Urban Beardsmen in the Field of Production: Hipster enterprise as defensive class formation

Ethan Shapiro
University of British Columbia

Abstract. This article presents empirical support for the conception of hipsters as an economically threatened fraction of the middle-class, seeking to salvage their social mobility through entrepreneurship in the creative industries. Hipsters have previously been studied in terms of consumption and identity, but few scholars have connected these trends to contemporary economic austerity. I argue that hipsters must be understood with reference to their roles in the field of production. Linking Bourdieu's 'new petite bourgeoisie' to contemporary debates on the 'creative class,' I examine Beardbrand, a prominent men's grooming company. My corpus-based discourse analysis reveals five main discursive categories, where: (1) entrepreneurs embraced the ideals of work ethic and meritocracy, (2) understood their social position through psychologized discourses, (3) narrated their transcendence from the corporate sphere into self-expressive occupations, (4) perceived natural alignments between their personal and professional selves, and (5) expressed their social indeterminacy through discursive rationalizations and uncertainties about their social position. While entrepreneurs rejected and challenged dominant ideas about the organization of work, they affirmed normative conceptions of meritocracy and individualized responsibility in their pursuits of creative self-employment, rebranding self-exploitation and precarity as personal growth.

Introduction

If you live in a city, you have likely encountered a hipster. The authenticity-hungry urbanites have been the target of both scorn and praise (Greif, Ross, & Tortorici, 2010). In the past few years, deprecatory media coverage around hipsters [1] has slowed; how-

[1] See YouTube video "Stop the knot" among other manbun-chopping pranks: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=a8YgTaMyZRk

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ever, hipster culture seems to be evolving into new lifestyles, such as the 'lumbersexual' (Rademacher & Kelly, 2019) and urban cultural prosumers (Michael, 2015). The rise of hipster aesthetics and practices across continents (O'Brien, 2020) suggests this unclaimed social movement does not exist simply in the realm of lifestyle choices or personal preferences (Scott, 2017; Rademacher & Kelly, 2019). Instead, it is a product of contemporary life that must be seen as a result of particular structural circumstances. Hipsters often have transformative material effects on space (whether offline or online) and culture (Maly & Varis, 2016; Maly, 2019). These transformations include the residential displacement of established working-class residents (Kennelly & Watt, 2012; Cooper, Hubbard, & Lees, 2020), the aesthetic sanitization of urban retail and working-class spaces (Hubbard, 2016; Sanders-McDonagh, Peyrefitte, & Ryalls, 2016), and the proliferation of a middle-class hungry for niched consumption (Michael, 2015; Maly & Varis, 2016). Underneath these changes in urban infrastructure and culture lay currents of economic austerity, of which hipsters are a symptom (Scott, 2017; Murray, 2020). The spectre of neoliberal governance haunts contemporary labour and housing markets, wealth inequalities, state policies, and urban development programmes, shattering the ability to achieve conventional middle-class successes (Murray, 2020). Thus, both economic and cultural insecurity are palpable for the contemporary middle-class, requiring creative solutions to the threat of down-classing. In this paper, I will argue for a conception of hipsters as an economically threatened segment of the middle-class, engaged in the defensive formation of cultural micro-enterprises[2] in response to neoliberal austerity.

While earlier sociological scholarship investigated the hipster in terms of consumption and identity (Schiermer, 2014; Michael, 2015; Maly & Varis, 2016), a newer strain of inquiry has revealed that hipster types are also highly involved in cultural production (Scott, 2017; Rademacher & Kelly, 2019; Murray, 2020). This research has demonstrated a blurred boundary between consumer and producer; such economic roles are subsumed by the quest for authentic lifestyle in the creative industries. These curious changes in middle-class lifestyle demand a Bourdieusian analysis, where affinities for particular goods, occupations, etc., are not merely personal or natural preferences, but internalized sets of cultural dispositions borne out of shared class conditions. Taste "brings together things and people that go together" (Bourdieu, 1984, p. 238) and distinguishes different class positions within social hierarchies; it unites those who occupy similar social positions while excluding others from these positions. Informed by Bourdieu, Michael Scott (2017) argues that hipster taste is constituted mainly by a self-employed entrepreneurial class that purveys authentic taste and lifestyle as the ultimate commodity (i.e. a "new petite bourgeoisie"; Bourdieu, 1984, p. 359). However, the field of sociology has yet to empirically examine the class origins of hipster production. This work is not only relevant to the narrowly categorized domain of hipster studies but to understanding the role

[2]Small businesses, usually employing a small number of workers, specializing in niche cultural/creative industries. Academics and private economic research organizations have hailed cultural micro-enterprises as solutions to systemic poverty (Banerjee, 1998), stagnant local economies, unemployment, capital funding (e.g. foreign direct investment), and strained 'quality of life' (Aageson, 2009).

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of niche cultural production within current political-economic contexts. To contextualize this research, I will first provide a theoretical overview of the new petite bourgeoisie, followed by a discussion of why hipsters, as agents within the productive field, fit into this category in the neoliberal context.

The New Petite Bourgeoisie and Cultural Intermediation

Bourdieu's (1984) concept of the new petite bourgeoisie[3] (hereafter, NPB) is useful in understanding hipster production. This class fraction occupies an indeterminate position in the cultural pole of the middle-class (see Bourdieu's map of social space, p. 122-3). This indeterminacy results in part from devaluations in educational capital as the stagnant or declining middle-class is unable to claim the social position previously promised to them by their academic qualifications (ibid., p. 355). To attain their meritocratic future, the NPB must find creative ways to salvage an upward or at least lateral mobility. Rather than adjusting their ambitions to fit existing jobs, the NPB produces jobs to match their ambitions (ibid., p. 359), meaning they must also produce the need for their new occupations. Thus, they become cultural intermediaries[4]: "sellers of symbolic goods and services who always sell themselves as models and as guarantors of the value of their products, and who sell so well because they believe in what they sell" (ibid., p. 365). Here, the role of taste as matchmaker (between similarly stratified people and things; ibid., p. 239) is taken up directly by individuals who seek to mediate between the fields of consumption and production. The practice of intermediation may produce the hipster's penchant for authenticity and individuality (Schiermer, 2014; Michael, 2015).

These "need merchants" (Bourdieu, 1984, p. 365) acknowledge that desires cannot be forced on the consumer; instead, they create the conditions for consumers to recognize their tastes in new areas. Occupations specializing in the "presentation and representation" of symbolic goods and services (ibid., p. 359; e.g. design, marketing, media) become more legitimate as the old rigid boundaries of highbrow taste melt into omnivorous appreciation (Peterson & Kern, 1996). That is, a wider range of goods become available for distinctive use as traditionally high-brow forms (such as knowledge of established canons) meander into the mainstream while low- or middle-brow products are intellectualized (Hahl, Zuckerman, & Kim, 2017; Schiermer, 2014; Johansson & Toraldo, 2015). Consumers must then learn to consume strategically; being 'in the know' of developments

[3] The Marxian classification of 'petite bourgeoisie' refers prototypically to small shopkeepers but can apply to a wide range of self-employed occupations in the middle-strata, enabled by an initial accumulation of capital (Bland, Elliott, & Bechhofer, 1978). Bourdieu (1984) notes that the great diversity in petit bourgeois culture stems from its' diverse social origins and mobility (i.e. they can originate from the working class, upper class, etc., and have a declining, rising, or steady trajectory; p. 355).

[4] While the term 'cultural intermediary' originally referred to wage-earning occupations in the creative industries (Smith Maguire, 2014), intermediaries are increasingly self-employed (Eikhof & Haunschild, 2006; Scott, 2017).

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in the cultural field is a valuable form of capital (Michael, 2015). Since the 1960s, large advertising firms have taken up taste-making as a veritable business model. Frank (1997) explains how unconventional advertising firms like DDB channelled consumers' suspicion of marketers into a taste for nonconformist and countercultural products. The NPB is made in the image of this 'new bourgeois' praxis[5], but takes on more personal risk in its application (see next section).

Because taste is internalized and dependent on social position, need merchants must alter or affect the consumer's aesthetic and moral disposition. Hence, intermediaries design an "ethical retooling" which "rejects the ascetic ethic of production and accumulation, based on abstinence, sobriety, saving, and calculation, in favour of a hedonistic morality of consumption, based on credit, spending and enjoyment" (Bourdieu, 1984, p. 309) and moves from the old petite-bourgeois duty-based morality to a "fun ethic" (ibid., p. 365). This orientation toward enjoyment characteristic of the new cultural economy is partially facilitated by advancements in credit scoring technology, enabling highly stratified market segments to access the immediate fulfillment of consumer desires, though on unequal terms (Kiviat, 2019). This fun ethic engenders a strategic harmony between personal and professional life (e.g., Bourdieu, 1984, p. 238); they sublate class anxiety into vocation, perfectly aligning their occupation with their subjective disposition. In sum, the NPB emerges from a threatened class position and employs cultural intermediation to recover their nullified social trajectories. Next, I will examine how hipsters may represent a segment of the NPB by consulting contemporary scholarly debates around the 'creative class.'

Creative Class as Neoliberal Imaginary: The Contemporary Context

Like Bourdieu, Florida (2002) notes the importance of new occupations in cultural production but posits the creative class as the primary site of economic growth within contemporary advanced economies (organized around knowledge production)[6]. While some have argued that Florida's concept lumps together disparate occupational experiences (Markusen, 2006) including differing precarity levels (Leslie & Rantisi, 2012), Florida reassures us that the creative class possess a conceptually-sound economic function: "to create new ideas, new technology and/or new content" (Florida, 2002, p. 8). Whether Florida's theory is empirically valid or not, it is undoubtedly an ideological force, shaping almost two decades of urban policy and entrepreneurial psychology. For instance, policymakers selectively protected employment in creative industries in the aftermath of the 2008 crash (Gabe, Florida, & Mellander, 2013), and the UK's post-deindustrialization

[5]I.e., private sector executives high in cultural capital, positionally opposed to the old business bourgeoisie (Bourdieu, 1984, p. 302-3).

