

Work & Inequality under Capitalism

SOC 6310: Work & Inequality
Spring 2016
Tues 4:30-7:00 PM
MAIN 201

Professor: Dr. Christy Glass
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Office Hours: Thurs 1:30 – 4:30 PM

"A central human capability involves being able to work as a human being, exercising practical reason and entering into meaningful relationships of mutual recognition with other workers." –Martha Nussbaum

"And this life activity [the worker] sells to another person in order to secure the necessary means of life...He works that he may keep alive. He does not count the labor itself as a part of his life; it is rather a sacrifice of his life." –Karl Marx

Course Objectives

As the two quotes above suggest, work can be the site of human flourishing and fulfillment. However, in modern society, work has become the primary site where social inequalities are produced and reproduced—a fact that animated classical and contemporary theorists alike. The centrality of work to social science research and theory is due to the significance of the workplace and relations of work in organizing nearly every aspect of our social lives. Cultural conceptions of citizenship, community and identity are deeply rooted in notions of work. Who works, how we work, who does which jobs, and how jobs are organized vary across time and space and shape a variety of outcomes of interest to social scientists.

The terms of employment and conditions of work that emerged in the 19th century and prevailed through most of the 20th century in the United States have been radically transformed in the past few decades. This course explores the transformation of work in the U.S. from the Industrial Revolution through the Great Recession, with a focus on the evolution of modern capitalism and the impacts of various production regimes on workers.

The course is organized as a small seminar for graduate students and advanced undergraduate students. In order to achieve the full potential of such a seminar, all participants must come to class prepared to discuss and critically evaluate themes, ideas and debates raised in the assigned readings. Our collective commitment to the course—inside and outside the classroom—will result in deeper analytic, writing and communication skills for all participants.

Central Questions

- How have scholars conceptualized work under capitalism?
- How have scholars analyzed work-based inequalities, including gender, race/ethnic and citizenship-based inequalities?
- What economic, political and ideological transformations have shaped the emergence and evolution of historical and contemporary production regimes?
- How is worker discipline and consent achieved in different production regimes?
- How have workers experienced and responded to the emergence of a new low wage, service-oriented economy?
- What are the possibilities for change?

Learning Outcomes:

- Gaining knowledge about the field.
- Learning to apply course material to a variety of social issues and problems.
- Developing skills in expressing yourself orally and in writing.
- Gaining a broader understanding and appreciation for scholarly work in this field.
- Learning to analyze and critically evaluate ideas, arguments and points of view.

Student Assessment

Course components as percentage of your final grade will include the following:

- Class participation and attendance: 40%
- Paper proposal (due 2/9): 10%
- Paper outline (due 3/22): 10%
- Opinion-Editorial (due 4/5): 20%
- Final paper (due 5/5) : 20%%

Required Reading

- Wharton, Amy, ed. 2006. *Working in America: Continuity, Conflict and Change*. McGraw.
- Cohen, Lizabeth. 2008. *Making a New Deal*. Cambridge University Press.
- Kalleberg, Arne. 2011. *Good Jobs, Bad Jobs*. New York: Russell Sage Foundation.
- Bank Munoz, Carolina. 2008. *Transnational Tortillas*. Cornell University Press.
- Additional required readings available on course Canvas page.

Accommodation with Students with Disabilities

If you have a documented disability and need reasonable accommodation to participate in this course, please make an appointment to meet with me as soon as possible so that together we can arrange the necessary reasonable accommodations. Please note that prior to our meeting you must obtain documentation of your disability through the Disability Resource Center (DRC) on campus.

Plagiarism Statement

Academic dishonesty of any kind will not be tolerated. Please be familiar with the *Code of Policies and Procedures for Students*. Keep in mind that ignorance of the policies contained therein is not an excuse for violating them. Penalties for plagiarism can include grade adjustments, academic probation, suspension, expulsion, withholding of transcripts, and denial or revocation of degrees.

