

## CONTENTS PAGE

	Page
Abstract	i
Glossary of terms	ii
List of figures and tables	iii
Chapter 1 Introduction and literature review	1
Chapter 2 Uncovering the labour process in racing	36
Chapter 3 The horseracing industry	72
Chapter 4 Context of stable staff employment relations	109
Chapter 5 The labour process in racing	138
Chapter 6 Employers in the racing labour process	187
Chapter 7 Workers in the racing labour process	214
Chapter 8 Conclusions	256
Bibliography	274
Appendices	289

## ABSTRACT

This thesis is a study of the labour process in the United Kingdom racing industry, with specific reference to racehorse trainers and their stable staff. The thesis considers the history and development of industrial relations in this part of the racing industry and find that it is a hollow shell. Its central contribution is to use labour process theory to understand the continuing subordination of labour. It moves beyond the dichotomy of 'small is beautiful' or 'small is exploitation', which formed the early theoretical debate in the small firms arena.

The thesis recognises that the labour process in small firms has not yet been fully explored and that the experience of workers has been under-reported in the literature. It therefore engages with the working lives of stable staff and finds that there is a distinct labour process. Staff have displayed a collective identity at periods in the past, despite working for a large number of small firms. There is latent collectivism amongst stable staff, derived from strong cultural bonds inside and outside the workplace and through the regular bringing together at race meetings throughout the racing season. This group of workers thus has a stronger labour market position than in many sectors dominated by micro and small firms and could have a stronger voice in the workplace.

There are some 612 racing stables in the UK, employing 6500 staff. Basic pay and conditions are governed by the National Joint Council for Stable Staff (NJCSS), the parties to the national agreement being the National Trainers' Federation (employers' association, NTF) and the Stable Lads' Association (industry staff association, SLA). The NJCSS was created in 1975 following a twelve week strike by stable staff in Newmarket, one of the main centres of racing. The SLA was also created in 1975 and effectively served to derecognise the Transport and General Workers' Union.

The employers created the NJCSS and SLA and the SLA remains under the employers' control. There is therefore an employer-dominated industrial relations machinery which effectively sets a minimum-wage rate but little more. The SLA lacks a national or regional structure and has no workplace presence and no real lines of communication with its members. Workers in turn have no confidence in the Association but do not seek the alternative of an independent trade union.

There is also an exploration of employer control and subordination of the workforce. Employers were found to use a range of strategies, from simple direct control through paternalism to control through the daily care and attention, which workers give to the horses in each racing stables. Employers were also found to be part of a nexus of controlling interests in the industry, including the Jockey Club and interest groups such as racehorse owners.

Overall the research finds that control, resistance and worker voice are all present but that these small capitals are analytically distinct, because of the nature of the industry they work in and the cultural ties that bind them and their workforce together.

## **GLOSSARY OF INDUSTRY BODIES**

<b>Association of British Bookmakers</b>	<b>ABB</b>
<b>British Horseracing Board</b>	<b>BHB</b>
<b>British Horseracing Authority</b>	<b>BHA</b>
<b>British Racing School</b>	<b>BRS</b>
<b>Horserace Betting Levy Board</b>	<b>HBLB</b>
<b>Jockey Club</b>	
<b>National Association of Stable Staff</b>	<b>NASS</b>
<b>National Joint Council for Stable Staff</b>	<b>NJCSS</b>
<b>National Trainers' Federation</b>	<b>NTF</b>
<b>Northern Racing College</b>	<b>NRC</b>
<b>The Race Course Association</b>	<b>RCA</b>
<b>Racehorse Owners Association</b>	<b>ROA</b>
<b>Racing Post</b>	
<b>Stable Lads' Association</b>	<b>SLA</b>
<b>Tattersalls</b>	
<b>Thoroughbred Breeders Association</b>	<b>TBA</b>
<b>The Totalisator Board</b>	<b>The Tote</b>
<b>Transport and General Workers' Union</b>	<b>TGWU</b>
<b>Weatherby's</b>	

## **LIST OF FIGURES AND TABLES**

**Page No**

## FIGURES

Figure 4.1	Structure of UK racing industry	88
Figure 4.2	Horses in Training – size of trainers yards	103
Figure 4.3	Yards with 40+ horses	104
Figure 4.4	Trainers by region	105
Figure 4.5	Employment rates 2002-2006	110
Figure 4.6	Employment rates for women 2002-2006	111
Figure 4.7	Employment rates for men 2002-2006	112
Figure 4.8	Distribution by age group 2002-2006	112
Figure 7.1	Organisation structure in racing	198

## TABLES

Table 2.1	Epistemological choices	20
Table 2.2	Methodological choices	21
Table 4.1	The Jockey Club	92
Table 4.2	The British Horseracing Board	96
Table 4.3	Annual trainer statistics	102
Table 4.4	Council of the National Trainers' Federation	108
Table 7.1	Respondents' backgrounds	208