

Faculti Summary

<https://faculti.net/pregnant-at-work-low-wage-workers-power-and-temporal-injustice/>

The speaker is a cultural anthropologist specializing in reproductive healthcare, focusing on prenatal care and abortion access. After researching in Cuba, they shifted to studying barriers faced by low-income women in accessing reproductive screenings, notably the impact of unpredictable work schedules in the low-wage service sector on their ability to receive care. This video exploration was fueled by a notable investigative article on Starbucks' scheduling practices, which highlighted the chaos created for employees' personal lives.

The speaker examined how these scheduling practices adversely affect pregnant workers, who struggle to attend prenatal care due to their inflexible work environments, which often result in choosing between jobs and healthcare. They emphasized the societal and health inequalities produced by these temporal injustices, particularly affecting women of color and low-income women, who historically bear a higher maternal and infant mortality risk.

Through qualitative research, including interviews with pregnant service workers at a safety net hospital in New York City, it was found that many women returned to work shortly after childbirth due to a lack of paid leave. This video pressure leads them to delay or miss important prenatal appointments, which can have dire consequences for their health and their babies. The speaker argues that these issues arise from a broader context of economic and social inequalities, worsened by legislative gaps regarding workers' rights, particularly around time and scheduling.

The speaker concludes with a call for policy change to recognize and address the ways time is organized within labor systems, advocating that improving the structure of work schedules is essential for social justice and the well-being of marginalized groups.