MANAGING BOUNDARIES WHILE WORKING FROM HOME, 1960-PRESENT

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The COVID-19 pandemic has been heralded as a watershed moment for remote work, an exodus of the American workforce that will never fully reverse. As major corporations debate returning to the office full-time, and other workers press or are pressed into

returning to the office, this panel situates the present realities of remote work within telework's long history. From the paperless office to the electronic cottage, much of the focus in mainstream discourses surrounding telework has been on demonstrating the technological feasibility of leaving workers at home and workforce adaptability, with secondary celebrations of ecological soundness and potential for employment growth. Discourses around the benefit of telework also frequently draw on blanket statements about what remote work affords workers—from wellness and eschewing commute times, to increasing flexibility—but do not directly take up the lived quotidian experiences of doing labor in this configuration. This panel intervenes by yoking the politics and fantasies of remote work with worker experience during work from home, especially of self-management of both individual affect, group and power dynamics, and environment. Within this frame, this collection of papers suggests that, while remote work suggests a dislocation of office and home and the creation of a third space, the overlays of work and home are always top of mind for individual workers, whether in their homes with children or while traveling as "digital nomads." The panel suggests that navigating this collapse creates a "third space," and is a site of ever-present negotiation for workers, both individually and in social dynamics across organizations. This panel works across a number of methods including ethnography, archival research of both born-digital and traditional objects and draws on interviews and survey data. The panel points to not only how workers act in front of the screen, but what is supporting remote work off and behind it: domestic architectures, impression management, and paid and unpaid forms of domestic labor.

The panel opens with a pair of papers that look at the historical development of work from home in order to situate the COVID-19 pandemic and its use of remote work as both a form of rupture and as a continuation of the logics, fantasies, and environments that pre-date this massive and rapid expansion into remote work. In "Home/Work: The Long History of the Future of Work," Devon Powers reads the history of progress and futural narratives attached to telework, and the renovations both material and ideological to the spaces that are enfolded into remote work: home and the office. The author pays special attention to the collapse of work and home, and the creation of a third space that is actually only an expansion of an existing one—the everywhere office. In "Make It Work: Hiding Children in Telework," Hannah Zeavin takes up the feminization of remote work in the context of feminist theories of reproductive labor, to argue that work from home is subtended by the fantasy that, by working from home, women might "have it all": they can do childcare and paid labor at once. The author examines how workers have negotiated this collapse of waged and unwaged labor by disappearing and hiding the visual and sonic evidence of children during work from home. Nancy Baym, Rachel Bergmann, et al look to the management of the worker's own visibility in "Video On/Off: Managing Visibility in Remote Videoconferencing" with 44% of American workers suddenly home in the COVID-19 pandemic. Baym et al ran a five-month longitudinal diary study of meetings at a large technology company between April and August 2020, comprised of 849 employees. The paper looks at reasons for (dis)comfort with appearing on camera during work and how workers negotiate the contradictions of on and off. In "Abruptly Online: Public Employees' Adaptation to Virtual Communication in Times of Crisis," Sierra Bray and Cynthia Barboza-Wilkes consider the special category of public employees and the challenges and benefits of work from home in a group of workers who had a novel relationship to working online. Andrea

Alarcon, in "Outsourcing the Home: the Digital Nomad Tactic" looks at the apotheosis of work from home in the rise of the "digital nomad." Alarcon intervenes by pointing to the unacknowledged support and costs of "nomadic life" in the city of Medellin and the workers who travel and collapse the identities of tourist and laborer, and vacation with work.

