

Soc 39: The Sociology of Work

Fall 2012

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Office hours: Wednesdays 1:30-3:30pm & by appointment

Silsby 104

Intro

We often think of work as a part of the impersonal world of economic markets, and yet in reality work is deeply intertwined with the wider world and the social forces that rule it. Indeed, work plays a central role in our social identities and interactions. In this course we will examine work from a social perspective, focusing mainly on the nature and history of work in the United States. We will be examining questions such as: How has the experience of work evolved over time? Have the rules of work changed fundamentally in the last few decades? How does work affect our social relationships? How does work reflect and impact inequalities? How do we define and choose our occupations?

Books

The required book for the course is:

Amy S. Wharton (2005) *Working in America: Continuity, Conflict, and Change*, 3rd edition. McGraw-Hill. ISBN: 0073528013

Components of the course

Group project: Occupational Analysis

In groups of 3-4 students, you will investigate several aspects of a particular occupation. You may choose any occupation you wish (except for illegal occupations). You might explore a future career possibility or cross social boundaries to explore a job you know little about. You may also choose to examine unemployment (looking for work), housework, or stay-at-home parenting.

Each project will include 3-4 components (depending upon whether you have 3 or 4 in your group). The components will explore different ways of conducting sociological research. You can choose which components you wish to include, see the list below. The final paper can either integrate all of the research into a single report or it can report the different components separately. However, even if you choose to do separate reports you will need to have some elements of integration (e.g. an introduction and conclusion that tie things together as well as cross-references within the sections). The reports should be 18-25 pages long (23-30 for groups of 4). The final report will be due on **November 20 at midnight**.

The possible components of the paper include:

- *An analysis of occupational demographics.* I will provide you with data about the size, wages, and demographic composition of occupations over time, as well as the tools to create a table summarizing these statistics for your selected occupation. You create the table and analyze the results. You might also look for additional data on your occupation.
- *Interviews* (up to two). Conduct an interview (or two) with someone who works in your chosen occupation. These interviews should be conducted in person or over the phone (not via email). We will discuss interview methods and ethics in class before you conduct interviews.
- *Content analysis.* Examine how this occupation is portrayed in the news media, or examine how this occupation portrays itself by examining publications generated by professional organizations. We will discuss content analysis methods in class.
- *Historical analysis.* Examine historical documents about the evolution of this occupation over time. This is not about writing up a history of the occupation, but rather looking historical documents to examine this occupation in the past.

Exams

There will be three take exams over the course of the term. These exams are a chance to review the topics in one section before we move on to the next. They will consist of one or two essay questions that ask you to tie together the topics in a section and think about broader questions. The exams will *not* test you on nitty-gritty facts. They will be open-book and you will have two days to complete each exam. Given the short time frame, don't count on being able to catch up on missed readings during the test.

Participation

While the class is partially a lecture course, we will also have some large- and small-group discussions of the readings in the class. You should be prepared to discuss the readings and contribute to the class discussions.

Grading

Participation: 4%
Exams: 24% each
Group report I: 24%

The final grade will follow this scale:

100-93: A
92.99-90: A-
89.99-87: B+
86.99-83: B
82.99-80: B-
79.99-77: C+
76.99-73: C
Etc.

The criteria for the grades:

The grading for the exams and reports focus on three criteria: a) Shows a nuanced understanding of the class materials and readings. b) Points to new and interesting connections and insights into the material. c) Is well written with a clear and well-supported argument.

A: Shows outstanding work on all three criteria. Shows independent critical thinking, developing ideas well beyond what we have covered in class.

A- Shows outstanding work on two of the three criteria and very strong work on the third. Shows independent thinking beyond what we have covered in class.

B+ Shows outstanding work on one of the three criteria and very strong work on the other two.

B Shows strong work on all three criteria.

B- Shows strong work in at least one criteria and acceptable in the others

C+ Acceptable work in all three criteria

C and lower. Needs work in one or more areas

Late policy

Take home essays will lose one point (out of 100) for every 2 hours they are late. Late papers will not be accepted for the final report.

Electronic devices

Laptops

I understand that students are increasingly using laptops to take notes, but the internet is also an irresistible distraction. I will allow laptops in class, but be warned that I have a pet peeve about students surfing the web in class. So, if you can't resist responding to blitzmail, you're probably best off leaving your laptop at home.

