files related to the data collection will be securely stored in password – guarded electronic files on the researcher's personal computer and under lock and key in the researcher's home office when in hard copy, as per ethical guidelines.

Given these precautions, you should not experience any harm in agreeing to participate in my research. In agreeing to participate, you will be able to air some of your concerns and you will make a contribution to knowledge in this area.

If you have any questions about the research project, please contact me, Linda Cohen, by email at linda@mun.ca , or by phone at 737-4486, leaving only your name and number on my dedicated message manager if I am not in, or by mail at the Department of Sociology, MUN.

This project has been certified as meeting appropriate ethical standards by the Interdisciplinary Committee on Ethics in Human Research at Memorial University of Newfoundland. If you have ethical concerns about the research, such as your rights as a participant or my conduct as a researcher, you can contact the chair of the ICEHR at icehr@mun.ca or by telephone at 737 8368.

Thank you!
Sincerely,

Linda Cohen, PhD candidate, Department of Sociology, Memorial University of Newfoundland
linda@mun.ca

Yes, I agree to participate in Linda Cohen's research under the conditions specified above:

Name and contact information:

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Researcher: (Linda Cohen)

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Appendix 1-C-ii: Consent form, 2nd stage

My name is Linda Cohen and I am a graduate student in the Department of Sociology at Memorial University. Please read this consent form carefully before making your decision to participate. I will leave you with a signed copy as well as taking one with me.

Purpose of the study

The purpose of this study is to collect data on the relationship between job insecurity and health among post-secondary contractual teachers. This data will be used for my doctoral dissertation. I am investigating whether or not and how the job insecurity associated with academic contractual work affects health for men and women.

The research process

Your participation in this second stage of the research process consists of completing:

- 1) two more *SF-12v.2® Health Surveys* identical to the one you completed in the first stage.
- 2) 3 “task diaries” at various intervals throughout the term (see attached sample).
- 3) an open ended interview session lasting approximately 1 to 2 hours.

I will audio-tape the open ended interview to ensure that no data will be lost. The audiotaped interview will be stored as an electronic file and will be partly or completely transcribed. If you choose not to be audio-taped, notes will be taken and stored under the same conditions as the transcriptions of the audio-tapes. All audio and written files related to the interview(s) and data collection will be securely stored in password – guarded electronic files on the researcher’s personal computer and under lock and key in the researcher’s home office when in hard copy, as per ethical guidelines. You will be offered a summary of the final study when completed.

The time involved in participating in this research process depends on how much detail you are willing and able to provide, given your time restraints. The *SF-12v.2® Health Surveys* take approximately 10 minutes each to complete. The time required to complete the task diaries depends on the level of detail you provide. I am including copies of each of these research instruments to give you an idea of what to expect. The open – ended interview at the end of the term should take between 1 and 2 hours. Questions will relate to your daily work as evidenced in the task diaries and your experiences of job insecurity and health. Examples of questions include whether or not you feel that your daily tasks are affected by your gender roles at work and home, your work biography, or the overall insecurity of working as a contractual. With your permission, we will also discuss any recent events that may have been stressful and how you coped with any health effects.

The information you provide in this research will be used as data in academic talks and publications. Your confidentiality will be respected at all times and only pseudonyms will

be used when discussing any data from this study. I will ensure that your name will not be used in the reporting of this data. You will be asked to choose a pseudonym for use in the study. This will NOT affect your employment and only the researcher and an assistant typist will have access to your files. Both the researcher and the assistant typist will be working under a confidentiality agreement.

Your participation in this research is free and voluntary. You can choose to end the interview or decline to answer particular questions at any time. You may withdraw from the study at any point. Given these precautions, you should not experience any harm in agreeing to participate in my research. In agreeing to participate, you will be able to air some of your concerns and you will make a contribution to knowledge in this area.

If you have any questions about the research project, please contact me, Linda Cohen, by email at linda@mun.ca ;or by phone at 737-4486, leaving only your name and number on my dedicated message manager if I am not in, or by mail at the Department of Sociology, MUN.