HOME/WORK: THE LONG HISTORY OF THE FUTURE OF WORK

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Last spring, as the COVID-19 pandemic upended normalcy for millions of Americans, the concept of "working from home"—doing one's job away from a central office—went from marginal to mainstream. Many commenters eagerly interpreted the shift as less a temporary response to a crisis than a critical tipping point ushering in a new, more flexible, and more decentralized future. "I predict that when the coronavirus is finally on the wane… the return to the cubicle will be slowed, and at some companies, it won't happen at all," explained William Arruda in *Forbes* in March 2020. With companies like Facebook, Slack and Twitter declaring that their employees may work from home indefinitely, and big-city landlords panicked about a crash in office real estate, Arruda's claim seemed poise to come true. As Clive Thompson wrote for the *New York Times* in June 2020, "For workers wondering right now if they're ever going back to the office, the most honest answer is this: Even if they do, the office might never be the same."
Yet these heady declarations about revolution in American workplaces usually fail to consider that the nature of the office is constantly changing—indeed, the office has always "never [been] the same." On the one hand, working from home—otherwise known as remote work, telework, telecommuting, homework, and many other names—has been a key part of visions of the future for decades, thus making the current advocacy for the practice less novel than it might otherwise seem. For example, in the February 1967 issue of *The Futurist* magazine, a publication of the World Future Society, Richard L. Shetler, president of the General Learning Corporation, declared that "for a great many activities, the home may become the most efficient place to work"; Shetler envisioned a future in which "the present pattern of morning workbound and evening homebound traffic jams will become memories of an annoying past." Alvin Toffler's 1980 book *The Third Wave,* went further, extolling the virtues of the "electronic cottage" and the home-centric society that would inevitably arise in its wake. "[T]he new production system could shift literally millions of jobs out of the factories and offices… and right back where they came from originally: the home" he wrote (Toffler 1980: 194). Shetler, Toffler and other proponents of working from home conceived of the transition as both inevitable and beneficial: a welcome response to technology; a way to provide access to the workforce for disenfranchised populations, including working mothers and the disabled; fuel for globalization; an exercise in environmentalism; and a logical answer to the changing temporalities of work (Ellison 2004: 1; Toffler 1980).
The current frenzy around working from home also has neglects the fuzzy distinctions between home and work that have been morphing over many decades. Though

currently it is common to discuss "home" and "work" as distinct spaces, clearly defined and even opposed to one another, that has not always been the case. Prior to industrialization, most work was done from home; wealthy people have long had libraries or studies where work could be conducted (Yuko 2020). Industrialization, including public transit and automobiles, drove the rise of the central office building and, in turn, the idea that "work" and "home" were separate, often at a substantial physical distance from one another. One marker of the return of white-collar work to the home in the post-war period is the rise of the "home office," a trend that began to take off around 1960 (Bartnett 1960). Over the ensuing decades, domestic spaces have continued to respond to the realities of longer workdays, dual income households, weekend work, freelancing, subcontracting, and gig work by becoming de facto workplaces, complete with desks, ergonomic chairs, and the latest communication infrastructure. As this has happened, workplaces have embraced homey touches such as comfortable furniture, prominent family pictures, and miniature refrigerators, all intended to make staying at the office longer more comfortable. Rather than strictly divided, "home" and "work" are better understood as weighty signifiers engaged in a complicated, sometimes antagonistic embrace.

My paper will attend to these complexities through an examination of the long history of home/work, as understood via futurist imaginaries of working. In particular, I am interested in how, why, and under what conditions the convergence of homespace and workspace have been envisioned as futuristic, innovative, or otherwise evidence of progress. Three specific trends since the mid-20th century will help to frame my analysis: 1) the rise of the home office; 2) the rise of the "office home"; and 3) the rise of "third space," or everywhere office.

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MAKE IT WORK: HIDING CHILDREN IN TELEWORK

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Asked for a comment on the impeachment of the President of South Korea, Professor Robert Kelly appeared on BBC Live in 2017. As he began to speak, first one young child, then a second, burst into the shot in his home office. They were quickly followed by their mother Jung-a Kim, who franticly pulled the children out of their father's remote television studio. The video quickly went viral and was viewed hundreds of millions of times. It was cherished for its inadvertently comic timing but was subject to (mis)interpretations that leapt from the Internet into the family's real life: commenters sympathized with Kelly, shared how often a similar situation had happened to them, chided his wife for her lapse, and racistly miscast Jung-a Kim as a childcare provider (or "the nanny"). The viral reception turned so heated that the family had to use security guards at their home and children's schools for a year. Beyond the vagaries of virality, the video encapsulates both the real labor and fantasies that subtend telework. Kelly's strategies for separating work from home in telework failed: his children didn't stay put in their planned activities and his wife, who was in the midst of caring for two children, was just one step behind.

