Chapter 3
Trolling in the Cultural and Creative Industries

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ABSTRACT

This chapter presents an international state-of-the-art literature review of abusive trolling experienced by workers in the creative and cultural industries (CCIs), bringing target experiences and organizational/ occupational perspectives to the forefront and contributing to the still-evolving understanding of trolling. The abusive trolling encountered by creative and cultural workers essentially reflects workplace cyberbullying at the interpersonal level stemming from external sources, as captured by D'Cruz and Noronha's 'varieties of workplace bullying' framework, and provides evidence for the category-based cyber abuse at the workplace. Apart from discussing the responses of creative and cultural workers to abusive trolling, interventions employed to manage trolling in the CCIs are reviewed and future research directions are forwarded.

INTRODUCTION

Trolling is a recent, widespread and international phenomenon, which has been identified as the most discussed topic on the Internet in the second decade of 21st century (Bishop, 2103a; Sanfilippo, Fichman, & Yang, 2018). Though the meaning attached to trolling is still evolving, two broad strands are discernible. On the one hand, trolling involves luring or baiting others to initiate pointless conversations on online communities/forums to sabotage discussions and derive personal enjoyment from such disruptive behaviours (e.g., wasting members' time in a forum by engaging in futile arguments) (Binns, 2012;

Hardaker, 2010; Hopkinson, 2013). On the other hand, trolling involves offensive remarks, personal attacks and hostile and aggressive online behaviour directed against others in order to provoke reactions (e.g., posting offensive comments on tribute pages) (Bishop, 2013a; Jane, 2012; Herring, Job-Sluder, Scheckler, & Barab, 2002; Lumsden & Morgan, 2017), indicative of cyberbullying (Cruz, Seo, & Rex, 2018; Farley, Coyne, & D'Cruz, 2018).

The present chapter provides an international state-of-the-art literature review of abusive trolling faced by workers in the creative and cultural industries (CCIs). While the CCIs are major drivers of economic growth (Boccella & Salerno, 2016; Flew, 2002), their features of flexible work/freelancing, competition and long working hours create conditions conducive for workplace bullying (Federation of Entertainment Unions [FEU], 2013; Hennekam & Benett, 2017; Siebert & Wilson, 2013). Creative and cultural workers who value autonomy, originality, self-expression, recognition and self-realization are drawn to work in the CCIs; however, they become disillusioned due to the precarious and exploitative nature of employment, which fuels mistreatment and victimization (FEU, 2013; Hesmondhalgh & Baker, 2010). Yet, alongside such abuse from internal sources (D'Cruz & Noronha, 2019), having to interface with customers and clients, often in the form of audiences such as readers, viewers, fans, and so on, can expose creative and cultural workers to harassment from external sources (Mendonca, D'Cruz, & Noronha, 2018). With creative and cultural labour often undertaken through computer-mediated communication (CMC) and/or entailing the use of information and communication technologies and devices (ICTDs) (Flew, 2017b; Hesmondhalgh & Baker, 2010), these workers are known to face abusive trolling from their audiences.

The chapter contributes in several ways. First, in reporting targets' experiences of abusive trolling, the chapter brings this important protagonist to the forefront, deviating from earlier trends of focusing on online interactions rather than target experiences (Bishop, 2013a; Coles & West, 2016; Hardaker, 2010, 2013). Second, in focusing on the CCIs, the chapter brings an occupational and/or organizational perspective to the discussion, reinforcing Sanfilippo and colleagues' (2017) argument that context influences how trolling unfolds and is experienced and defined. Third, in locating abusive trolling within the 'varieties of workplace bullying' framework (D'Cruz & Noronha, 2019), the chapter enriches both the workplace bullying and trolling literatures, adding depth to each conceptualization.

The chapter begins by discussing the concept of trolling and providing an overview of the CCIs. Following an elaboration of the abusive trolling experiences of various sectoral/sub-sectoral groups and social categories in the CCIs, responses and interventions are described. The chapter closes with avenues for future research.

UNDERSTANDING TROLLING

A review of studies examining the concept of trolling presents a diverse, complex, contradictory and often confusing understanding of the term. Trolling has been used in the literature to cover a variety of negative online behaviours with lack of uniformity in definitions (Cook, Schaafsma, & Antheunis, 2018). The early understanding of trolling depicts it as a relatively harmless behaviour of baiting readers to engage and react in discussion forums (Bishop, 2014b; Hardaker, 2010; Matthews & Goerzen, 2019; Lumsden & Morgan, 2017; Schwartz, 2008). However, the meaning of trolling has evolved from provoking others for mutual enjoyment to harassing others by posting offensive remarks to seek personal amusement (Bishop, 2013a; Bishop, 2014b). In addition, there is often a disconnect between the schol-

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