This project has been certified as meeting appropriate ethical standards by the Interdisciplinary Committee on Ethics in Human Research at Memorial University of Newfoundland. If you have ethical concerns about the research, such as your rights as a participant or my conduct as a researcher, you can contact the chair of the ICEHR at icehr@mun.ca or by telephone at 737 8368.

Thank you!

Sincerely,

Linda Cohen, PhD candidate, Department of Sociology, Memorial University of Newfoundland

linda@mun.ca

- 1) Yes, I agree to participate in Linda Cohen's research under the conditions specified above and using the specific research instruments I have initialled below.**

Name and contact information:

Signature: _____

Date: _____

- 2) I agree _____ / disagree _____ that the interview will be audiotaped.**

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Please initial the appropriate boxes:

	I agree to participate in:	I decline to participate in:
<i>SF-12v.2® Health Surveys</i>		
Task diaries		
Open ended interview		
To be audio-taped		

Researcher: (Linda Cohen)

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Appendix 1-D: SF-12v.2® Health Survey

This *SF-12v2™ Health Survey* is copyrighted by QualityMetric and was purchased by me specifically for this PhD research. A description of the survey can be found at <http://www.qualitymetric.com> . The following is a copy of the questionnaire retrieved from http://www.qualitymetric.com/products/surveys/pdf/SF-12v2_Standard_Sample.pdf

Your Health and Well-Being

This survey asks for your views about your health. This information will help keep track of how you feel and how well you are able to do your usual activities. *Thank you for completing this survey!*

For each of the following questions, please mark an in the one box that best describes your answer.

1. In general, would you say your health is:

Excellent	Very good	Good	Fair	Poor
▼	▼	▼	▼	▼
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

2. The following questions are about activities you might do during a typical day. Does your health now limit you in these activities? If so, how much?

	Yes, limited a lot	Yes, limited a little	No, not limited at all
	▼	▼	▼
• <u>Moderate activities</u> , such as moving a table, pushing a vacuum cleaner, bowling, or playing golf.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Climbing <u>several</u> flights of stairs.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

SF-12v2™ Health Survey © 1992-2002 by Health Assessment Lab, Medical Outcomes Trust and QualityMetric Incorporated. All rights reserved.
SF-12v2 is a registered trademark of Medical Outcomes Trust.
(IQOLA SF-12v2 Standard, English (Canada))

3. During the past 4 weeks, how much of the time have you had any of the following problems with your work or other regular daily activities as a result of your physical health?

	All of the time	Most of the time	Some of the time	A little of the time	None of the time
Accomplished less than you would like.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Were limited in the kind of work or other activities.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

4. During the past 4 weeks, how much of the time have you had any of the following problems with your work or other regular daily activities as a result of any emotional problems (such as feeling depressed or anxious)?

	All of the time	Most of the time	Some of the time	A little of the time	None of the time
Accomplished less than you would like.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Did work or other activities less carefully than usual.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

5. During the past 4 weeks, how much did pain interfere with your normal work (including both work outside the home and housework)?

Not at all	A little bit	Moderately	Quite a bit	Extremely
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

6. These questions are about how you feel and how things have been with you during the past 4 weeks. For each question, please give the one answer that comes closest to the way you have been feeling. How much of the time during the past 4 weeks...

	All of the time	Most of the time	Some of the time	A little of the time	None of the time
Have you felt calm and peaceful?.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Did you have a lot of energy?.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Have you felt downhearted and depressed?.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

7. During the past 4 weeks, how much of the time has your physical health or emotional problems interfered with your social activities (like visiting with friends, relatives, etc.)?

All of the time	Most of the time	Some of the time	A little of the time	None of the time
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Thank you for completing these questions!

Appendix 1-E: Demographic survey

Demographic background: The answers to the following questions will be gathered at the beginning of the research, preferably face to face but possibly by phone or email. The information will be used to select participants for the larger study and in a basic analysis of the sample characteristics.

