



The Cultural Study of Work

By Douglas Harper, Helene M. Lawson

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This anthology brings more than fifty years of scholarship of the culture and sociology of work into a compelling introductory and analytical text. Sociologists have long sought to understand the universal activity of work from the point of view of the worker. This book shows how common sociological themes such as socialization, social interaction, the social construction of time, and deviance are experienced in work settings as diverse as the factory, the nightclub, the restaurant, and the offices of high-tech professionals. Featuring vivid ethnographies, the book is organized around the concept of culture: the recognition that people doing things together organize social life in common and identifiable ways. As such, this collection can be used as an innovative core reader or as an ideal supplement to standard texts that approach work from the demographic, structural, or macro perspectives. An online teaching guide is available to all adopters.

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Editorial Review

Review

The Cultural Study of Work brings together twenty-three articles that describe the world of work seen close up, by social scientists who took the time and trouble to observe it close up and over long periods of time. The book provides the empirical basis for understanding work as a social phenomenon and so fills a important gap. The material comes from a great variety of sources and would be hard to get your hands on in any other way. (Howard S. Becker)

This is the essential book for readers who want to know what the major trends in work scholarship have been, for those in need of a text for introductory and even graduate classes, or for those who simply want to savor the watershed moments in scholarship that highlights both ethnographic and theoretical treatments. (Tom Fricke, University of Michigan)

A stimulating, thoughtful, and well-considered collection of great value to undergraduate and post-graduate students and lecturers working in sociology, socio-cultural anthropology, and cultural studies fields. (Roger Brown, Staffordshire University)

The editors have brought together a superb collection of occupational studies ranging from medical and veterinary practitioners to paralegals, beauticians, barbers, and baseball players that illuminates the inescapable connection between work and self-conception. The authors deserve the thanks of those interested in society for keeping alive the contributions of Hughes and those who were influenced by him. The insights provided by this book merit a wide and enthusiastic readership; they will not be disappointed. Essential. (CHOICE)

Douglas Harper and Helen M. Lawson's rich collection on work cultures is especially welcome, and interesting. (*Times Literary Supplement*)

This is a bold, innovative work. Harper and Lawson and their contributors have assembled a powerful body of work that attests to the cultural construction, creation, meaning and organization of work in a technological, post-industrial world. This is an invaluable collection that belongs on the shelf of all serious students of work, culture, and the organization of everyday life. (Norman K. Denzin, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign)

The Cultural Study of Work is an excellent introduction to the field, a pleasure to read, and with its organizational and editorial strength , a volume that is likely to be of lasting value. (*Journal Of The Royal Anthropological Institute*)

About the Author

Douglas Harper, professor and chair of the sociology department at Duquesne University, is the author of Working Knowledge: Skill and Community in a Small Shop (1987) and Changing Works: Visions of a Lost Agriculture. Helene M. Lawson, professor and program director of sociology and coordinator of the gender studies program at the University of Pittsburgh, Bradford, is the author of Ladies on the Lot: Women, Car Sales, and the Pursuit of the American Dream.

Users Review

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Barbara Barnes:

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Harrison Bowman:

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