

Seminar II: Work and Identity in 19th-21st Century Anglo-American Culture & Media

Vertretungsprofessorin:

PD Dr. Anne-Marie Scholz

University of Hamburg

Wintersemester 2022-23

Fri. 10-12

Room: Ü35-01047

Course Description:

Today, fundamental structural changes have altered the nature of work and labor worldwide. Globalization and computerization have contributed to reducing the need for wage labor without generating a corresponding political and cultural debate about the ways work has formed the basis for human identity in societies like the U.S. and Europe and what social, political and cultural changes need to take place to accommodate new forms of economic life. In this seminar we will look less at numbers than at *ideas* about different types of work-physical, professional and creative- in 19th and 21st century Anglo-American literature and culture in order to make sense of the contemporary 21st century context, its ideological parameters (“work-life balance”?) and the material circumstances of its labor conditions (“the vanishing middle class”?). We will focus upon issues of class and race and pay particular attention to the relationship between ideas about work and concepts of gender identity over time.

Readings:

Please purchase the following:

Richard Sennett, *The Culture of the New Capitalism*

Michel Houellebecq, *Ausweitung der Kampfzone* (English title: *Whatever*)

(orig. in French, German version recommended)

Ellen Ullman, *The Bug*

All other course materials will be uploaded onto the campus site

Course Requirements:

Regular attendance, presentation, response essay