Cell phones

Please turn off your cell phones while in class. I reserve the right to answer any phone that rings in class.

Academic integrity

I expect students in the class to conduct themselves in accordance with Dartmouth's honor code and with academic and personal integrity. Explanations of Dartmouth's integrity rules and principles can be found at <http://www.dartmouth.edu/~uja>. Students are expected to take responsibility for doing their own work, providing proper citations whenever using words or ideas borrowed from others. Details on citing sources are available at <http://www.dartmouth.edu/~sources>.

I also expect you to be considerate to other students while in class. This does not mean that you should censor your opinions, but you should present your ideas in a respectful manner.

Disabilities

Students with learning, physical, or psychiatric disabilities enrolled in this course that may need disability-related classroom accommodations are encouraged to make an office appointment to see me before the end of the second week of the term. All discussions will remain confidential, although the Student Accessibility Services office may be consulted to discuss appropriate implementation of any accommodation requested.

Religious observances

Some students may wish to take part in religious observances that fall during this academic term. Should you have a religious observance that conflicts with your participation in the course, please come speak with me before the end of the second week of the term to discuss appropriate accommodations.

Assigned Readings

Introduction

1. Course overview

2. Work and the work ethic

- Rodgers (1978) The Work Ethic in Industrial America 1850-1920. part of Ch 1, pp.1-17, 27-29. **PDF**
- Rybczynski (1991) Waiting for the Weekend. *The Atlantic Monthly*. August, pp.35-52. **PDF**

The Historical evolution of work in the US

We start this course with an examination of the evolution of work over time in the US. We explore this history because many of the elements of work that we take for granted today are only recent inventions. Understanding the source of these practices will shed new light on work today. Most of the readings in this section focus on people, mostly men, working in large factories, obviously only a small portion of all employment during these periods. We will discuss in class the extent to which this perspective is useful or whether it provides an incomplete picture.

3. Early history to the turn of the 20th century

- Hodson and Sullivan, "The History of Work." Selected pages from Chapter 1 of *The Social Organization of Work*, 4th ed., 2002
- Jacoby, The way it was: factory labor before 1915. Ch. 1 **Wharton**
- Karl Marx, Alienated Labour. Ch. 4 **Wharton**

4. Scientific management & bureaucracy

- F. W. Taylor, The Principles of Scientific Management. Ch 6. **Wharton**
- S. Meyer, The Evolution of the New Industrial Technology. Ch. 3. **Wharton**
- "Ford Auto Worker" in *Gig: Americans Talk About Their Jobs*. J. Bowe, M. Bowe & S. Streecher (editors) 2001., pp. 43-48 **PDF**
- Max Weber, Bureaucracy. Ch. 5 **Wharton**

5. Welfare capitalism & Human relations

- Gerald Zahavi (1983). "Negotiated Loyalty: Welfare Capitalism and the Shoeworkers of Endicott Johnson, 1920-1940" *The Journal of American History*, Vol. 70, No. 3, pp. 602-620. **PDF**
- Mayo "The Hawthorne Experiment: western electric company" **PDF**
- Jacoby, Sanford. 2003. A century of human resource management. In B. Kaufman, R. Beaumont & R. Helfgott (eds.) *Industrial Relations to Human Resources and Beyond: The Evolving Process of Employee Relations Management*. Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, pp. 147-164 **PDF** (note these are selected pages, stopping in the 1970s, thus the abrupt ending)

6. Labor unions

- Fantasia & Voxx (2004). *Hard Work*. Berkeley: University of California Press. Selected pages from Chapter 2, pp. 34-77 **PDF**
- Milkman, Ruth, 1997: "Prisoners of Prosperity: Auto Workers in the Postwar Period" in *Farewell to the Factory: Auto Workers in the Late Twentieth Century*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 22-50. **PDF**

7. Post-WWII

- Richard Edwards (1979) *Contested Terrain*. Ch. 1, pp.3-22. **PDF**
- Whyte, W.H., 1956. *The Organization Man*. Simon & Schuster, New York. Selected pages **PDF**

The New Economy

Most people are convinced that the nature of work has changed fundamentally in the last few decades. We will examine evidence on the extent of these changes and discuss competing explanations for why these changes may have occurred. This section of the course also ties in closely with the previous section. When we talk about

the New Economy, we are often comparing work today to work during the post-WWII period. How reasonable is this standard? Is it the current period or the post-WWII period that should be viewed as unusual?

