

SOCIOLOGY OF WORK, INDUSTRY, AND OCCUPATIONS

HTS 3007A
Fall 2006
M/W/F 1-2 pm
DM Smith 208

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Overview

Child care. Computer programming. Auto assembly. Counter service. Corporate management. Do these diverse ways of making a living have anything in common? Why do some jobs seem to be more demanding—or tedious or difficult or rewarding or lucrative—than others? Why do some people work so hard while others do only the minimum? Is there any such thing as a good boss? How do people get jobs—and do they choose occupations and careers, or do occupations and careers “choose” them? How do people balance family responsibilities with demanding work schedules? Are women still making gains in the workplace? What about minority groups? Why do some people seem unable to move up? How will the increasingly global economy affect work and wages here and abroad? What will the workplaces of the future be like? In addressing these questions and others from a sociological perspective, this course aims to familiarize students with the tasks, technologies, relationships, meanings, and explicit or implicit rules that make up various work worlds. Contemporary U.S. work contexts will be emphasized, with some attention to historical trajectories, future trends, and global relationships. Classes will combine discussion and lectures, and assignments will include opportunities for students to do original research on work settings and experiences.

Required Texts:

The following book has been ordered at Engineer’s:

Amy S. Wharton (ed.), 2006. *Working in America: Continuity, Conflict, and Change*. Third Edition. Boston: McGraw Hill. ISBN: 0-07-352801-3

Other assigned readings are posted as PDFs to the course website on WebCT; see www.webct.gatech.edu, course HTS 3007A. Please let me know at once if you have any difficulty getting access to the readings.

Course Requirements

Participation and Attendance (15%)

Participation in class discussions and active engagement with lectures are essential to your success in this course. To participate fully, read the materials listed for each session in the schedule *prior to* class and arrive prepared to share your thoughts, opinions, and questions.

Short Papers (higher grade 25%, lower grade 20%; total 45%)

You will write two 5-7 page papers, each combining data you have gathered through original research with themes covered in readings and class discussions. For the first paper, you will interview a worker about his/her employment history, choices, and experiences. For the second, you will observe a workplace and analyze its organization and culture. Detailed information about both papers will be provided in class.

Midterm and Final Exams (midterm 20%; final 20%)

The midterm and final will be taken in class and will consist of short-answer essays and term definitions.

Policies

Late Assignments: Except in the case of *extreme* and preferably well-documented emergencies, your assignment will be docked one-third letter grade for every two days late, or one whole letter grade per week. All work must be submitted by Monday, December 11.

Honor Code: You are expected to act in accordance with the Georgia Tech Honor Code. See: http://www.deanofstudents.gatech.edu/integrity/policies/honor_code.html
Anyone engaging in acts which violate the honor code, such as cheating or plagiarism, will be penalized. If you are uncertain about what constitutes plagiarism, please ask!

Accommodating Disabilities: If you have any conditions which require accommodation, please alert me and provide documentation from the ADAPTS office as early in the term as possible so that arrangements can be made. No accommodations will be made retroactively.
ADAPTS information can be found at: <http://www.adapts.gatech.edu>

Schedule of Readings and Assignments

Note: Readings marked “Wharton” are in the *Working in America* reader. Readings marked “WebCT” can be found in the “course readings” section of the site, in order by week.

INTRODUCTION

M 8/21 **Course Overview**

What is Work?

W 8/23 Wharton Ch. 2: Ann Crittenden, “How Mothers’ Work Was ‘Disappeared’”

Work and Industry in (Brief) Historical Perspective

F 8/25 WebCT: Curt Tausky, “Looking Back: The Industrial Revolution”

Tools for Analyzing the Workforce and Workplace

M 8/28 WebCT: Randy Hodson & Teresa Sullivan, “Studying the World of Work”

The Social Organization of Work

- W 8/30 WebCT: Karl Marx, “Wage Labor and Capital”
F 9/1 Wharton Ch. 5: Max Weber, “Bureaucracy”
Wharton Ch. 7: Harry Braverman, “The Division of Labor”
WebCT: Richard Edwards, “Contested Terrain”

Experience, Meaning, and Motivation

- M 9/4 *No Class – Labor Day*
W 9/6 Wharton Ch. 4: Karl Marx, “Alienated Labour”
F 9/8 Wharton Ch. 6: Frederick W. Taylor, “Fundamentals of Scientific Management”
WebCT: George C. Homans, “The Hawthorne Experiments”

VARIETIES OF WORK AND INDUSTRY

Industrial Manufacturing

- M 9/11 Wharton Ch. 3: Steven Meyer III, “The Evolution of the New Industrial Technology”
Wharton Ch. 26: Eric Schlosser, “Fast Food Nation: The Most Dangerous Job”
W 9/13 Wharton Ch. 25: Tom Juravich, “Women on the Line”
F 9/15 Wharton Ch. 24: Michael Burawoy, “Thirty Years of Making Out”

Inside Bureaucracy: Clerical and Managerial Work

- M 9/18 *Paper One Due* (no reading assignment)
W 9/20 Wharton Ch. 31: Robert Jackall, “The Social Structure of Managerial Work”
F 9/22 WebCT: Karen Hughes, “Transformed by Technology? The Changing Nature of Women’s ‘Traditional’ and ‘Non-Traditional’ White-Collar Work”