[6]Note similar arguments in Howkins (2001), an essential text in the ideological formation of the creative class.

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economic growth model has focused on the creative industries (BOP Consulting, 2010). However, scholars have shown that creative occupations are often less stable than other sectors but glorify precarity through the ideal of self-expression (Christopherson, 2013; Jakob, 2013). Such occupations also involve taking on large personal financial risks, meaning governments and firms can encourage and benefit from creative work while outsourcing risk.

The notion of the creative class contributes to the study of hipsters insofar as they consider themselves part of it. The indeterminate middle-class have begun to accept the high risks associated with creative occupations as their own personal troubles (Neff, Wissinger, & Zukin, 2006). The institutionalization of the creative class theory has proliferated an "ethos that values creativity, individuality, difference and merit" (Florida, 2002, p. 8), which masks a reality of economic and occupational insecurity with an imagined meritocratic order wherein individual idea-mongers are tasked with uplifting themselves and society. In other words, "Florida's ideas may have travelled so far, not because they are revolutionary, but because they are so modest" (Peck 2005, p. 760). These ideas make sense to us because they resonate with the dominant normative principle: individualized responsibility. Under neoliberal capitalism, entrepreneurial freedoms are regarded as the precondition of human well-being (Harvey, 2005). Consequently, creative sector growth demanded by state and local institutions urge creative entrepreneurs to believe in their potential success and disregard the risk. As well, educational credentials fail to generate guaranteed employment as schooling becomes oversaturated, commodified, and rationalized (Radder, 2010; Samier, 2016). Even if this depreciated educational capital is accrued, Atkinson (2005) indicates the labour market's polarization between low-skill service jobs and highly gated knowledge work, meaning autodidacticism and self-employment may be the most strategic choices for the middle-class. Therefore, the hipster NPB "believe in what they sell" (Bourdieu, 1984, p. 365) because the logic of their social class demands that they do.

Previous sociological research on hipsters, including Schiermer's (2014, p. 170) seminal analysis of 'hipster handbooks,' finds that hipsters are often associated with the creative industries. This finding sheds insight into popular imaginings of the hipster ideal-type (which is a socially constructed and performed identity; Le Grand, 2020), revealing what sorts of people qualify as 'hipsters.' Michael (2015) confirms that hipster consumers are also engaged in local cultural production. Similarly, the contestation of hipster enterprise and its association with gentrification in urban areas (Hubbard, 2016) implicates hipsters in the reorganization of cities around the creative class. However, these 'gentrifiers' may be more precarious than their detractors would like to admit. Murray's (2020) ethnographic participants in Detroit's bartending scene express a desire to pursue self-employed creative (i.e., new petit bourgeois) lifestyles, but this aspiration is balanced by the need to work a bartending 'gig.' One participant explains this tension: "I have my day so split in half. Everything in the beginning of my day I'm like chipping at like, 'that's what I want my life to be. I want that.' And the last half of my day is like, 'oh, this is

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my waiter gig'" (p. 465). Here, the tensions of neoliberalism, between entrepreneurialism and austerity, individual freedom and economic necessity, meritocracy and career stagnation, are internalized by its subjects. Thus, some evidence suggests that behind hipster consumption (Maly & Varis, 2016) lie hipsters as producers; self-employed creatives, who are psychologically and materially embedded in their social position's ambiguous 'middleness.' By investigating how hipster entrepreneurs navigate their social position, we can begin to understand their class origins. To this end, I will pursue an in-depth analysis of a relevant cultural micro-enterprise.

Methods

Method Selection and Source Material

Viewing the methods section as the "conceptual epicenter" of the research article (Smagorinski, 2008, p. 390), this section will seek to make all research processes as explicit as possible. This study utilized a corpus-based discourse analysis of blog articles retrieved from a relevant micro-enterprise, Beardbrand, to critically examine how hipster-types talked about their social positions. I decided to limit my analysis to digital content due to the widespread online presence of creative enterprises[7]. Beardbrand was chosen because of its entrepreneurial bent and heavy focus on the creative industries. As a prominent men's grooming brand, Beardbrand epitomizes a masculine hipster aesthetic and exemplifies the growth of cultural micro-enterprises. Beginning as a start-up in 2012, Beardbrand's products are now distributed at Targets across the US and 28 online retailers in 18 different countries. Beardbrand has become a substantial name in men's grooming, catering a range of beard, hair, and body products to a dedicated clientele. The company sees itself as leading a movement aimed at denouncing trends and, more importantly, "[changing] the way society looks at beardsmen." Beardbrand boasts a blog, called *Urban Beardsman*, and a YouTube channel with 1.7 million subscribers. It also hosts a paywalled online brand community, Alliance, which is described as a space for men to "surround [themselves] with growth-minded people," and includes pre-market access to products and private forums for so-called 'beardsmen.' My research focused on Beardbrand's blog due to its

[7]In the previous study, brands were initially gathered through Google queries such as "hipster blogs," "thrifting blogs," and "beard blogs." Such terms were then indexed by the top ten hipster cities (according to MoveHub's Hipster Index). Through these queries, a body of websites was compiled, including Nudie Jeans (nudiejeans.com), Aether (aetherapparel.com), Rokit (rokit.co.uk), Beardbrand (beardbrand.com), and Huckberry (huckberry.com). Websites were selected based on their sufficiency of content, notable readership or patronage, and the incorporation of both blog and webstore components. After completing a preliminary analysis of these brands, Beardbrand was carefully selected based on its' use of global hipster identifiers in their visual representations (Maly & Varis, 2016; beards, idiosyncratic fashion, coffee, etc.), its existence in a network of similar brands, and its global reach (when I first began researching this brand, I was not yet focused on hipsters as an NPB).

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accessibility. Focusing on this case allowed me to investigate class origin inductively, through questions such as: What kind of lifestyle is being proposed on Beardbrand, and for whom? What does the hipster entrepreneur lifestyle look like, and how does one attain it?

Because of this study's Bourdieusian inclination, I conceptualized discourse as a 'field' structured by class antagonisms in social space, wherein tastes are competitively deployed and de/legitimated. Article writers were seen as agents navigating their social position by strategically deploying their knowledge of 'good' taste, including lifestyle knowledge claims, on which cultural intermediaries base their legitimacy (Smith Maguire, 2014). Discourse analysis can be defined as the process of making sense of "meaningful symbolic behaviour" (Blommaert, 2005, p. 2) while interpreting meanings through many perspectives (Johnstone, 2008, p. 263). I judged this method appropriate for this research on the assumption that discourse operates as a structured resource, used by speakers in stratified ways to protect or elevate their social position. The method of discourse analysis allowed me to elucidate broader generalizations like Bourdieu's NPB and Florida's creative class via specific instances of cultural intermediation.

While this research aims to unpack the class conditions and origins of self-employed hipsters, the direct measurement of class conditions poses a methodological issue: the potential construction of a uniform class from disparate conditions. As with ideas of the creative class and even cultural intermediaries, constructing a unitary 'hipster NPB' is challenging and perhaps undesirable since their occupations span large vocational chasms from marketing to social assistance to cultural production (Bourdieu, 1984, p. 359). With this particularity in mind, a case study of a single brand was chosen to provide one account of the hipster NPB. Thus, this research seeks to deconstruct the discourses of a hipster-oriented brand rather than delimit the boundaries of 'hipster culture' in general.

Corpus Consctruction

All articles from *Urban Beardsman*[8] were initially included in a corpus. This first corpus was constructed by copying and pasting posts into a Microsoft Word document for ease of analysis. While this process risked creating a "disembedded data set" (Irwin, Bornat, & Winterton, 2014, p. 351), giving the illusory impression that the data are detached from social context, I took an active approach in re-embedding the data by making frequent visits to the source website (to check product additions, new posts, etc.) and subscribing to Beardbrand's email list. These elements were not selected for analysis but served as anchors grounding the research process in its immediate context. This corpus was constructed in early September 2020, based on a previous exploratory corpus study I

[8]Sourced from the *Urban Beardsman* blog in September 2020, https://www.beardbrand.com/blogs/urbanbeardsman.

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conducted in 2019, and contained a total of 631,731 words (1412 pages). I organized the corpus by authorship category (written by the company's founder, guest writers, or anonymous staff writers) to stay cognizant of speakers' differing motives for speaking. The purpose of the initial exploratory study was to examine how hipsters produce and disseminate aesthetic and ethical knowledge, which led serendipitously to my interest in hipsters as a class phenomenon.

From this initial corpus, I began the data reduction process. Informed by my previous study, I built a new corpus centred around 'beardsmen profiles,' which focused on men promoted by Beardbrand. These were articles written by or about men who qualified as "Urban Beardsmen" (discussed in the results section) and displayed the kinds of work and lifestyles Beardbrand sought to model. All articles that profiled a single person were selected for inclusion. Articles written by the founder were also included to gain insight into the company's vision and ideal clientele. This reduced corpus would answer the question: Is this a company made by and for an emergent NPB, or was it simply a lifestyle brand for voracious consumers of 'authentic' goods? Though Beardbrand published these articles for advertising purposes, I do not see this as a threat to the data's validity. Because hipster culture largely relies on bringing 'cool' into commerce (Scott, 2017), I saw Beardbrand's marketized messages as specific instances of taste-making and needs-production, through which the brand and its contributors claimed legitimacy. This reduced corpus was finalized by September 8, 2020, with a word count of 107,231 (226 pages).

Data Analysis

My analysis was conducted between September 8, 2020 and December 10, 2020. I began the discourse analysis with a round of open coding (initial labelling and problematization of data) and proceeded through subsequent stages of focused coding (re-coding for specific thematic elements; Harding, 2003). Codes were labelled using the comment function on Word. I chose an open coding approach to develop an empirically grounded understanding of how creative entrepreneurs navigate their class position (Glaser & Strauss, 1999). Adhering to Mayring's (2002) inductive category development, codes were added, altered, omitted, or subsumed by other categories during the coding process based on emergent findings. I repeated this focused coding stage three times, refining categories further as patterns in the dataset began to solidify. Ultimately, I arrived at five discursive categories which were deemed significant throughout the corpus: (1) entrepreneurial ethos, (2) psychologization of experience, (3) occupational transcendence, (4) elective affinities, and (5) social indeterminacy.