The fantasy of remote work is an inherent contradiction, in which the flexibility of home work allows for the care of family and domestic space and simultaneously the home can be bracketed so that productive labor—always via the notion of suspending reproductive labor—can occur. This ideal is breached when these two spaces overtly collide; to keep the fantasy going children must be kept out of the frame (although the pandemic has relaxed the norms and feeling rules around this question somewhat, for some workers). Once children are in the frame, the domestic and the office hopelessly clash in remote work (and can damage careers and become sites of quotidian shame, let alone internet stardom). Kelly was able to rely on a home office, and on a partner to perform childcare, even if these strategies momentarily failed to keep his kids off screen. What of those workers without childcare? How do they manage to preserve an extra-domestic work environment within the home? In this paper, I will look at the strategies deployed from below (by individual workers) and above (from architects, corporations) to hide children during work from home, as well as the covert and overt pressures communicated to workers to do so. After opening with Kelly's video documenting a failure to separate the home from work, the paper traces attempts to do just that: from offline infrastructures to the cottage industry of consulting on professional Zoom appearances that sprang up around the start of the COVID-19 pandemic. The paper then offers in parallel a genealogy of those ad hoc strategies that have addressed various forms of intrusion from the domestic into remote work, read over and against the feminist and/or feminizing arguments for work from home and the structures that supposedly accommodate these forms of labor.

The history and conceptualization of remote work itself implies an impossible disarticulation of space in which one is neither at work nor at home. Much has been made about the loss of the "third space" (the bowling alley, the bar, the library) in

COVID-19 life; but many have also lost a distinction—in so far as it existed—between work and home, two spaces becoming one. In parallel, in the decades-long history of telework, dislocating labor from an office has been forecast as a necessary future and a site of liberation. Working from home and eschewing the office has been heralded as an ecological necessity, good for individual wellness, and for corporate productivity. Telework has additionally particularly addressed itself to women via—and despite—this contradiction of being nowhere and somewhere at once and has relied on the notion of a feminized "having it all" and the "flexibility" necessary to accomplish it, in order to collapse waged labor and domestic work, where having it all implies some form of difficult or impossible simultaneity, being everything at once in order to have everything.

In order to support this oft-feminized fantasy of a freer future, with neither the full drudgery of office nor the domination of housework, domestic architectures (Brooks, Shanken, Jacobs) and infrastructures offline have supported the possibilities of teleworking: rooms are configured to dampen sonic leak, the increase in children's homework and after-schooling allows some separation from domestic labor and child (Patton), and the home office evolves as a distinct, technologized space, to which domestic computing is introduced (Nooney). Telework has been coded unevenly into the very artifice of middle class homelife since the 1960s (Patton, Huws, Duffy, Gregg). These traditional physical architectures have addressed themselves to the challenge of containing the chaos of the domestic and readying individuals for productivity and work (Spigel, Rankin). But women faced with the realities of working from home while raising children have seen, across this history, that these physical separations are not enough. Like Professor Kelly, these workers have seen that, *pace* Virginia Woolf, a room of one's own is not enough—if one even has that.

Therefore, additional tactics have shaped the realities of work from home by women managing both the domestic and paid labor. Beginning in the 1960s, women who worked together at home or were self-employed in their own kitchen table businesses deployed, as one example, tape loops of office sounds (Hicks) and typewriters to transport their tele-clients to the office and cover over the sound of children who were sitting and playing nearby. In our contemporary moment, designing spaces for Zoom use is only one mode of control over environments: Zoom backgrounds, muting, turning the camera off, multitasking all come into play in managing the signs of home life in work.

Professor Kelly's viral video lets us see the deepest truth about remote work: it renders home and office indistinct without collapsing the separate and antagonistic roles of the person involved in those spaces and activities. In order to work from home, one must first disappear home from work. In order to make use of the supposed flexibility in caring for children telework promises, the children must not fully appear or exist on the clock.

