

## **Abstract – Dependence & Precarity in the “Sharing” Economy**

Since its introduction in the late 2000s, there has been considerable debate about the impacts of the “sharing” economy. One focus of attention has been treatment of people who provide services via platforms. In this paper, we analyze conditions for platform providers on the basis of 102 in-depth interviews drawn from earners on six platforms (Airbnb, TaskRabbit, Uber, Lyft, Postmates and Favor). Interviews were conducted from 2013-2016. We find that providers have widely varying experiences, earnings and working conditions. A key axis of differentiation is the extent to which they rely on the platform to pay basic expenses versus use it to earn supplemental income. Dependent providers on a number of platforms experience low net earnings, inadequate demand, and less control, making the platforms a precarious way to earn a living. A second axis is that the platforms themselves vary considerably in terms of what providers can earn, conditions of work and their ability to produce satisfied workers.