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Research Ethics in Secondary Analysis of Data

As Mao and Feldman (2018) show, the influence of social class is inseparable from the research process and the production of academic knowledge. To account for class in my study's design, I reflexively deployed the Bourdieusan theory of habitus as a means of acknowledging my own class-based competencies, which serve to reinforce existing power relations (Swartz, 1997). After most coding sessions, I used a journaling technique to systematize my observations and challenge them in the context of my own class position and dispositions. Of course, these practices did not dispel my biases entirely, nor were they designed to. Instead, these practices added a level of rigour to my analysis. As Burawoy (1998) argues, academic rigour consists of producing research with a depth of knowledge that resonates with contemporary issues. In this vein, my reporting will not disparage individual hipsters but rather situate them within a larger societal critique, where there are clear forces outside the hipster's control. Here, Lather's (1986) conception of construct validity is indispensable, demanding a "ceaseless confrontation with the experiences of people in their daily lives in order to stymie the tendency to theoretical imposition" (p. 67). Thus, the project's rigour and genuine belief in the value of structural analysis should be apparent in the reporting process.

Results

As discussed earlier, five discursive categories were identified as significant in my case study on Beardbrand. The following categories are paramount to Beardbrand's discourse and often convene within the same article. The vast majority of authors/contributors were self-employed in the creative industries (see the Appendix for a comprehensive list of occupations). All contributors identified as men (with one exception) and most received post-secondary education though not necessarily in their current professional field. The brand's discourse catered to an exclusively male clientele, expressing classed ideals of self-employment, self-expression, entrepreneurialism, etc., in gendered terms. Therefore, these results are best understood as a particular iteration of hipster culture whereby masculinity is mobilized to achieve an aura of authenticity and legitimacy in the field of niche cultural production. To properly identify authorial context, excerpts will be labelled as follows: F (written by founder), G (written by guest writer), UB (written by anonymous staff), and I (interviews)[9]. I have bolded terms in each excerpt to highlight themes significant to the analysis. Corpus page numbers will be located under every excerpt.

[9]Interviews were not transcribed in full but rather 'curated' by a staff writer (sometimes anonymous) who added commentary and narrative structure to the interview post.

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Entrepreneurial Ethos

The fact that most men profiled in *Urban Beardsman* were self-employed entrepreneurs is telling of Beardbrand's intended audience. Article titles such as "5 Tips on Building a Brand From Nothing" (p. 2), "Incorporating Your Beard Into Your Personal Brand" (p. 5), and "5 Things Growing a Beard & Running a Startup Have in Common" (p. 6) show that this brand is not merely designed for niche consumers. Rather, the brand serves an amalgam of authentic consumers and trailblazing producers, in the form of the "urban beardsman":

> (1) A beardsman is a man who builds his own path; who understands the value of looking good; who has confidence and leadership to get shit done. There have always been men like this, but no one has bothered to unite them or to tell their stories-until now. We've been telling the stories of incredible beardsmen for years and will continue to share with the world what it means to be an urban beardsman [...] That's what I love about this movement – we aren't trying to change who you are on the outside, but help you show the world who you really are on the inside. (UB, 1)

Like conventional descriptions of the hipster (Schiermer, 2014), authenticity and individuality (along with masculinity) are central to the urban beardsman's identity. Beardbrand recognizes its role as a cultural intermediary in creating the conditions for men to realize their inner authenticity through "telling the stories of incredible beardsmen" and providing quality grooming products. However, this excerpt suggests that the provision of such goods is intended for specific self-presentational purposes (Goffman, 1959); not only does Beardbrand allow its consumer to show the world who they really are, but to show the world that they are independent, confident leaders. For entrepreneurs in creative fields, there is quite literally value in looking good, as one's legitimacy as a need merchant is dependent on ostensible personal authenticity. The company acknowledges this value and offers men a streamlined acquisition of cultural capital, which can then be converted into a successful enterprise. Thus, Beardbrand's proposition is not just to help men discover authenticity in the consumptive sphere but to assist them in the productive sphere:

> (2) There's something about a beard today that suggests [sic] ideological independence and self-sufficiency—it speaks to the wise choices one is making. People are making things with beards: leather, coffee—all things that are artfully craft-driven. It's no longer a middle finger to the mainstream. It's saying I'm gonna take my own choices in life. (G, 64)

Here, we see the connections between the hipster aesthetic (beard, craftsmanship, etc.) and self-employment – that is, the connections between one's apparent tastes and one's social position. While some see hipster culture as a trendy rejection of mainstream con-

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sumption, this author espouses a much more individualized, ideologically independent project of self-determination through "craft-driven" cultural production. Critiques of pretension usually levied at so-called hipsters do not scathe urban beardsmen; their goals are not to offer a subcultural revolution against all things inauthentic. They simply seek to make "wise choices" as self-sufficient entrepreneurial craftsmen. This celebration of prudence is visible throughout the corpus and presents a discursive strategy for dealing with the challenges of entrepreneurship (personalized risk, emotional investment, etc.) while justifying the political-economic conditions which necessitate their entrepreneurship. This strategy is most evident in beardsmen's discussions around work ethic:

> (3) I don't want to just work seven hours a day like the average person or employee does, I want to fit more in." After a slow process of tweaking his schedule through the years, he developed what he calls, the "7 and 1" schedule. The "7 and 1" schedule is Chawla's way of slotting three 7 hour shifts in 1 day—two are work shifts, (separated by a 2 hour social break) and the third shift is for sleep. "I go to bed at 4am every day, but I sleep for 7 hours. And then I allow an hour for getting up, grooming the beard, etc. and going to work." (I, 53-4)

In this excerpt, Chawla, a self-employed app developer and co-working space founder, embraces the ideals of productivity and self-regulation while generously allotting himself a social life. The desire to "fit more [hours] in" can be seen as emanating from the material imperative to do so. The tensions of being one's own boss, between personal freedom and self-imposed constraint, make themselves clear in this entrepreneur's preoccupation with work ethic. He even internalizes this preoccupation as a locus of distinction; he is "not like the average person or employee." Rather than questioning the degree of self-exploitation required to be successful in the creative industries, self-regulation is praised as a fulfilling solution to the demands of entrepreneurial work. Chawla's hyper-rationalized schedule presents a regulatory model for other bearded entrepreneurs to aspire towards. By mining value out of time itself, the difficulties of self-employment can be swiftly navigated if one doubles down on the ideal work ethic. However, unlike the 'old' petite bourgeois morality of duty described by Bourdieu (1984, p. 367), members of this new petite bourgeoisie justify their requisite self-exploitation by expressing their occupational enjoyment:

> (4) While many people grind out a 9-to-5, waiting for the weekend, Moss is the polar opposite, and states, "I devote all my time to my work—it's in my blood to work myself into the ground." However, the difference from most is Moss gets to do what he loves, admitting, "my work is often play, which means I get paid to play." (I, 97)

Here, the "fun ethic" (Bourdieu, 1984, p. 365) is melded into the traditional work ethic. Moss is defined in opposition to the ideal nine-to-fiver; he eschews the gruelling rat-race to pursue personal desire and play. This pursuit, while highly advocated throughout

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Beardbrand's discourse, implies its own unique hardships concerning mental and physical labour. The photographer interviewed in excerpt 4 reveals a particularly deterministic acceptance of these hardships ("it's in my blood to work myself into the ground"). However, immediately after this acceptance comes an obligatory acknowledgement of the personal enjoyment experienced through his occupation. Thus, these hardships are experienced as personal troubles, taken on by prudent entrepreneurs who see value in the trade-off between mundane day-jobs and getting "paid to play." Another way in which entrepreneurs justified their occupational choices and practices was through meritocracy:

> (5) The fact that I get to do what I want, when I want, and in a creative way is a true blessing. Having the complete freedom to express myself, ideas and views with folks enjoying it—I'm definitely living the American dream! (I, 76)

> (6) I have a two-year old son now, and I want him to see me go after my dreams. I want him to see me believe in something even when it looks impossible and learn if you want to do something, you can succeed if you put in the work. (I, 99)

In both excerpts, the discourse of meritocracy is employed in defence of creative occupations. One founder/editor of a men's magazine (excerpt 5) validates his profession through the frame of the "American dream," the idea that everyone has the ability to achieve upward mobility through hard work. This ethos is not only a useful motivational tool for 'hustling' entrepreneurs but serves as a site of legitimation for new occupations not yet seen as legitimate (Smith Maguire, 2014). In fact, the purpose of Beardbrand's project may be oriented towards constructing legitimacy around independent cultural producers so that their taste-making can become profitable. As seen above, both interviewees praise the personal freedom granted by entrepreneurship, especially in terms of creative self-expression (excerpt 5) and following one's dreams (excerpt 6). In this discourse, pursuing one's creative goals becomes a rewarding enterprise, both personally and financially. Because of meritocracy's unfailing nature, one self-taught vintner (excerpt 6) seeks to instill these values in his son, that he too may achieve his dreams through diligent work. Thus, Beardbrand contributors fill the gap between cultural consumer and producer by embracing an authentic self-employed lifestyle, emphasizing entrepreneurial ideals of work ethic and meritocracy. This discourse of entrepreneurship suggests that both the brand's producers and audience are engaged in creative entrepreneurial undertakings.

Psychologization of Experience

Beardbrand's writers and guest contributors carve out experiential space in distinctive ways. Throughout the corpus, the themes of personal growth, self-improvement, posi-

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tive mindset, etc., were frequently touched on. Many of the featured entrepreneurs experienced their business enterprises as missions of personal development and built their brands around the facilitation of such missions in their consumers (e.g., Beardbrand's motto "keep on growing" [p. 12, 50, 219, passim]). Bourdieu (1984) posits that this new petite bourgeois tendency extends logically from a morality in which "pleasure is not only permitted but demanded," and experience is understood through "a cult of personal health and psychological therapy" (367-8). This morality is not only the legitimizing factor behind the proliferation of self-care brands but is also a lens through which creative entrepreneurs understand themselves, and more indirectly, their social position. That is, Beardbrand's contributors both subscribe to and marketize a conception of existence centred on positive mindset and enjoyment.