Age category: Circle one of the following:

18 – 25

26 – 40

40 – 65

Over 65

Sex: _____

Highest educational qualification _____

Marital status: _____

Spouse's occupation and employment status (full-time, part-time, temporary, or other):

Number of dependents: _____ Ages: _____

Employment history as a contractual, starting with the current contract

Length of current contract: _____

Number of courses/ labs you are responsible for under this contract: _____

Amount of new preparation involved: _____

Years/ months as a contractual instructor? _____

Years/ months at current institution? _____

List of teaching position(s) you have held in the past 2 years in terms of length of tenure and employment status (full -time, temporary, part-time, type of contract):

How many hours per day do you work during these employment contracts?

If you held any other jobs during the last two years, please list and describe the proportion of time these occupied (approximate amounts):

What proportion of time did you spend studying for a doctoral or other program during this time (approximate amounts)

Thank – you!

Appendix 1-F: Task diaries

Instructions:

1. For each task diary, I will email / phone you to remind you to complete it on one of the working days for the following week.
2. The task diary is in a Word file so you have two options in filling it in. The first is to fill it in as a Word document and email it back to me at linda@mun.ca . The second option is to print it off and fill it in by hand, mailing it back to me, Linda Cohen, Sociology, through internal mail or notifying me of where to pick it up.
3. Whenever you get a chance through that day, enter the activities you did at approximately the times you did them. This can include domestic, child care, or recreational activities in addition to anything you did that was work or research – related. Please include as much detail as you can.
4. At the end of the day, please indicate whether or not this was a typical day. If it was not, what made it different? I encourage you to include as much detail about the day as you can.
5. I will collect the task diaries, or you can mail them back to me, Linda Cohen, Sociology, through internal mail envelope provided, or email the Word files back to linda@mun.ca .

Thank-you!

Task diary

Time	Activity
Before 6 a.m. To 8 am,	
8 to 9 a.m.	
9 to 10 a.m.	
10 to 11 a.m.	
11 a.m. to 12 p.m.	
12 to 1 p.m.	
1 to 2 p.m.	
2 to 3 p.m.	
3 to 4 p.m.	
4 to 5 p.m.	

5 to 6 p.m.	
6 to 9 p.m.	
9 p.m. to 12 a.m.	

Was this typical working day for you? If not, what was different about it? Please feel free to add as much detail as you wish about the day and attach sheets if necessary.

Appendix 1-G: Guidelines for the semi-structured interview

Only those respondents who have signed the consent form will be interviewed with the following interview schedule.

1. What has been your work history as a contractual university teacher?
2. How does contractual work currently 'work' in your unit – e.g. how many are there in the unit, what is the hiring process?
3. From the task diaries, please describe a typical day's activities. Are these affected by either job strain (high demand, low control)? or by the overall insecurity of working as a contractual? Or by any other factors relating to home or work?
4. In reference to the SF-12v2™ Health Survey , please describe what you consider 'health' to be and rank your own health status. Has your health been affected by working as a contractual?
5. Identify a recent "critical incident," a significant experience at work (either positive or negative). Describe your reactions to this experience and describe any job conditions related to these reaction(s). How did you cope with this situation? Were there any immediate or long-term health consequences of these events and of your coping strategies?
6. Are you familiar with this university's EAP program, Sexual Harassment and the Respectful Workplace policies? Do you think contractual would avail of these services readily? Is there a need that you've observed or would they be helpful?
7. Is there anything else that you feel I should include in this study?

Supplementary questions to be used throughout the interview:

Because this is an open-ended interview process, the following questions will be used when and if they are appropriate.

Situational context

General question: How does contractual work ‘work’ in your unit – e.g. who gets hired, how many are there in the unit, what is the hiring process?

Specific questions to delve into if needed:

How are contracts allotted and how has this changed, if it has, since you started work here?

Where are you in the hierarchy of work and how does this affect your relationships with those around you?

How is the administration viewing contractual workers, in your experience?

How does the union facilitate or assist contractuels, in your experience?

Job insecurity and health

Has working as a contractual affected your health in any way?

To what degree are these health effects attributable to job strain (high demand, low control) or job insecurity or both, and how?

If you experienced a health problem, what sources of support are available to you?

Have you had any experiences at work as a contractual instructor that you attribute to or associate specifically with gendered expectations? such as treatment by students, administrators, et cetera?