8. New trends in the economy

- Walter Powell. The Capitalist Firm in the 21st Century: Emerging Patterns in Western Enterprise. Ch. 9 **Wharton**
- Vicki Smith. Employee Involvement, Involved Employees. Ch 14. **Wharton**

9. Technology

- Jeffrey K. Liker, Carol J. Haddad, Jennifer Karlin (1999) "Perspectives on Technology and Work Organization" *Annual Review of Sociology*. **selected pages (see PDF on blackboard)**
- Vallas & Beck. The Transformation of Work Revisited. Ch. 13 **Wharton**
- Sean O Riain. "Net-Working for a Living" Ch. 16 in Wharton 2nd edition. **PDF**

10. Insecurity

- Sennett, Richard B. 1998. Drift. The Corrosion of Character: The Personal Consequences of Work in the New Capitalism. New York: W.W. Norton, pp. 15-31 **PDF**
- Vicki Smith. Structural Unemployment and the Reconstruction of the Self in the Turbulent Economy. Ch 10 **Wharton**

11. NUMMI

- Readings TBA

12. Exam

Inequality at work

We can observe many different types of inequality in the labor market, and in fact work (and earnings related to work) is a major factor behind the creation and perpetuation of inequality. In this section, we will examine inequality within several different social groups: race, gender, class, and immigrant groups. In addition, we will examine several different mechanisms that may explain these inequalities: discrimination, networks, socialization, workplace interactions, and work/family considerations. For several of the class sessions, the readings will focus on one mechanism and one social group. In our class sessions, we will discuss the extent to which a given mechanism also plays a role with other social groups (e.g. how do networks affect inequality by race? gender? class?).

13. Trends in inequality

- Cotter, Hermsen & Vanneman. Gender Inequality at Work. Ch. 17 **Wharton**
- Levy. Occupational Change. Ch. 19 in Wharton 2nd edition. Selected pages **PDF**

14. Discrimination & race

- Moss & Tilly. Stories Employers Tell. Ch. 20 **Wharton**
- W.A. Darity and P.L. Mason, 1998 "Evidence on Discrimination in Employment: Codes of Color, Codes of Gender," *Journal of Economic Perspectives* 12(2) 63-90. **selected pages PDF**

15. Immigration & networks

- LeDuff, Charlie (2000) "At a slaughterhouse, some things never die" *New York Times*, June 16. **PDF**
- Waldinger & Lichter. *How the Other Half Works*. Chapter 1, pp. 3-28 **PDF**
- Pierette Hondagneu-Sotelo. Maid in L.A. ch. 23 **Wharton**

16. Socialization & social class

- Scott & Leonhardt (2005) "Shadowy Lines that Still Divide" *New York Times* May 15, 2005.
- Anyon, J. (1980) "Social Class and the Hidden Curriculum of Work" pp 424-437 (adaptation) in *Education and Society* Dougherty K, and Hammack, F. (Eds.), 1990, HBJ. **PDF**
- Paul Willis "Labor Power, Culture, Class and Institution," Ch. 4 of *Learning to Labor: How Working Class Kids Get Working Class Jobs* **PDF**

17. The job and the workplace & gender

- Hochschild. The Managed Heart. Ch. 8 **Wharton**
- Henson and Rogers. Why Marcia You've Changed! Ch. 18. **Wharton**

18. Work, family & leisure time

- Budig & England (2001). "The Wage Penalty for Motherhood" *American Sociological Review*, vol. 66 **selected pages PDF (you don't have to read grey sections)**
- Jacobs, Gerson & Gornick. *The Time Divided*. Ch. 42 **Wharton only pages 558-562.**
- Hochschild. *The Third Shift*. Ch. 41 in Wharton 2nd edition **PDF**

19. Exam

Worlds of work

In the final section of the course, we will examine several broad groupings of occupations. We will explore the similarities and differences within and between these groups in the experience of work.

