

Faculti Summary

<https://faculti.net/the-making-of-the-good-bad-job-how-algorithmic-management-manufactures-consent-through-constant-and-confined-choices/>

This video is a transcription of a presentation discussing the author's personal experiences and research on the gig economy, specifically focusing on algorithmic management within ride-hailing services. It begins with the author's reflections on their mother's job loss during the Great Recession and the challenges she faced in finding new employment. This video motivates the author to study how individuals strive to maintain their socioeconomic status, often turning to gig work.

The presentation touches on the concept of algorithmic management, where algorithms control various HR functions in gig economy companies like Uber and Instacart. The author explores why gig workers often express satisfaction despite the precarious nature of their jobs, drawing on sociologist Michael Burawoy's work on consent in labor contexts.

Through qualitative research methods, including driving for a ride-hailing service and conducting interviews with other drivers, the author identifies tactics gig workers use in relation to algorithmic management. These tactics are categorized into "engagement" and "deviance," with workers making small choices within the constraints of the algorithm.

Engagement tactics involve following the system's expectations, while deviance includes actions that push against these rules. The author notes that while companies are aware of some deviant behaviors (like inflating ratings or selectively rejecting rides), they often tolerate them because the ultimate goal is to keep workers online and engaged with the platform.

The research also looks at how these dynamics might differ in global contexts, especially in the Global South, where gig work may be perceived as more prestigious compared to traditional taxi driving. Overall, the presentation emphasizes the complexities of autonomy and consent in algorithmically managed work environments.