Craft, Professional, and Technical Work

- M 9/25 WebCT: Arthur Stinchcombe, “Bureaucratic and Craft Administration of Production: A Comparative Study”
W 9/27 WebCT: Monica Casper, “Working on (and Around) the Unborn patient: Negotiating Social Order in a Fetal Treatment Unit”
F 9/29 Wharton Ch. 43: James Evans, Gideon Kunda & Steven Barley, “Beach Time, Bridge Time, and Billable Hours: The Temporal Structure of Technical Contracting”

Service and Marginal Work

- M 10/2 Wharton Ch. 8: Arlie Hochschild, “The Managed Heart”
W 10/4 Wharton Ch. 29: Jeffrey Sallaz, “The House Rules: Autonomy and Interests Among Service Workers in the Contemporary Casino Industry”

- F 10/6 Wharton Ch. 33: Jackie Rogers, “Are We Not Temps?”
 Wharton Ch. 34: Teresa Gowan, “American Untouchables: Homeless Scavengers in San Francisco’s Underground Economy”

Midterm

- M 10/9 Catch-Up & Review
 W 10/11 *Midterm* in class

Worker Resistance and Collective Bargaining

- F 10/13 Wharton Ch. 21: Miriam Wells, “Unionization and Immigrant Incorporation in San Francisco Hotels”
Additional TBA

BEYOND THE WORKPLACE

Labor Markets

- M 10/16 *No Class – October Break*
 W 10/18 WebCT: Paula England & George Farkas, “Economic and Sociological Views of Industries, Firms, and Jobs” (excerpt)
 WebCT: Gary Becker, “Human Capital”
 F 10/20 WebCT: Mark Granovetter, “The Strength of Weak Ties”

Careers: Choices and Structures

- M 10/23 WebCT: Shelley Correll, “Gender and the Career Choice Process: The Role of Biased Self-Assessments”
 W 10/25 *TBA*
 F 10/27 Wharton Ch. 32: Sharon Collins, “Blacks on the Bubble: The Vulnerability of Black Executives in White Corporations”

Work and Family

- M 10/30 Wharton Ch. 41: Anita Garey, “Motherhood on the Night Shift”
 Wharton Ch. 40: Arlie Hochschild, “The Time Bind: Men”
 W 11/1 Wharton Ch. 38: Paula England & Nancy Folbre, “Capitalism and the Erosion of Care”
 Wharton Ch. 39: Barbara Ehrenreich, “Maid to Order: The Politics of Other Women’s Work”
 F 11/3 Wharton Ch. 42: Jerry Jacobs, Kathleen Gerson & Janet Gornick, “The Time Divide: American Workers in Cross-National Perspective”

WORK AND INEQUALITY

Identity, Status, and Power in the Workplace

- M 11/6 WebCT: Rosabeth Kanter, “Numbers: Minorities and Majorities”
WebCT: Steven Peter Vallas, “Rediscovering the Color Line Within Work Organizations: The ‘Knitting of Racial Groups’ Revisited”
- W 11/8 Wharton Ch. 18: Kevin Henson & Jackie Rogers, “‘Why Marcia You’ve Changed!’: Male Clerical Temporary Workers Doing Masculinity in a Feminized Occupation”
Wharton Ch. 19: Kristen Dellinger & Christine Williams, “The Locker Room and the Dorm Room: Workplace Norms and the Boundaries of Sexual Harassment in Magazine Editing”
- F 11/10 Wharton Ch. 20: Philip Moss & Chris Tilly, “Stories Employers Tell: Employer Perceptions of Race and Skill”

Wage Inequality and Unemployment

- M 11/13 *Paper Two Due* (no reading assignment)
- W 11/15 WebCT: Richard Freeman & Lawrence Katz, “Rising Wage Inequality: The United States vs. Other Advanced Countries”
Wharton, Ch. 17: David Cotter, Joan Hermsen & Reeve Vanneman, “Gender Inequality at Work”
- F 11/17 Wharton, Ch. 16: William J. Wilson, “Jobless Poverty: A New Form of Social Dislocation in the Inner-City Ghetto”
Wharton, Ch. 10: Vicki Smith, “Structural Unemployment and the Reconstruction of the Self in the Turbulent Economy”

GLOBAL WORK AND INDUSTRY

Global Work Experiences

- M 11/20 Wharton Ch. 37: Arlie Hochschild, “Love and Gold”
WebCT: William Adler, “A Job on the Line”
- W 11/22 *No Class – Happy Thanksgiving*
- F 11/24 *No Class – Happy Thanksgiving*

Global Industry: For and Against

- M 11/27 WebCT: Stephen Golub, “Does Trade with Low Wage Countries Hurt American Workers?”
WebCT: Paul Krugman, “In Praise of Cheap Labor”
WebCT: Robert Weissman, “Grotesque Inequality: Corporate Globalization and the Global Gap Between the Rich and Poor”

THE FUTURE OF WORK AND INDUSTRY

New Technologies and Work Practices in Manufacturing

- W 11/29 Wharton Ch. 11: Shoshana Zuboff, “In the Age of the Smart Machine”
Wharton Ch. 13: Steven Vallas & John Beck, “The Transformation of Work Revisited: The Limits of Flexibility in American Manufacturing”

Postindustrial White Collar Work

- F 12/1 Wharton Ch. 14: Vicki Smith, “Employee Involvement, Involved Employees: Participative Work Arrangements in a White-Collar Service Occupation”
Additional TBA

Emerging Trends

- M 12/4 Wharton Ch. 9: Walter Powell, “The Capitalist Firm in the Twenty-First Century: Emerging Patterns in Western Enterprise”

Final Exam

- W 12/6 Catch-Up & Review
F 12/8 *Final Exam* in class