> (7) Adopting the mindset of a Beardsman has provided the start to me being able to remake myself and hopefully find that career that inspires and motivates me. (G, 109)

Being a beardsman is described here as a "mindset," a psychological orientation toward personal reinvention and motivation. Interestingly, this mental quality is bound up with one's search for meaning in the labour market ("find that career that inspires and motivates me"). It is worth asking, then, what events or processes in the social field spurred this need for personal reinvention? The author of the excerpted article, Thomas, recounts his experiences in higher education where he earned a bachelor's and master's degree in athletic administration, following the infallible logic of "college = career" (p. 108). However, he had barely obtained his diploma before the crisis of 2008 ensued, obstructing any attempt at employment despite his qualifications. The crisis led Thomas to re-evaluate his once-guaranteed career path, realizing the importance of passion in his occupational pursuits. Though he eventually took up a sales job, the author acknowledges his status as a "retail zombie" (p. 109) and still seeks to find a fulfilling career. His disillusionment with corporate life and the traditional middle-class pact between education and success allows him to aspire toward Beardbrand's self-employed creatives, who represent an alternative to his career disappointments. Thomas strives toward this career alternative by recognizing the importance of adopting the right mindset, which is not merely a question of finding the right job but of remaking the self. Though Thomas is neither self-employed nor working in the creative industries, he represents a beardsman in metamorphosis, beginning to view his world through a psychologistic lens. Others describe their endeavours in similar terms:

> (8) [. . .] there's so much to grow and develop with all my projects that there's an endless list of tasks to do. Taking a 'me-day' is taking me away from learning something new [. . .] I truly love the hustle of being self-employed. It's always making me thirsty to seek out more and push myself further. (G, 91-2)

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This beardsman (Jimmy) is a professional photographer who also runs a hat shop and an online jewelry boutique. Jimmy refuses to submit to relaxation and instead finds enjoyment in "the hustle of being self-employed." The boundary between 'fun' and 'work ethic' is blurred for creative entrepreneurs who profess absolute enjoyment of their chosen career. While attending to a multitude of projects ("all my projects") may be mentally and emotionally taxing, the prospects of growth, development and self-improvement enable Jimmy to push himself continually. Just as Thomas (in excerpt 7) sees his experience of the 2008 crisis as an opportunity for cognitive readjustment, Jimmy views his entrepreneurial aims as a quest for psychological prosperity. Beardbrand's entrepreneurs also extend their belief in personal growth to consumers:

> (9) Although having a successful self-made business is a huge achievement, Pirrotta describes the most rewarding part of what he does as being able to support others reach [sic] their goals. "Helping people's dreams come to life, that is an indescribable feeling," he admits. [. . .] "Ultimately, you just have to love what you do everyday. I'm the happiest person on the planet because I love what I do." (I,84)

As the owner of a brand development firm, Pirrotta sees his mission as actualizing in other entrepreneurs the happiness he has achieved as a "self-made" businessman. Putting aside the question of whether successful ventures can be entirely self-generated, this brand developer is self-made to the extent that he believes his entrepreneurial success is a result of his own internal qualities and attitudes (i.e. his merit)[10]. Pirrotta brings this self-based conception of success to the market and commits himself to help "people's dreams come to life." This commitment resonates with Bourdieu's analysis of the pleasure-oriented NPB, who gain their legitimacy as pleasure becomes the raison d'etre for certain social strata. Entrepreneurs like Pirrotta do not only represent intermediaries between brands and consumers but between people and their psychological well-being. The brand developer is also a brand psychoanalyst onto which the entrepreneurial patient projects their personal and vocational desires. Pirrotta also facilitates his own enjoyment from the relentless pursuit of his ideal profession. Others are encouraged to follow their dreams, and dream-makers like Pirrotta can symbiotically profit from his clients' self-actualization. Thus, personal and professional growth are entangled in Beardbrand's new petit bourgeois discourse:

> (10) Beards take time, and you know what? So does building a business. If you have the patience and fortitude to cultivate an awesome face jacket, you've also got the iron will to strike out on your own and try starting your own venture. (UB, 16)

[10]This is not to say that Pirrotta or any other entrepreneurs do not deserve their success, but that all seemingly personal outcomes have their origins in social processes into which we have varying degrees of insight.

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> (11) There is always a risk associated with putting yourself out there, no matter how you do it. But understand that you will not grow personally or professionally unless you are willing to take that risk. (G, 3)

In excerpt 10, growing a beard is seen as homologous to building a business; they are both structured by the imperative to individuate, to become a patient, strong-willed, and most importantly, independent venturist (whether that venture is personal or professional improvement). In fact, the presence of a well-groomed beard implies an "entrepreneurial mindset" (p. 14). If one has the requisite skills to maintain a distinguished beard, they surely have the willpower to manage a lucrative business enterprise and assume the risk it presupposes (excerpt 11). The act of growing and maintaining a beard in the context of creative entrepreneurship reflects the entrepreneur's relationship to work and leisure; his social position requires that he self-regulates his labour while presenting this labour process as leisure. However, the beard appears as a "natural expression of [one's] innermost nature" (Bourdieu, 1984, p. 191), a means of deciphering its' wearer's moral character rather than one's class position. Thus, both the personal and professional spheres can be dissolved into this inner character, or in other words, psychologized, and used to explain one's navigation of social realities. Those who are willing to take risks (with risk-taking or inhibiting as a purely cognitive execution) also understand the value of personal and professional growth (excerpt 11). In sum, urban beardsmen understood and orchestrated their experiences as entrepreneurs in psychological terms, emphasizing growth-mindsets and enjoyment. Entrepreneurs encouraged their consumers (likely other entrepreneurs) to adopt similar perspectives, conceptualizing the entrepreneurial project as a personal striving rather than a response to classed realities.

Occupational Transcendence

Beardbrand's creative entrepreneurs were also engaged in a discursive process of distinguishing themselves from 'traditional' professions. In particular, their distinction was achieved through the telling and retelling of occupational transcendence narratives: stories of the entrepreneur's apotheosis from the mundane corporate/bureaucratic world. For 'side-hustling' beardsmen who carried out their creative ventures outside the confines of their day-jobs, their '9-to-5' lives were made invisible. Instead, articles focused on their artistic aspirations or business efforts while giving their weekday affairs a passing mention (e.g., "He juggles an insanely busy schedule, holds down a nine-to-five, but somehow manages to work in his photography and social life in-between" [p. 79]). Thus, occupational transcendence was achieved by dis-authenticating corporate occupations and highlighting the personal freedom enabled by working in the creative industries:

> (12) When I worked as a Financial Advisor, I felt like I was living in a shell. Like the real me was hidden away in a cage and could only come out when

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> I was among friends or family. It's not as stressful as someone who is in the closet, but I would think it's a similar feeling. As a Financial Advisor, you always need to be putting on a show - you need to look the part of a person who's capable of investing money. Unfortunately, the corporate environment wouldn't accept me as a beardsman. I was most driven to build Beardbrand so that I could avoid the experience of going back to the corporate world. (F, 21)

Here, Eric (the founder of Beardbrand) wrestles with the inauthenticity of the corporate sphere. He describes feeling constrained and confined by his occupation, which forbade him to be his "real" self. He then transitions to an awkward analogy between 'coming out' and becoming an entrepreneur, which, though deficient in tactfulness, reveals the subjective resistance felt by these misplaced entrepreneurs. Entrepreneurship then becomes a vehicle for transcendent identity, to shed one's occupational shell. In this vein, Eric was also uncomfortable with the impression management required in corporate environments, feeling unaccepted as a "beardsman." That is, he did not feel his current job could allow him to "build his own path" (excerpt 1) or achieve a self-expressive route to meritocracy. Instead of genuinely expressing himself, Eric had to "look the part" in playing a role that clashed with his self-concept. However, he also implicitly recognizes the security that his job granted him (Eric was still employed as a financial adviser while Beardbrand was starting up and was expecting a child soon). "Going back to the corporate world" was something that had to be avoided precisely because, while it represented economic protection, it also flattened his trajectory of personal growth. While Florida (2002) would have recognized financial consultation within the creative class' purview, Eric does not see this occupation as legitimately 'creative' because it stifles his authentic self-project. Other beardsmen expound this need to distance oneself from the personal stagnation produced by corporate life:

> (13) I am a yoga professional. I help people connect with themselves and others through the practice of yoga. In a past life I worked like a maniac pushing business and real estate opportunities, and although I still dabble in those fields, this simpler way of life has led me to more happiness than I ever could have achieved in the prior chaos. (G, 156)

> (14) After leaving his corporate gig, he mixed his previous business knowledge with his photography skills, and turned his favorite hobby into a customized lifestyle. "I was fortunate to have a successful career in my previous world that allowed me to retire and do something that I've always wanted to do," he says. (I, 81)

Phrases like "in a past life" and "my previous world" mark the subjective division between the corporate and entrepreneurial selves. Interestingly, both men are not completely mentally or economically separated from their previous occupations: excerpt 13 resentfully

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(“like a maniac”) admits to his continued involvement in real estate, while excerpt 14 incorporates his business skills into his photography business. Despite this uneasy involvement, these men declare to have achieved an ideal lifestyle, whether it be “a simpler way of life” or “something that I’ve always wanted to do.” The transition from past life to self-fulfilling future is not yet complete in excerpt 14, but the author affirms his transcendence, noting his happiness and disconnection from the chaos of manic business life. In this discourse, there is a certain moral tone expressed by these beardsmen, an ethical division between two worlds. This tone is emblematic of a class fraction that seeks “its occupational and personal salvation in the imposition of new doctrines of ethical salvation,” and that plays “a vanguard role in the struggles over everything concerned with the art of living” (Bourdieu, 1984, p. 367). Thus, these men cement a class of new occupations premised on creating authentic lifestyles in their transformation of “business knowledge” (excerpt 14) into authentic self-employment. The creation of these occupations is also experienced as a way for individuals to transcend their immediate class position and the opportunities it delimits:

> (15) I figured that I could either spend my nights making $50 working at Walmart or I could drive thirty miles, do an open mic night and make $50 that way. We aren’t rich or anything, but it beats the hell out of working a desk job. (I, 201)

> (16) I grew up believing that I would be able to make it into the field I had dreamed of since I was ten, instead I ended up in a job that has stressed me out, worn me down emotionally and stripped me of a lot of the positivity and individuality that used to be free flowing within me. The purpose of this writing is to share my feelings of professional emptiness and to say that the majority of my years in the workforce have been spent with almost zero passion. Working in an industry that provides me no internal or creative benefit had finally turned me into a retail zombie who clocks in and out simply for the paycheck. (G, 108-9)

In excerpt 15, Ben (a musician) weighs his options between “working at Walmart” and hustling for open mic slots, both equated with the same monetary value. Through this binary between wage labour and creative labour, Ben expresses his disillusionment with contemporary labour markets. This binary is particularly palpable for the Missouri-based musician, who exists within a decades-long history of deindustrialization, disappearing employment opportunities, economic decline, population vacuums, etc., as in other ‘rust belt’ states. Even though Ben may have difficulties establishing his legitimacy as a creative professional (i.e. producing an occupation in alignment with his passion), this challenge is perfectly welcome within an economic reality of constrained mobility. Thus, Ben’s movement toward the cultural pole of social space as an artist is in part a rejection of his immediate opportunity structures and the creation of a new one. In excerpt 16, Thomas expresses a similar disillusionment, though it is articulated as a rift between his

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previous beliefs and his current reality. The meritocratic ideal once promised to him now crumbles in the confines of a cubicle. The individuality that he values and recognizes in a previous version of himself, belonging to a previous system of opportunity, appears to be purged in the hours between clocking in and out. Rather than denying the "desk job" like Ben, Thomas reluctantly accepts his fate and fulfills his corporate duties with "zero passion." Within the context of Beardbrand's messaging, Thomas represents a forgone transcendence, to remind others to look beyond the characteristic liminality of their social position. One way for ambiguously-situated individuals to overlook and overcome this middleness is by renouncing 'financial pleasures':

> (17) "Instead of going off and following my dream of shooting for amazing wildlife and travel magazines, I ended up photographing kids at school. Do you remember school portrait day? Yeah, that was me and I did it throughout my twenties until I turned thirty." After coming to the realization that life does not revolve around money, Sean sold his photography business for one British pound [. . .] "My problem was that I was just in a rush to be something by thirty. I believed that if I worked hard and earned more money, then I would be successful. That was my benchmark for success, but I was miserable." (I, 210)

> (18) But controlling your finances is controlling your freedom. For everyone that freedom comes in monetary amounts and there is no right or wrong number. Don't be a slave to your job, to your debts, or to your materials. Break the chains and take control of your life. (F, 42)

Again, excerpt 17 shows a dislocation between meritocratic ideals and the misery of an unfulfilling (but well-paying) day-job. Sean, a photographer and professional adventurist, recounts chasing an economistic conception of success which should have brought him happiness and resents this conception for its failure to deliver such a result. He remedies this disjuncture by readjusting his definition of success, not in monetary terms, but in terms of self-fulfillment, of following one's dreams. This renouncement of financial success allowed Sean to pursue a career in adventurism (p. 211), rising above the contradiction between occupational despair and meritocracy. However, excerpt 18 suggests there is a fragile balance between the ethos of creative expression and self-imposed austerity. While emancipating the entrepreneur from "professional emptiness" (excerpt 16), self-employed careers in the creative industries can also be accompanied by significant personal and financial risk. Entrepreneurs must negotiate between occupational transcendence (the ability to free oneself from their day-job in order to pursue one's dreams) on the one hand, and financial constraint on the other. As much as these entrepreneurs may embrace self-expression as their be-all-end-all, they still have basic personal and business expenses to cover. Thus, financial prudence becomes a strategy to achieve occupational transcendence; as long as individuals manage themselves responsibly, they will attain fulfilling careers. Overall, Beardbrand writers represented their distance from and opposition

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to both the corporate sphere and wage labour by maligning their inauthenticity and moral rigidity as well as emphasizing the personal freedom gained through self-employment in the creative industries. These discursive strategies allowed beardsmen to overcome their immediate labour market opportunities by envisioning new occupational possibilities involving the pursuit of 'dreams' but also financial restraint.

Elective Affinities: From Passion to Profit

As we have seen thus far, Beardbrand's contributors advocate for the ideals of entrepreneurial work ethic and meritocracy, while experiencing their practice of these ideals in psychologistic terms. This entrepreneurial lifestyle, which synthesizes the moralities of productivity and enjoyment, facilitates a transcendence of existing opportunity structures. In blending work and play into a passionate enterprise, creative entrepreneurs find themselves in occupations that align seamlessly with their dispositions. One's personal tastes are transferred into the professional realm where the individual seems naturally destined for their new occupation. This elective affinity between the personal and the professional (that is, the resonance between these two separate but apparently inextricable systems) allows creative entrepreneurs to act as "guarantors of the value of their products" (Bourdieu, 1984, p. 365), demonstrating the legitimacy of the lifestyle they proclaim in the marketplace. One lawyer-turned-indie-coffee-shop-owner describes a cosmic alignment between him and his profession:

> (19) The feeling that I'm doing something I'm possessed to do, and people come in and appreciate how we produce it—that's been the most rewarding thing for me ultimately. (I, 64)

Here, the coffee shop owner describes his relationship to his occupation in spiritual language. The uncanny ability of taste to adjust this individual to his objective conditions is expressed through a love of his destiny, a love of the social position of which his tastes are the product. In identifying with his occupation at the inner psychic or spiritual level, the coffee shop owner experiences a resonance between himself as a socially classified person and his occupation as a 'well-suited' socially classified profession (Bourdieu, 1984, p. 238). This social compatibility turns a mere job into a calling, a lifestyle justified by some transcendent match between a person and their occupational duty (Weber, 1905/2012). Within the context of the new petit bourgeois morality of pleasure, subjective gratification through creative work is the basis of this calling, which comes to satisfy the imperative to enjoy. We also see this affinity in one's relationship to their body:

> (20) I had always wanted to grow a beard, but constantly had jobs where they weren't acceptable [. . .] Once I quit my auditing job to start Iron & Tweed [Lewis' lifestyle blog] it was game on! So really, my blog and my beard are

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> sort of linked – for me, they're both symbolic of freedom and new beginnings. (I, 199)

This lifestyle blogger and fashion author, Lewis, explains the parallel meanings of his beard and occupation. As Bourdieu (1984, p. 191) notes, the body is never merely physical but is composed within a social system of distinctive signs. The beard is no exception to this and represents how one's bodily modifications and stylings are interpreted as 'natural' incarnations of a person's disposition, as we also saw in excerpt 10. For this blogger, the body and his chosen profession are linked by the freedom experienced through both. The "innermost nature" (Bourideu, 1984, p. 191) that Lewis' beard represents and his occupational calling come together in opposition to his "auditing job." Lewis also emphasizes the unacceptability of beards in his previous job (which represents a larger trend in the corpus), perceiving a mismatched relationship to his body that his corporate gig required. This barrier to self-expression and desire ("I had always wanted to grow a beard") allowed Lewis to reject middle-class conformity and branch out into a project of personal freedom, encapsulated by both his bodily and occupational freedom. This rejection also implicitly articulates a normative conception of authentic masculinity, predicated on a self-cultivation and a moral adherence to one's dispositions. Through this congruity between disposition and career, creative entrepreneurs can move towards the field of taste production, not as a nefarious project of aesthetic or ethical universalization, but simply as an extension of their internalized tastes and a genuine belief in their value. This genuine belief was demonstrated in entrepreneurs' desire to awaken passion in others:

> (21) His current goal is to help others on the way to a more fulfilling, happy, encouraging, supportive, connected, passionate and informed life. Through showing and teaching how something is done, or inspiring others, he hopes to change people's perspectives in order to enlighten and make their lives better, even if in the smallest of ways. (UB, 220)

> (22) It helped me realize that people are inspired by the passion they find in others even if they aren't necessarily interested in your specific product or service. So no matter what you do, if you are genuinely passionate and enthusiastic about your work, people will be interested. (G, 3)

> (23) Nothing beats the personal freedom when working for yourself; and even more rewarding—if the career you've created is based on sharing your passions in life with others. (I, 75)

These entrepreneurs, all of them founders of budding cultural enterprises, profess a sincere dedication to helping others find their passion. All of these men have built their businesses on the premise that passion is easily converted to profit, as long as one has a strong work ethic. These entrepreneurs want others to experience the elective affinities they have felt in their own lives. For instance, one staff writer describes the goals of a

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VFX artist as "to change people's perspectives in order to enlighten and make their lives better." By "teaching how something is done," this beardsman can improve the lives of others precisely because he is staying true to himself. His position in social space and, therefore, his tastes show him that the pursuit of passion is not only an economically viable way to make a living, but that it is a morally viable path to self-improvement and enlightenment. In fact, the economic aspects of the production system (what goods are being produced, one's role in the system, etc.) are secondary to the subjective elements of entrepreneurship. For one skateboard designer/creative brand artist (excerpt 22), success as an entrepreneur is not about the "specific product or service," but about the passion and enthusiasm an entrepreneur brings to the market. If this passion is visible to the consumer, "people will be interested." Here, the elective affinity between the personal and the professional is evidence for one's legitimacy as a producer of culture and cultural goods. This discourse also works as reassurance for prospective entrepreneurs who may still feel unsure about the financial liquidity of their passion.