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VIDEO ON/OFF: MANAGING VISIBILITY IN REMOTE VIDEOCONFERENCING

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Introduction

In 2020, information workers around the world were sent home to a world of pandemic videoconferencing. At the height of the shutdowns, 44% of US workers reported working from home full time (Statista, 2020). Within months, the teleconferencing platform Zoom

reported a 30-fold increase in daily downloads and more than 300 million daily meeting participants. Microsoft Teams meetings with video in addition to voice increased from 21% to 43% worldwide. With this rise in videoconferencing, both academic and journalistic attention turned to "Zoom fatigue" (Bailenson, 2021; Fosslien & Duffy, 2020; Wiederhold, 2020).

Some of this fatigue may come from blurred boundaries between office and home. Veijola and Jokinen (2008, pp. 170-171) describe the contemporary work environment as "hostessing society," in which feminized "care, affects, and communication are constitutive aspects of the work performances in new work." Videoconferencing from home, employees around the world faced an increased demand to allow their colleagues to see them in their private spaces, a sense of "hostessing" more literal than these scholars foresaw. How did people decide how visible to be while working from home? We argue that the work of hostessing helps us understand many of the ways people manage video visibility and gives insight into reasons it can grow so tiring.

Method
We ran a five-month longitudinal diary study of meetings at Microsoft from April-August 2020 (Rintel et al., 2020). 849 employees, representing nearly all regions and organizations within the global company, wrote up to 24 diary entries each about their experiences of remote work, with an emphasis on meetings. They were given eight topics as prompts, such as productivity, interaction, multitasking, and approaches to meetings. 357 participants also responded to polls on topics like spontaneous interaction. Here, we analyze responses to a poll about turning video off, and a subset of diary entries with keywords such as *video, appearance, expression, face, gesture, nonverbal, voice*, and others. After narrowing these entries to those about managing the writer's own visibility, we had entries from 473 participants. We coded using an iterative process, moving between data and discussion, refining the coding categories, looking both for reasons that participants turned video on and off, and underlying logics that guide that reasoning.

Findings
Participants identified technical, cognitive, and social reasons for video use and non-use. Participants described turning video off because of poor network connections, either as a genuine reason to preserve bandwidth, or as a believable excuse when they did not want to be seen. Video choices were also made to manage attention. Participants turned video on to help them focus and turned if off to multitask. Especially in informational meetings, participants describe turning video off to tend to their bodies and homes by moving around, taking a walk, spending time outdoors, or doing chores.

Participants also described three broad categories of social rationales for turning video on or off: self-presentation, managing others 'social needs, and managing the relational needs of the team. These speak to the affective work videoconferencing entails.

Part of the work of hostessing is ensuring that self and home are presentable. Participants described themselves turning video off because of concerns about presentability. Many reported leaving video off because of the state of the space they

were in (see Krasnoff, 2020), family interruptions, and feelings of self-consciousness regarding appearance. Participants described intentional strategies to control their presence when they did turn video on. To constrain what is seen, they limited, blurred, and concealed what they did not want shared. At the far end of the spectrum of attitudes towards visibility were participants who embraced the affective labor, making significant efforts to ensure their video presence was well conveyed, including room switches for more natural lighting, proximity to routers for better video quality, tech upgrades for microphone and camera clarity. They put effort into aesthetically pleasing backgrounds, free from clutter and peppered with personal touches that could serve as conversation starters.

Kirsner (2020) and Lerner (2020) have described the sense of speaking into a void on video. Most (64%) respondents to one of our polls said they wished they could see those who turned video off to have more information about their attentiveness and reactions. Participants responded to this by making themselves more visible to serve others 'social needs. They exaggerated their facial and nonverbal responses or performed eye contact by staring into their cameras. Entries describe how, despite suffering in comparison to in-person meetings, video was still the best of the available options for communicating the physical and emotional cues they deeply missed. Many described video as adding social and engagement value, rather than improving work efficiency or output.

