



## Abstracts/Résumés

### 'I Need People That Are Happy, Always Smiling': Guest Interaction And Emotional Labour In A Canadian Downtown Hotel

*Paul Watt*

Faculty of Continuing Education,  
Birkbeck, University of London,  
London, United Kingdom

This paper discusses interactive service employment within the hospitality industry. Using research undertaken at a downtown hotel in a Canadian city, the paper examines front-line customer service workers engaged in guest interaction. It employs the concept of 'emotional labour', as developed by Hochschild, to illuminate not only managerial discourses, but also the work experiences of those women employed at the front desk (reception) and reservations. The women are shown to engage in intense and prolonged emotional labour, including having to routinely deal with 'irate guests'. The front office workers are shown to engage in covert resistance strategies in order to help them cope with the demands of the job including from aggressive guests. The paper also discusses the way that the work of women room attendants involved a guest interaction element, one that could involve doing emotional labour. The paper concludes by suggesting policy and further research implications, including on what the long-term effects of emotional labour might be.

[Full Article \(PDF\)](#)