The passion one feels in their occupation reflects the social compatibility between socially stratified people and jobs, and one must demonstrate this compatibility if they are to work in the production of taste. Through their vocational alignment, passionate entrepreneurs produce tastes for new occupational positions based on "sharing your passions in life with others" and for goods corresponding to such positions. Beardbrand is exemplary of this dual production, founding their brand on a mission to purvey authentic products for entrepreneurially-minded men. Thus, "sharing your passions" becomes a potentially profitable business model, where producing taste in one's own image is only made possible by the seamless weaving of personal and professional taste. Though Beardbrand contributors emphasized passion more frequently than profit in their commendation of the entrepreneurial lifestyle, entrepreneurial enthusiasm was acknowledged as a lucrative endeavour:

> (24) We're all about entrepreneurship and local businesses, and very passionate about what we do. My motto is: "Find out what you love doing, and figure out how to make money doing it." (G, 146)

> (25) Both guys have shown that regardless of your passion, if you believe it enough and pursue it as your true authentic self, people will not only respond well to your enthusiasm, but respect you for it. (I, 67)

The motto in excerpt 24 reflects the orientation Beardbrand's entrepreneurs have towards their businesses. Rather than designing their brands around what is already profitable or taking up positions as employees in the creative industries with limited personal autonomy, these entrepreneurs sought to "find what [they] love doing, and figure out how to make money doing it." This injunction creates a space for potential entrepreneurs to recognize themselves in new creative occupations. For individuals who are disenamored with the corporate sphere (as seen in 'occupational transcendence'), this messaging is

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empowering; you can live a fulfilling life on the basis of entrepreneurial passion. Financial and educational barriers melt away in the presence of pure belief, which ensures success as long as one pursues a project as their "true authentic self." Thus, the alignment between personal and professional spheres becomes crucial as authenticity becomes a precondition for a successful professional life. The passion that emerges from a perfect marriage of personal taste and occupation is then converted into profit. Because this elective affinity does not appear to be shaped by social position, creative entrepreneurs imbue their projects with a mystical character. Feeling 'called' toward a certain social trajectory, these entrepreneurs view themselves not as mere producers of goods but as moral entrepreneurs delivering transformative individual and social change:

> (26) It's true, the products that we develop are just that, products. But for me, as the creator, I see them as so much more. They are gateways and tools to change society; to shift perceptions and challenge the status quo. (F, 33)

> (27) We are so passionate about the company we are building, the customers we serve, and the community we are uniting. [...] We wanted to be more than a company that sells products, and instead we want to guide men to become the individuals they want to be (beard or beardless). For many of our customers, that means giving them the tools they need to grow their beards out. (F, 21)

Looking at the founder's discourse, we can see that Beardbrand's aim is much broader than the provision of men's grooming products. The company is a vehicle of social change that enables people, bearded or not, to shift their perceptions and challenge existing norms. Positioning themselves beyond the banality of nine-to-five life, the brand is able to see the moral failings of contemporary society in its conformity and intolerance for beardsmen. However, the brand's goal is not merely to encourage individual reflection on salient moral issues of the day, but to unite a community of beardsmen (excerpt 27). Here, the company is simply taking an active role in the work of taste, that is, bringing people and things together that go together. Beardbrand's intermediary role is sketched out further in its ambition to "guide men" in becoming "the individuals they want to be." However, the imagined individuals these men want to become are in themselves shaped by taste: the material and symbolic objects and practices one gravitates towards are not random but socially organized. Therefore, it is Beardbrand's task to awaken in others the elective affinities they have found for themselves through the production of taste. The brand markets a lifestyle of independence and personal growth, within which consumers can identify their tastes. Giving men "the tools they need" can then be seen as a process of taste-making, of producing a self-understanding in the consumer that aligns with the brand's commercial and class interests. Beardbrand's contributors experienced a cosmic alignment between their careers and tastes, leading them to advocate for the awakening of entrepreneurial passion in others. This genuine belief in the necessity of their occupations was mobilized as reassurance for potential entrepreneurs and helped to produce taste for

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new creative occupations.

Social Indeterminacy

So far, we have seen evidence for the interrupted middle-class trajectories of Beardbrand's entrepreneurs, whether in the need to 'transcend' traditional corporate positions or in entrepreneurs' encouragement of others to take on the risk associated with self-employment as long as they are passionate. The orientation toward upward mobility, which structures middle-class practices and fantasies (perhaps most apparent in the 'entrepreneurial ethos' section), can no longer be achieved through once-reliable means. While in Bourdieu's (1984) France, this interruption resulted from a revaluation of the relationship between educational qualifications and jobs (p. 355), the neoliberal American context poses new problems for the upward-oriented middle-class as discussed above. Creative work becomes an option for the stagnant or declining middle-class, relatively low in economic capital but rich in cultural capital, to salvage their social position by moving into ill-defined and not-yet-legitimate areas. This type of work is hailed as enabling personal freedom and self-expression but tends to lack the stability and predictability of conventional employment (Christopherson, 2013). To legitimize their emerging fields, new brands and entrepreneurs occupying new cultural positions can take an active role in producing the taste for their new occupations (see 'elective affinities'), by encouraging others to become entrepreneurs and promising high profits from not-yet-dominant cultural capital. Thus, these entrepreneurs occupy an indeterminate place in the middle-class: their new positions do not guarantee upward mobility, but neither do they ask their occupants for guarantees (e.g. educational credentials). This social indeterminacy can be seen in the discursive resistance to working a single well-established job:

> (28) Team Beardbrand is a group of men that [...] bring diversity to our community. They support the overlapping idea that no matter your background or professional life, beardsmen are not restricted to a pre-determined occupation or lifestyle. Rather, sporting a beard opens the door to a world of opportunities. (UB, 173)

> (29) While my last business card read, Marketing Director for NewME Accelerator, I'm currently the head of Nearwealth, a consulting firm [. . .] I also manage a talented hip-hop artist, Juju Osbourne and I am currently developing the platform Just More Proof, a project centered around sharing inspirational testimonies. I enjoy making ideas happen, and helping others live loving, fulfilling, and purposeful lives. (G, 139)

For these entrepreneurs, the question "what do you do for a living?" hardly lends itself to a straightforward answer. In excerpt 28, the idea of restricting oneself to a "pre-determined

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occupation or lifestyle" is renounced in favour of a vague "world of opportunities." Looming behind this discourse is a question of restriction: in what ways do beardsmen feel so restricted that the discourse of opportunity becomes appealing? The cultural capital these beardsmen possess, whether acquired through the education system or autodidacticism or both, does not preclude employment in well-established occupations, but it does not guarantee employment either. Faced with an array of possible jobs and possible downslide, these beardsmen welcome ambiguity and refuse to be 'tied down' to one particular job, simply because their social position does not allow them this stability. Indeterminacy is understood through the frame of individual choice, interpreting one's unanchored fate as an array of opportunities that need not be predetermined. In the next excerpt, we gain a snapshot of one instant in a highly volatile occupational trajectory. No longer a marketing director, this entrepreneur now boasts at least three projects from financial consultation to talent management to "sharing inspirational testimonies" (excerpt 29); in the latter, we can apprehend what Bourdieu (1984, p. 345) meant by "ill-determined." Though his business cards may always be under the process of revision, all of his endeavours cohere within the vocation of "making ideas happen, and helping others live loving, fulfilling, purposeful lives." This entrepreneur thus occupies a principle more than he occupies a profession, constantly altering the latter to fit the former if necessary. This principled but indeterminate position often engenders an embrace of precarity:

> (30) The business only grew from there. He personally didn't pay himself for the first year of Beardbrand. All of it went straight back to the business. Luckily his wife was working, they had savings, and didn't mind eating too much ramen. The first year was really lucky, and Beardbrand took off within that year. (UB, 51)

> (31) I remember one time my bank account kept going down, so I made a list of pro [sic] and cons; I realized if I need to be a bartender or wait tables to afford my rent, I'm like, 'ok that's actually pretty cool! I'll be the best bartender or waiter ever!' When I think about the worst-case scenario it's never really that bad. New experiences you can learn from are what really drives me and makes the risks worth it. (I, 101)

Both entrepreneurs (Eric and Tobias, respectively) accept the economic insecurity that accompanies self-funded business ventures. This tacit acceptance of precariousness reflects the self-exploitative work habits documented in the scholarship on self-employed creatives (Throsby, 2007). As we can see in excerpts 30 and 31, this self-exploitation can come in varied ways. For instance, Eric refused to grant himself a salary for the sake of reinvestment, while relying on the labour of family members to shore up the tentative income-pause. While this may be interpreted as a merely prudent financial decision based on long-term trajectories, this practice came at significant costs, such as expending family savings and self-imposing austere consumption habits ("didn't mind eating too much ramen"). The affirmation of Beardbrand's success at the end of excerpt 30 is also a strategic

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rationalization of self-exploitative work: even though some asceticism is inevitable, the entrepreneurial mindset will prevail. Tobias, on the other hand, did not have initial access to economic capital through savings or family to 'bootstrap' his app-developing ventures. As his bank account declined, he had to find a way to afford his rent while maintaining his creative pursuits. The necessity of earning a steady income (which is not yet provided by Tobias' design work) is converted into the opportunity to gain "new experiences" in service jobs which are "actually pretty cool." Here, Tobias reconciles his objective economic circumstances, which are "never really that bad," with his desired social trajectory by absorbing the symbolic gains of working-class experience. His ideological alignment with the NPB allows him to see himself as separate from his coworkers, despite being (provisionally) working-class. For him, temporary service work is not merely an income source but a path of personal growth and learning. This experiential lens (emerging from the new petit bourgeois injunction to explore oneself, pursue enjoyment, etc.) leads Tobias to see his financial and personal risks as "worth it." In addition to the rationalization of economic insecurity, Beardbrand's entrepreneurs expressed their social ambiguity through the ideal of geographical mobility:

> (32) Shortly after his escape from the world of school photography, Sean knew he had to find something to fill that need for something more. "I didn't have any formal education, so I was kind of unemployable. I figured that if I went traveling, I might find myself. I (210)