Part I. The Social Organization of Work

The Social Meaning of Work

- Tues, 1/12 **Sociological Approaches to Work: What's at Stake?**
Tilly & Tilly, "How to Work Things Out" (CANVAS)
Tilly & Tilly, "Worlds of Work" (CANVAS)

Theoretical Approaches to Work

- Tues, 1/19 **Theories of Work & Inequality**
Marx, "Alienated Labor" (WHARTON)
Weber, "Bureaucracy" (WHARTON)
Braverman, "The Division of Labor" (WHARTON)
Burawoy, "Thirty Years of Making Out" (WHARTON)
Hayes, "Flat Broke with Children" (WHARTON)

Historical Foundations

- Tues, 1/26 **The Rise of Industrial Capitalism**
Taylor, "Fundamentals of Scientific Management" (WHARTON)
Mayer, "Evolution of New Industrial Technology" (WHARTON)
Jacoby, "The Way It Was" (WHARTON)
Harvey, "Fordism" (CANVAS)
Chriddendon, "How Mother's Work Was 'Disappeared'" (CANVAS)
- Tues, 2/2 **The Rise of Industrial Unionism**
Roediger *Wages of Whiteness* (CANVAS)
Cohen, *Making a New Deal*, Chaps. 1, 4-8 (COHEN)

Part II. Current Trends in Work & Inequality

The Rise of the Post-Industrial Economy

- Tues, 2/9 **The Logic of Change**
Harvey, *Brief History of Neoliberalism*, Chapt. 1-4 (CANVAS)
- Tues, 2/23¹ **Deindustrialization, Outsourcing & Restructuring**
Powell, "The Capitalist Firm in the 21st Century" (WHARTON)
Smith, "Structural Unemployment" (WHARTON)
Wilson, "Jobless Poverty" (WHARTON)
Sassen, "Incorporation of 3rd World Women" (CANVAS)
Freeman, "Where Have All the Unions Gone"

State Retrenchment & Risk

- Tues, 3/1 **Whither the Safety Net**
Hacker, *The Great Risk Shift* (CANVAS)
Massey, "Explaining American Exceptionalism" (CANVAS)
Western and Rosenfeld, "Unions, Norms and Wage Inequality" (CANVAS)

The Nature of Work in the 'New Economy'

- Tues, 3/15² **Low Wage Jobs, Low Wage Workers**
Kalleberg, *Good Jobs, Bad Jobs*, Chapt. 1-9 (KALLEBERG)
- Tues, 3/22 **Service Jobs, Service Workers**
Hochschild, "The Managed Heart" (WHARTON)
Leidner, "Over the Counter" (WHARTON)
Sallaz, "House Rules" (WHARTON)
Fuller & Smith, "Management by Customers" (CANVAS)

¹ Tuesday, Feb. 16 will follow a Monday class schedule.

² March 7-11 is Spring Break.

Part II. Inequality at Work

Inequality at Work: Gender & Sexuality

Tues, 3/29

Sociological Approaches to Inequality at Work

Tilly & Tilly, "Inequality at Work" (CANVAS)

Gendered Jobs, Gendered Workers

Williams et al., "Gendered Organizations in the New Economy" (CANVAS)

Williams, "The Glass Escalator" (CANVAS)

Schilt, "Just One of the Guys?" (CANVAS)

Inequality at Work: Work/Family Conflict

Tues, 4/5

Family Status & (Care) Work

Hays, "Responsibilities of Intensive Mothering" (CANVAS)

Hodges and Budig, "Who Gets the Daddy Bonus?" (CANVAS)

Hochschild, "Love and Gold" (WHARTON)

Hondogneau-Sotelo, "Maid in LA" (WHARTON)

Inequality at Work: Race

Tues, 4/12

Race & Racism on the Job

Vallas, "Rediscovering the Color Line" (CANVAS)

Moss and Tilly, "Stories Employers Tell" (WHARTON)

Pager, "Discrimination in a Low Wage Labor Market" (CANVAS)

Wingfield, "Are Some Emotions Marked 'Whites Only'?" (CANVAS)

Inequality at Work: Immigration

4/19

New Patterns of Segregation & Labor Management?

Bank Munoz, *Transnational Tortillas* (MUNOZ)

The Future of Work Under Capitalism

4/26

Defining Problems, Debating Solutions

Fantasia & Voss, *Hard Work*, Chaps. 4-5 (CANVAS)

Kalleberg, *Good Jobs, Bad Jobs*, Chaps. 10-11 (KALLEBERG)