20. Socialization and identity within occupations

- Harper & Lawson (editors) (2003) "Socialization & Identity" in *The Cultural Study of Work*. pp. 53-64 **PDF**
- Trice "Occupational Cultures", chapter 2 in *Occupational Subcultures in the Workplace*. Pp. 21-45. **PDF, skim pages 21-26.**

21. Professions

- Hodson & Sullivan (2002) "Professions & Professionals" in *The Social Organization of Work* pp. 281-306 **PDF**
- Kathryn J. Lively "Occupational Claims to Professionalism: The Case of Paralegals" in Harper and Lawson eds *The Cultural Study of Work*, pp.347-369 **PDF**

22. Managers

- Kevin T. Leicht and Mary L. Fennell (2001) "Managers and Managerial Work in the 20th Century" chapter 3 in *Professional Work: A Sociological Approach* Malden, Mass.: Blackwell Publishers. **PDF**
- Jackall "The Social Structure of Managerial Work" Ch. 31 **Wharton**

23. Service work

- Leidner "Over the Counter: McDonald's" Ch. 27 in **Wharton**
- Buchanan "Lives on the Line: Low-Wage Work in the Teleservice Industry" Ch. 28 in **Wharton**
- Sallaz "House Rules" Ch. 29 in **Wharton**

24. Contingent work

- McAllister "Sisyphus at Work in the Warehouse" **PDF**
- Henson "Just a Temp" in 2nd edition of Wharton **PDF**

25. Outside the formal labor market

- Lisa Maher (1997) "Gender, Work and Informalization" in *Sexed Work*. New York: Oxford University Press, pp. 55-82 **PDF**
- Mitchell Duneier (1999) "Men Without Accounts" in *Sidewalk*. New York: Farrar, Straus & Giroux. Pp. 81-111 **PDF**

26. Exam

Wrap-Up

27. Generation Y

- *Defense AT&L* "Generation Y in the Workplace" Nov/Dec 2006. **PDF**
- *Business Week* "Welcome to the Gen Y Workplace" May 4, 2005 **PDF**
- *USA Today* "Generation Y: They've arrived at work with a new attitude" Nov 6, 2005 **PDF**

28. The Great Recession

- TBA

29. Project Discussions

Class Schedule

Class		Date	Topic	Project
1	Monday	10-Sep	Overview of course	
2	Wednesday	12-Sep	Work and the work ethic	
			<i>The Evolution of Work in the U.S.</i>	
3	Friday	14-Sep	Turn of the 20th century	
4	Monday	17-Sep	Scientific management & bureaucracy	
5	Wednesday	19-Sep	Welfare capitalism & human relations	
6	Friday	21-Sep	Labor unions	
7	Monday	24-Sep	Post WWII	
			<i>The New Economy</i>	
8	Wednesday	26-Sep	New Trends in the Economy	Grade prefs due
9	Friday	28-Sep	Technology	
10	Monday	1-Oct	Insecurity	
11	Wednesday	3-Oct	NUMMI, exam handed out	
12	Friday	5-Oct	No class, exam due at midnight	
			<i>Inequality</i>	
13	Monday	8-Oct	Trends in Inequality	
14	Wednesday	10-Oct	Discrimination & race	
15	Friday	12-Oct	Immigration & networks	
16	Monday	15-Oct	Socialization & social class	
17	Wednesday	17-Oct	Gendered work & the workplace	Proposal due
18	Friday	19-Oct	Work, family & leisure time, exam handed out	
19	Monday	22-Oct	No class, exam due at midnight	
			<i>Worlds of Work</i>	
20	Wednesday	24-Oct	Socialization & identity within occupations	
21	Friday	26-Oct	Professionals	
22	Monday	29-Oct	Managers	
23	Tuesday	30-Oct	Service work	
24	Wednesday	31-Oct	Contingent work	
25	Friday	2-Nov	Outside the formal labor market, exam handed out	
26	Monday	5-Nov	No class, exam due at midnight	
27	Wednesday	7-Nov	Generation Y	
28	Friday	9-Nov	The Great Recession	
29	Monday	12-Nov	Project discussions	
	Tuesday	20-Nov	Final report due	