

CONCLUSION

On-demand work is not new, but a contemporary instantiations of piecework. In this paper, we reconsider three major research questions in on-demand work using the lens of piecework: 1) “what are the complexity limits of on-demand work?”; 2) “how far can work be decomposed into smaller microtasks?”; and 3) “what will work and the place of work look like for workers?” To do so, we draw on piecework scholarship to inform analyses of what has changed, what hasn’t, and may change change soon. Reciprocally, we believe that modern on-demand work will teach us about the broader phenomenon of piecework as well. If history really does repeat itself, the best we can do is be prepared.