Much as a hostess might turn on the music and fine-tune lighting, participants described using video to create particular atmospheres that would benefit the whole of the meeting. People describe using video to create atmospheres of professionalism, focus, enhanced communication, and sociality. One participant described turning their video on to "inspire others" to stay present [P837]; another used it to "break down the barriers" of geographically distributed work [P835].

The extent to which people attended to these concerns varied depending on the meeting context, individual differences, and emergent norms. They described being more likely to keep video off in large, informational meetings, or ones held outside of business hours (such as early mornings or late at night). Far from unified in their perception, people varied in their preferences. In one poll, we asked participants about the relative importance of eleven possible reasons for turning video off–each of these was rated very important by some, and very unimportant by others. Peer and organizational norms were also important: People reported looking to others in the meeting (particularly meeting leaders or customers) for cues on whether to use video.

Conclusion
What appear to be simple decisions about whether to turn video on or off in meetings illustrate complex tensions between self-presentation, organizational norms, and navigating the messiness of living our domestic and work lives in one space. In some cases, the choice to have video off is obvious: the meeting norms support it, the need to protect oneself is high, and others 'needs are not served by your video presence. In other cases, the choice to have video on is equally clear: others have their videos on,

you feel confident in your appearance and your domestic context, and others will be well-served if they can see your reactions.

To turn video off as the context shifts from this first scenario toward the latter is to refuse the hostessing work of assuring your presence is aesthetically pleasing, your space inviting, and others 'needs put first. To turn it on and focus one's visibility on attending to others as the context shifts from the latter scenario to the first is to heighten the work of that labor.

Whatever the future holds, it seems likely to bring plenty of videoconferencing. The informal, unpaid affective labor that eased social interactions at work will be located in the home and mediated in new ways, giving rise to new kinds of hostessing work and, with that, new kinds of fatigue.

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ABRUPTLY ONLINE: PUBLIC EMPLOYEES' ADAPTATION TO VIRTUAL COMMUNICATION IN TIMES OF CRISIS

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Introduction

Bureaucracy and red tape can cause public organizations to lag behind the private sector in implementing new software and remote work setups. Thus, the migration to telecommuting and the introduction to online meeting platforms during the COVID-19 pandemic presented a sudden, new technological frontier for many employees in local government who had been used to working in-person for decades. This scenario causes us to consider how migrating work interactions online (e.g., formal team meetings, informal work-related conversations, or communication with city residents) may present problems and/or break down barriers for this distinctive group of employees—people who have recently (and abruptly) encountered online work setups.

Literature review / theoretical constructs (abridged)

To shed light on the complexities of this migration of work-related communication to online spaces, we explore three spheres of literature: (1) the diffusion of technological innovations (Rogers, 1995), (2) impression management in computer-mediated communication (Baym, 1995; Walther, 2007), and (3) affordances of information and communications technologies (Faraj and Azad, 2012). Recent studies engaging with this scholarship have analyzed how adaptation to online work has manifested across many sectors (Mayowski, Rubio, and Norman, 2019; Pols and Willems, 2011; Miranda and Carter, 2005), but as of 2021, only one study has explored how employees in local

government have contended with telecommuting (deVries, Tummers, and Bekkers, 2019). Much still remains unknown about how sudden, forced adaptation to online work—especially in sectors unaccustomed to quick change—creates unique scenarios that result in distinct psychological and logistical challenges and benefits for employees.

Research questions

With the above research as a theoretical lens, we explore how local government employees describe their experiences associated with work-related communication as interactions transition from in-person to virtual, with a particular focus on how they describe (RQ1) their <u>emotional experiences</u>, (RQ2) perceived <u>challenges</u> and (RQ3) perceived <u>opportunities</u> in this new online environment.

Method

In April 2020, as California initiated its first stay-at-home order in response to COVID-19, we launched a mixed-methods research project combining waves of survey data, 60 semi-structured interviews, and daily diary prompts from 182 people working from more than 10 municipal governments, resulting in more than 1,500 completed daily survey entries. We analyzed our longitudinal, qualitative data in two phases. First, to understand the way local government employees have adapted to telecommuting, we coded the diary data for any mentions of meetings or work interactions and used a grounded approach to identify common themes that addressed benefits, challenges, and emotional experiences related to this telecommuting adaption. Second, we complemented diary codes with a thematic analysis of 60 semi-structured interviews to allow participants to tell their stories with less constraints. This analysis resulted in the following themes.