New-agey individualism aside, this excerpt shows that social indeterminacy also translates to geographical indeterminacy. Like one photographer who describes himself as a "nomad" (152), Sean (also a photographer) chronicles his desire to 'find himself' by fleeing his vapid day-job. He recognizes his lack of educational capital as a demerit in the labour market and feels the need to "escape" his existing employment arrangement. This escape occurs in geographical as much as symbolic terms. While Sean is particularly vague about his chosen destination, other entrepreneurs in the Beardbrand 'community' are explicit about their high degree of spatial mobility. For instance, a tech start-up co-founder works in London, though originally from Germany and educated in Tokyo (p. 141); an environmental artist hops from Dayton to "Gainesville, NYC, Santa Fe, Finland, Iceland, Atlanta and Detroit" (p. 156); a travelling bartender wanders the fifty states (p. 218); a Canadian lifestyle photographer has roamed from Pennsylvania to urban North Carolina (p. 145); etc. Later in Sean's interview, we learn that he could not afford to travel but pursued competitive cycling in order to travel for a living. Eventually, he achieved his goal of becoming a professional adventurer. Sean abandons the traditional, but now untenable, aspirations of middle-class homeownership and secure employment, instead opting for exploration. While this exploration is quite literal for Sean, the professional adventurer is a perfect metaphor for the NPB, who must venture into new cultural territories and convince others of their value. In addition to geography, Beardsmen look to history to consolidate their ascending social trajectory:

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(33) Old Money [cologne], represents the "work" in urban beardsman. But for me, it represents more than simply work. To a certain degree it pays homage to the titans of industry who helped build America and the world. Beardsmen like Andrew Carnegie (full beard), James J Hill (goatee), Cornelius Vanderbilt [sic] (sideburns), and JP Morgan (mustache). These were men who knew the [sic] could change the way the world operated and set out to improve society. (F, 33)

Here, Beardbrand's founder explains the symbolic significance of his cologne, "Old Money." In identifying with Gilded Age tycoons, Eric transcends his uncertain class position, discursively restoring his current socio-historical conditions to ones in which innovative men could "change the way the world operated and set out to improve society" through the market. These men do not simply represent a class of frugal industrialists at a particular historical juncture; rather, they are beardsmen. Through this act of retroactive classification, Eric draws a straight line between his entrepreneurial endeavours and those of "the titans of industry." In his view, both projects were premised on the theory that 'great men' possessed by the entrepreneurial spirit can make a positive difference in the world. Despite the structural differences between the post-Civil War and neoliberal Americas, such as rising wages in the former and falling wages in the latter, rapid industrialization and stagnant deindustrialization, class conflict and class blindness (Huyssen, 2014), Beardbrand's entrepreneurs construct an intertemporal connectedness between themselves and an idyllic period of meritocracy and innovation (which, at the time, was more easily attainable for men). That is, they use the past to intervene in their conception of the present and future (Sarial-Abi et al., 2017). This psychological identification with the old industrial bourgeoisie allows beardsmen to pacify their class anxieties specific to the 21st century while experiencing them as transhistorical struggles for greatness. This intertemporal connectedness also explains Beardsmen's preoccupation with craft and artisanship, perceived as lost relics of an occupational golden age extinguished by mass-production (p. 4, 60, 89, 180, 207 passim), as well as their fixations on rugged self-sustaining patriarchs (e.g. fathers and grandfathers, p. 13, 69, 93, 106, passim) and references to the mid-to-late 19th century (from Thoreau [master corpus p. 105, 1120] to bearded and moustached craftsmen and shopkeepers [master corpus p. 175, 253, 846, passim]). Beardsmen also express their social indeterminacy through their uncertainty about the future:

(34) While I do not know how big my beard will get or what my career holds next, I do know that I have begun to heal and that professional spark inside of me has started to produce smoke and warmth for the first time in years. (G, 109)

(35) It was always tempting to quit my job and work with leather full time. And when the company faced a major downsizing, and I got laid off, I had to make the decision to either find another job, or finally pursue the dream of ours (my wife and I) to work together in our shop making leather bags full

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> time. Though it was scary, the decision was pretty easy for me. We haven't looked back. (I, 206)

While the author in excerpt 34 expresses uncertainties about his career prospects and dealing with the ill-defined and unestablished nature of his position, excerpt 35 represents a strategy to mitigate the threat of class vicissitudes, which he experiences as downsizing and layoffs. In the former, a sales employee and imminent entrepreneur balances the unpredictability of his career by highlighting the psychological and vocational healing ("begun to heal," "professional spark") he has experienced in becoming an urban beardsman. While we have seen that entrepreneurs rebrand this uncertainty as an opportunity (see 'occupational transcendence'), this rationalization is also a sublimation of class anxiety into doubt about the future. Even though these entrepreneurs may not see themselves as forming a particular class fraction or emerging from a threatened middle position, they are conscious of their hopes and insecurities regarding the future. These projections reveal aspects of their objective opportunities, beliefs about their destined social trajectory, and the interactions between these two elements. For beardsmen, all occupations are provisional (e.g. excerpts 28 and 29) under an austere socio-economic reality, which denies them the realization of a previous middle-class belief system. The discourse in excerpt 34 is still coming to terms with this problem. However, excerpt 35 accepts this reality and refuses to look back at a forgone class trajectory. The threat of losing the future promised to this entrepreneur and his wife, posed by neoliberal changes in the organization of work, is also a threat to the deepest, most internalized layers of his disposition (which have been shaped by bygone class circumstances) and thus demands a reorientation of meaning. Thus, the entrepreneur constructs meaning through the discourse of 'pursuing one's dream' – the new petit bourgeois imperative to 'do what you love.' Becoming a beardsman, then, is not necessarily an antidote but a shroud for social indeterminacy, masking ambiguity and precariousness with self-determination. Confronted with a labyrinth of a social world, the most 'intuitive' course of action for these men is to find mobility within the self, to play out a defensive struggle in the realm of dreams and self-improvement.

Conclusion

In this article, I have argued for a conception of hipsters as a class of self-employed cultural producers responding to neoliberal economic and social reforms. Connecting Pierre Bourdieu's (1984) new petite bourgeoisie to more recent debates on the creative class (Florida, 2002; Markusen, 2006; Leslie & Rantisi, 2012; Christopherson, 2013; Jakob, 2013), I envisioned hipsters as producers who emerged from a threatened social position and mobilized creative entrepreneurialism as recourse to an upward social trajectory. To understand how these producers talked about their emergence as entrepreneurs, I conducted a corpus-based discourse analysis of Beardbrand, a men's grooming company with

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a focus on sharing the stories of bearded entrepreneurs (or beardsmen). By conceptualizing discourse as a field, this method allowed me to glean how these men experienced and justified their movement into the self-employed creative industries. My findings revealed five main discursive categories which represented the ways in which Beardbrand's hipsters navigate their social position as a threatened middle-class while rationalizing and legitimizing their roles as creative entrepreneurs.

First, I found that Beardbrand catered to a class of entrepreneurial creative producers and built their *Urban Beardsman* blog around the contributions of like-minded entrepreneurs. These men adopted an entrepreneurial ethos centred around work ethic and meritocracy, envisioning themselves as a quintessential creative class (Florida, 2002) while reinforcing the ideological primacy of entrepreneurial freedoms (Harvey, 2005). They also experienced their endeavours in the psychologized language of mindset and enjoyment, in line with Bourdieu's (1984) morality of pleasure. The prevalence of occupational transcendence narratives revealed a snapshot of their social mobility from traditional middle-class occupations to creative self-employment. Like Murray's (2020) Detroit bartenders, these men flocked to the creative industries as the prototypical middle-class existence became untenable. Beardsmen described a seamless alignment between their personal tastes and chosen professions, which allowed them to convert their passion into profit, encouraging others to identify their taste in similar lifestyles through cultural intermediation. This elective affinity shows that Beardbrand's hipsters reconverted cultural capital (whether knowledge from previous business occupations, the education system or autodidacticism) into economic capital (Scott, 2017). Lastly, Beardsmen revealed their social indeterminacy through variegated careers, embracing precarity, geographical mobility, identification with the past, and uncertainty about the future. In particular, the acceptance of precarious work in the name of self-expressive lifestyles reflects broader trends in the creative sector (Jakob, 2013; Christopherson, 2013).

Overall, Beardbrand provides evidence for the claim that hipsters emerge from a threatened middle-class position as a result of neoliberal austerity (Scott, 2017; Murray, 2020). These entrepreneurs rejected and challenged dominant ideas about how work is and should be organized by placing the role of creative freedom and passion at the forefront of their pursuits. However, they also upheld rather normative conceptions of meritocracy while advocating strong beliefs in market-oriented solutions to social and personal issues. In addition to their entrepreneurial zeal, these men clung to the neoliberal order, often rebranding self-exploitation and precarity in terms of personal growth under the austere auspices of individualized responsibility. While hipsters have been contested in popular and academic discourses, especially around gentrification and the 'upscaling' of working-class areas (Hubbard, 2016; Sanders-McDonagh, Peyrefitte, & Ryalls, 2016; Kennelly & Watt, 2012; Cooper, Hubbard, & Lees, 2020), this article aimed to place hipsters into their larger social and political-economic contexts by looking at the ethics, ambiguities, and anxieties they express. My research suggests that although Beardbrand's hipster entrepreneurs were active agents in soliciting market-facilitated social change,

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they enacted such roles as a reaction to neoliberal forces in defence of their social position. They constructed new lifestyles and occupations precisely because these were their only apparent options – as one beardsman notes: "It wasn't really a choice—I knew I had to launch a business" (p. 2).

