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Dear potential participant,

My name is Dr. Max Haiven and I work as Canada Research Chair in Culture, Media and Social Justice at Lakehead University. I would like to share with you some details of our **science fiction film club for Amazon workers** in case you might be interested in joining.

The film club will meet on Zoom at weekly intervals in fall of 2021 with the exact times to be determined based on participants' availability. All participants will view the film ahead of time so we can discuss it. In the Zoom call, my fellow facilitators and I will host a conversation about the film.

Mostly, we're interested in what you and other participants think about the film and if you see any parallels between the future or world of the film and your own life and work at Amazon. There are six sessions--one and week--and if you attend at least four of them, we would be pleased to offer you a \$100 digital gift card.

We are also setting up a Discord server (a way of chatting online) and would welcome you to participate. If the group is interested, we might also do some more creative activities to respond to the films, like writing screenplays, creating alternative endings and writing short stories.

For more information about our project you can visit our website: reimaginingvalue.ca/filmclub.

Who and why

Why are we doing this? Amazon is the world's largest retailer and one of the biggest companies and employers in the world. It's changing many things about how we buy, how we work, how we live and how the economy works. It's even changing the future itself. But for whose benefit? Many people appreciate working for Amazon, but others feel exploited. No matter how you feel, we want to talk with current or former Amazon workers about how their lives and futures are changing. We think the best and most interesting way to do this is by discussing science fiction films together.

This project fits into research I have been doing for a number of years about the "radical imagination," which is the thing that makes it possible for us to think that society can be changed for the better. I believe that the radical imagination exists in everyone and shines when we come together to discuss important things about our world and I specialized in

creating opportunities for this to happen. In this project, I'm working with a few other researchers who share this passion and an interest in science fiction.

I'm interested! What's next?

Here's what you need to know if you are interested in participating.

- **Who can participate?** This opportunity is open to anyone currently or recently employed, directly or indirectly, by Amazon *except* for managers and corporate executives (who cannot participate because it might make workers uncomfortable). Maybe you work in a warehouse, or as a delivery driver, or at Whole Foods, or on the MTurk platform? As long as you are currently or recently employed by Amazon, or your livelihood *depends* on Amazon, we welcome you.
- **Complete the survey and agreement.** We'll ask you to first complete a [small survey on Google Forms](#) so we can get some information and your email address. This information is only for the internal use of our research team and will never be shared. The entry survey also includes a consent form and a participants' agreement where you'll agree to keep what happens inside our Zoom meetings confidential.
- **You can always use a fake name.** Throughout the whole project you don't need to use your real name. But we do ask you to choose a single fake name and use it consistently, or else it is confusing.
- **We'll never identify you.** The Zoom sessions will not be recorded, but our research team will be taking notes. Because of the nature of the Discord platform, whatever you share there will be seen by everyone. If we publish anything based on those notes or Discord conversations, it will never identify anyone by name or in a way that can be used to identify them. But it might describe a person, for instance, in a magazine article we might write that "one participant, who grew up in Guatemala and now works at an Amazon warehouse in Florida, shared that she sympathized with the main character in *Snowpiercer* because..."
- Additionally, if there is interest from the people in the group, we might do some creative stuff together, like write our own screenplays or short stories or alternative endings to films. If we do this, we may discuss together the possibilities of publishing this material on our project's website or elsewhere. You'll have the option not to participate, and you can always use a fake name if you want to.

Risks and benefits

There are very few risks to participating in this project, but we want to let you know what they are just in case.

- First, some of the films we watch might be disturbing or feature controversial material. We'll let you know ahead of time what films we'll be watching and give you links to

information so you know what to expect and we'll try and give everyone a warning if something is likely to be upsetting.

- Second, since we're gathering together about 14-18 workers like you, we can't completely guarantee no one will talk about what's said inside the sessions to people outside. In our registration survey we are asking everyone to sign a pledge of confidentiality to keep what's said at the club private.
- Third, we do know that Amazon is sensitive to criticism from its workers. We expect that workers in our film club will express criticism of the company and talk about their experiences, good and bad. But since there are millions of Amazon employees and the company has a lot of other things to focus on, we think the risk that they will take action against workers for participating in the film club is very low.

There are some benefits of this research we want to share.

- First, we think it will be fun, interesting and thought-provoking and offer Amazon workers who love science fiction a chance to come together, to meet new people and share their passion. It might also provide an outlet for creativity.
- Second, if you attend at least four of the six sessions, we'll send you a \$100 digital gift card to thank you for your time.
- You'll also be helping us as researchers. We're trying to develop a new "methodology" (i.e. a way of doing research) that's not about studying workers as if they were lab rats but, instead, creating a space where workers *themselves* can come together to understand and "think big" about the world. Once the club is completed, we plan to share what we did and how it worked with other researchers to improve the way we learn about the world. Also, we think that in the course of our discussions we'll all learn something new about Amazon and the future it's creating, which is important as the company grows in size and power.

Staying informed and your privacy

If you sign up for this club by completing the entry survey, we'll add you to an email list and send you updates about the status of the project and anything we publish based on our research. You can also follow its progress on the website (reimaginingvalue.ca/filmclub), as well as by following me on Twitter (@maxhaiven).

Some of the things we are thinking about doing include: publishing academic articles and book chapters; writing articles for blogs, magazines and newspapers; publishing thoughts, ideas and creative content to our website; talking about the project on podcasts and other platforms.

I want to remind you that your participation is entirely voluntary. You can leave at any time. You don't have to answer any question or participate in any way that you don't want to. We will keep the results of the entry surveys, our notes and any creative output from participants in a private Google Drive and never share it without your express permission. We will keep that

Drive for five years after the conclusion of the research project, they delete everything, and if you want data associated with you deleted before that, we will honour your request right away.

Many thanks for considering being part of our project. We value your time and interest.

Please don't hesitate to get in touch with me directly if you have any questions or concerns via email at: mhaiven [at] lakeheadu.ca

I hope to meet you soon,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Max Haiven', written in a cursive style.

Dr. Max Haiven

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This study has been approved by the Lakehead University Research Ethics Board. If you have any questions related to the ethics of the research and would like to speak to someone outside of the research team please contact Sue Wright at the Research Ethics Board at 807-343-8283 or research@lakeheadu.ca."

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