Findings

Emotional experiences (RQ1)

Local government employees described an ebb and flow of both negative and positive emotional experiences associated with their work-related communication as their interactions transitioned from in-person to virtual. Participants conveyed a range of emotions—from frustration and irritation, to excitement and delight—related to their new online work setup. Respondents experienced these types of emotions as they (1) prepared for, (2) engaged in, and (3) unwound from online interactions throughout their day, showing a "before-during-and after" path of emotions associated with their online work interactions.

Challenges (RQ2)

Local government employees described technical and logistical problems ranging from software and hardware issues to a lack of dedicated space at home as major sources of stress—compounded by an increased workload during the pandemic. The transition to telework professionally combined with the stay-at-home order personally created a

culture in which it was assumed employees should be more accessible. With the new ease of gathering teleworkers together, employees found themselves juggling an increased quantity of meetings. They struggled to find time to prepare for each meeting and described feeling overwhelmed when they were asked to switch gears rapidly from one to the next. Additionally, many participants shared challenges balancing their work schedules with those of roommates, partners, and/or children who were competing over limited computer access and quiet spaces to accommodate work or distance learning.

Opportunities (RQ3)

Despite the challenges, local government employees still described a number of benefits related to the transition to telecommuting. With respect to work-related communication, some employees appeared delighted with how easily they could coordinate people's schedules for online meetings, describing it as much less cumbersome than trying to get multiple people physically into the same room. In particular, it became easier for many employees to access and share information, given fewer scheduling and space constraints. Employees also appeared to value the social connection and authenticity among colleagues in meetings. In the absence of informal side conversations in the hallways, more groups began to dedicate time to check in on one another's well-being as an agenda item, institutionalizing practices that helped to create a sense of belonging (including bringing in therapists to engage with the teams virtually).

Implications

We see different emotional patterns and power dynamics emerge depending on the number of people in online work-related interactions (i.e., dyads versus groups) and whom participants are communicating with (e.g., supervisors, peers, or the public). In addition, within Crenshaw's (1989) framework of intersectionality, women of color expressed more pressure to suppress negative emotions and amplify positive emotions in online interactions to avoid compounding racist and sexist stereotypes which penalize women at this intersection. What is common across demographics is how participants describe seeking autonomy, competence (both emotional and technological), and relatedness during times of crisis—psychological needs which are underexplored in relation to the topic of technology adaptation.

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OUTSOURCING THE HOME: THE LOCATION-INDEPENDENT WORKER'S TACTIC

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Traditional outsourcing done by companies tends to practice the finding of not only cheap, but also good and specific skilled labor abroad. Tourism, which is considered an export (cite) has worked in similar ways, with countries and destinations branding themselves in order to cater to specific niches. The local government of Medellin, Colombia, has been on an aggressive campaign to reinvent its international image, often written about via the narrative of a comeback kid after the cartel violence of the 80s. Currently, the mayor aims to make Medellin an innovation hub, using its official

"commitment to innovation" to pull in foreign investment. Independently yet relying on these official efforts, it has grown as a hub for location-independent workers, remote workers and digital nomads: workers who continuously travel and are popularly portrayed through laptop-by-the-beach photos on Instagram. The label conjures the meeting of the always lingering telework with an unlikely cultural counterpart, the transnational backpacker. It implies the permanency of work and a work identity online, with the mobility and shifting of the body.

Kiener (1996) (cited by Hamington, 2010) explains the gendered division in hospitality activities, with male activities as public displays of ownership and physicality, while female hospitality as domestic, religious, and ornamental. I classify as "masculine" that which the government aims to sell: modernity and the availability of infrastructure required, such as good internet connection. However, what I found to be the biggest appeal has been classified as feminized (undervalued and often underseen) work. Drawing from a larger ethnographic study in Medellin, Colombia, started in 2018, this paper argues that as independently-located workers can work from home, and "home" can be anywhere, a hub city's role as "hostess" becomes its identity in a transnational supply chain (Tsing, 2009) of information work, replicating existing hierarchies in global work.