Of course, this study is limited in its scope; a single brand can only be so representative of the diverse manifestation of a new petite bourgeoisie who can only be defined by "what they do" (Smith Maguire, 2014, p 17). However, representativeness was of less concern for this research than how my findings fit into larger social structures. A major limitation of this study is its focus on an exclusively male group, which provided only a glimpse into one of the gendered modes of creative entrepreneurship. This limitation was visible in each discursive category as urban beardsmen mobilized masculinity (signified in part by a well-groomed beard and the cultural capital necessary to grow one) to legitimize their move into the creative sphere. Beardbrand's discourse drew from pre-existing cultural scripts of gendered entrepreneurialism, including a conception of personal freedom as abstraction from social constraints, to enable their ventures in taste production. Beardsmen also recognized (bearded) masculinity as revealing their inherent creative entrepreneurial dispositions rather than classed modes of distinction, thereby drawing a direct line from their personal life to the professional sphere. In this regard, future scholarship may investigate how the NPB achieves class distinction through gendered signifiers. The limitations of this study may also be addressed by examining how the NPB copes with occupational anxieties and exigencies at the intersections of gender and class. Furthermore, the ways that women and others understand their experiences in the self-employed creative industries may reveal differing gendered pressures behind contemporary entrepreneurial imperatives.

This study is intended to fit within a research programme of understanding how niche occupations are produced, legitimized and eventually professionalized to resolve class vicissitudes (Scott, 2017). Such research sees cultural micro-producers not just as a phenomenon of identity formation but as class formation. Given the diversity of occupations encountered in this study, hipster enterprises do not form a coherent occupational group but rather a loose cluster of actors combining vocation with wider material and symbolic struggle. In this vein, future research is not limited to hipsters and can be expanded to study social influencers, independent media creators, urban planners, fitness trainers, artisan producers, wellness coaches, designers, and other cultural intermediaries. This scholarship should continue to investigate how the middle-class navigates the changing political-economic landscape, and the role of cultural intermediaries in steering this navigation. As the current study shows, culture can be deployed in the transcendence of contemporary class realities, and as a performance of assuredness amid material and symbolic uncertainty. Subsequent research may look at how this cultural stance succeeds in alleviating class anxieties. It may also seek to expand on how entrepreneurs' psychologized experiential frames work towards the persistence of neoliberal ideology (e.g. work ethic, meritocracy, etc.) and reinforce the privatization of responsibility. Such an

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approach could sketch out the nuanced role of creative industry workers as responding to and perpetuating social inequalities. By examining these cultural producers, we can better understand how market solutions attempt and fail to deliver the freedoms they promise.

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Appendix: Table of Occupations Named in Corpus

Note: most authors/interviewees indicated a variety of occupations. Thus, occupations may represent only partial elements of variegated careers. Occupation titles remain faithful to their appearances in the corpus. Corpus page numbers listed with occupation title.

Occupation	# of occurrences in corpus	Occupation	# of occurrences in corpus	Occupation	# of occurrences in corpus
Actor (189)	1	Film and television executive (127)	1	Photographer (131), (152), (159), (175), (204), (210), (216), (79), (81), (90), (94), (96), (97), (116)	14
Adjunct professor (161)	1	Financial consulting firm founder (139)	1	Poet (111), (56)	2
Adult colouring book illustrator (214)	1	Fishing lure designer (171)	1	Poetry teacher (57)	1
Adventure educator (69)	1	Fitness blogger (199)	1	Portfolio tool developer (100)	1
Adventure-wear designer (118)	1	Fitness coach (104)	1	Print/lifestyle model (135)	1
Amateur chef (148)	1	Footwear brand founder (54), (208)	2	Product endorser (197)	1
Amateur writer (152)	1	Footwear company founder/designer (179)	1	Product/user experience designer (101)	1
App developer (100)	1	Freelance marketing expert (contract basis) (4)	1	Professional adventurer (210)	1

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Apparel boutique co-founder/designer (93)	1	Gold miner (144)	1	Professional baseball player (221)	1
Apparel designer (119)	1	Graphic design/illustration (172)	1	Professional basketball player (109), (126)	2
Art/apparel brand founder (87)	1	Graphic designer (131), (151), (164), (219)	4	Professional competitive gamer (67)	1
Artist (151)	1	Graphic designer/design consultant (169)	1	Professional e-athlete (202)	1
Assistant wine maker (99)	1	Hair model (221)	1	Professional football player (223)	1
Astro-photographer (158)	1	Hat/apparel company founder (90)	1	Professional smartphone photographer (77)	1
B2B (business-to-business) copywriter/blogger (11)	1	Health food catering company founder (74)	1	Professional wedding photographer (136)	1
B2C (business-to-consumer) copywriter/blogger (11)	1	Hip-hop artist/musician (130), (131)	2	Professional wedding/portrait photographer (113)	1
Backup singer (92)	1	Illustrator/vector graphics artist (130)	1	Psychosocial rehabilitation specialist (144)	1
Barber (79)	1	Independent brand design consultancy firm co-founder (169)	1	QA engineer (121)	1
Barber shop sales VP (83)	1	Independent designer (167)	1	Rain forest guide (69)	1

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Bartender (144)	1	Independent musician (224)	1	Rancher (144)	1
Beard model (144)	1	Industrial designer (116)	1	Rapper (86)	1
Beard/mustache community administrator (219)	1	Information technologist (133), (170)	2	Real estate investment project manager (144)	1
Bespoke suit and accessory company stylist/founder (168)	1	Inspirational platform developer (139)	1	Record label founder (151), (224)	2
Bike shop mechanic (165)	1	Instagram creator (169)	1	Restaurant worker (133)	1
Boot designer (54)	1	Instagram model (72)	1	Running coach (220)	1
Boutique shoe store-art gallery founder (store doubled as art gallery) (55)	1	Instagrammer (224)	1	Sales rep (109), (129)	2
Boutique meat producer employee (159)	1	IT systems administrator (158)	1	School cafeteria chef (specializing in 'health foods') (74)	1
Brand ambassador (144), (197)	2	Landscape designer (220)	1	Screenplay writer (224)	1
Brand consultant (83)	1	Leather brand painting/shipping/receiving manager (125)	1	Security agent (144)	1
Brand management firm founder (83)	1	Leather company founder (205)	1	Sensory analysis guest lecturer (99)	1
Brand team member (203)	1	Lifestyle blog founder (199)	1	Server (144)	1
Bus operator (129)	1	Lifestyle blogger (6)	1	Shoemaker (208)	1
Cartoonist (87)	1	Lifestyle brand founder (213)	1	Skateboard designer (4)	1

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Cement truck driver (144)	1	Lifestyle magazine founder (154), (75)	2	Skateboard print shop art director (87)	1
Cereal café co-founder (166)	1	Logger (144)	1	Skateboard shop founder/craftsman/painter (114)	1
Chef (174)	1	Logistics coordinator (120)	1	Ski hill lift operator (144)	1
Children's clothing line assistant (133)	1	Lyricist (176)	1	Social influencer (173), (197), (65), (65)	4
Cigar and wine purchasing agent (99)	1	Manufacturing/distribution business owner (171)	1	Social media marketer (219), (221)	2
Cinematographer (152)	1	Marketing director (94)	1	Software developer (121)	1
Clothing producer (172)	1	Marketing professional (163)	1	Somatic educator/ somatic education firm founder (136-7)	1
Co-working space founder (53)	1	Media firm CEO (127)	1	Spotify art director (100)	1
Cobbler (179)	1	Men's accessories brand founder (85)	1	Storyteller (152)	1
Coffee shop founder (55), (63)	2	Men's journaling company founder (116)	1	Streetwear brand founder (172)	1
Comedian (195)	1	Men's magazine founder (8)	1	Style/fitness writer (222)	1
Commercial model (72)	1	Men's self-improvement company founder (222)	1	Surf industry manufacturers association executive director (123)	1

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Construction union worker (138)	1	Men's style blog founder/writer (223)	1	Talent agent (139)	1
Content/image manager (217)	1	Menswear brand shop manager (223)	1	Task management app developer (141)	1
Creative advertising copywriter (4)	1	Metalwork artist (70)	1	Theatre artist (136)	1
Creative agency/brand management worker (225)	1	Middle-school physical education teacher (121)	1	Theatre company co-director (137)	1
Creative cultivator (167)	1	Mobile designer/develop er (53)	1	Traveling bartender (173)	1
Denim company co-founder/owner (211)	1	Model (129), (134), (197), (217), (219)	5	Ukulele luthier/brand founder (89)	1
Design collective co-founder (167)	1	Mortgage broker (161)	1	Underground music producer (151)	1
Designer (214)	1	Motivational speaker (139)	1	Union steward (161)	1
Destination wedding/commer cial photographer (148)	1	Motorcycle repair shop founder (60)	1	Urban boutique freelancer (87)	1
Digital agency founder (148)	1	Motorcycle repair shop technician (60)	1	VFX artist (204)	1
Digital brand builder (167)	1	Music therapist (176)	1	Video director (151)	1
Digital designer (122)	1	Musician (111), (142), (156), (178), (183), (186), (200), (61)	8	Video/photo producer (219)	1
Digital influencer (217)	1	Network engineer (128)	1	Wedding/lifesty le film photographer (144)	1

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Digital media specialist (164)	1	Newsman (161)	1	Weekend bartender (159)	1
Disc jockey (144), (151)	2	Non-profit co-founder (58)	1	Whiskey/bourbon sales rep (148)	1
Emcee (56), (176)	2	Non-profit founder (165), (95)	2	Wholesale warehouse employee (111)	1
Engineer (148)	1	Olympic bobsledder (51)	1	Wild-land firefighter (144)	1
Environmental artist (156)	1	Olympic kickboxer (192)	1	Winery co-founder (99)	1
Event planning agency founder (122)	1	Online jewellery boutique co-founder (90)	1	Woodwear company founder (160)	1
Event promoter (129)	1	Online retail store founder (159)	1	Woodworker (4)	1
Fashion firm district manager (Ralph Lauren) (89)	1	Paddle sports shop print/digital marketer/administrative/shipping worker (117)	1	Yoga professional (156)	1
Fashion/lifestyle photographer (102)	1	Pedicab driver (172)	1	Youtuber (111), (112), (197), (221), (224), (65), (65), (70)	8
Fashion/style author (175)	1	Personal trainer (193)	1	Zoological bird manager (169)	1

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