Due to the increasing fissurization of work in the "global north", where costs of health insurance, training and office infrastructure are being shifted to individual workers (Gray & Suri, 2019; Weil, 2020). The tactic therefore is to turn outsourcing on its head, earning in dollars or Euros, yet living,and therefore spending, in poorer nations, something that we had been used to with the practice of remittances (cite). The tactic is, like much of the on-demand economy, dependent on a legislative gray area, where workers stay on tourist, health or student visas while they work for companies or clients "back home". As lines between work and home blur, and visiting for "business" or for "pleasure" blur as well, "hospitality" gets diluted to informal arrangements (such as AirBnB or furnished apartment rentals). A big question in nomad blogs and absolute requirement is the quality of connectivity. From the data I collected in WhatsApp and Facebook discussions, remote workers would go on occasional trips to other parts of the country, but reported unreliable internet and therefore inability to stay. Medellin has the comfort of the modernity of ICT infrastructure with an increasing amount of coworking and coffee shops, which were the first to suffer or close down due to COVID.
Due to the armed conflict, Colombia did not have many international visitors until the signing of the peace agreement in 2016 (Sánchez, 2018), halting the establishment of a robust tourism industry. In this case then, the on-demand economy managed to insert itself directly into local life, which allows digital nomads to resemble expat immigrants, and can procure services directly from individuals rather than intermediators. Care services are readily available and informally recommended; for example, the WhatsApp group I have been conducting online ethnography on is called "Medellin Digital nomads and friends" where people ask for recommendations on everything from doctors to where to buy bbq ribs, and are replied to by either locals, or other foreigners, recommending a service. I interviewed a local whose job was to scour these groups and respond when someone asked for furnished apartments, but never post an ad. He has this job because he speaks English, and is able to take foreigners around, often befriending them . Furnished apartments, he said, require much less paperwork than

unfurnished ones: it is a niche market and has remained unregulated, with the only paperwork requirement being a copy of passport. Rousseau observed that personality was becoming a form of capital, and in this line many of my interviewees mention the warmth, welcoming and fun Colombian culture as a main appeal. Hochschild (2012) coined the term "emotional labor" meant the part of a service job that requires emotions to be called up or faked to satisfy customers for a company, generally expected in the heavily female-staffed hospitality industry. Given the skipping over the industry in these cases, the line between what is authentic connection, commodified culture, service work or official hospitality makes the exchange harder to account for.

Additionally, the arrangement of blurred lines between tourist and work traveler is mimicked by the "gig" economy and the local informal labor: many of the nomads depend on informal labor to subsidize their lifestyle, in this way it is outsourcing housework in order to work less on the maintenance of the home. For example, an undocumented, Venezuelan domestic worker I interviewed had three foreign clients she had gotten via word of mouth and charges 65.000 pesos per day ($17.00), while if she also cooked she would charge 80,000 ($22.00), average local rate. In one of the WhatsApp groups a nomad commented:

> -I have a personal chef/cleaning lady. She is basically my Colombian mom.
> Comes 7am-2pm M-F. Cooks three meals. Dinner I heat up. I found her through a personal recommendation, but the same person also sent me this www.Hogaru.com to find these types of people
> She is by no means perfect, but the convenience and cost is worth it.
> I definitely save money by paying her and for groceries versus eating out every meal (which is what I would do).

The feminized appeal of a beautiful home, beautiful women, cheap domestic work as well as cost of living allows location-independent workers to outsource their home. The case of digital nomads or location-independent workers means the informality of the on-demand economy is meeting the existing informality prevalent in many developing countries. The quality of life rises not only due to increased spending capacity, but also the time freed by having to work less and having to do less domestic work. While the mayor aims for the city to become Latin America's "Silicon Valley" , the actual appeal for international visit or work is the feminized labor of hostessing and commodification of what makes it "a welcoming home" for workers.

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