

THE MEANING OF WORK

Values & Orientations



BACKGROUND

- **Work values**
 - “meaning of work in a particular society”
- **Work orientations**
 - “meaning attached to work by particular individuals”
- **Job satisfaction**
 - “individual and subjective response to a person to material and psychological job rewards” (discussed in next section)



MANIFEST & LATENT FUNCTIONS

- **Manifest functions**
 - Maintaining or improving standard of living
- **Latent functions**
 - Contribute to an individual's well-being
 - e.g., experiences of creativity, sense of purpose



Work as...	Definition	Intellectual Origins
Curse	Unquestioned burden necessary for survival or maintenance of social order	Western theology, ancient Greco-Roman philosophy
Freedom	A way to achieve independence from nature or other humans/express creativity	Western liberal individualism
Commodity	Abstract quantity of productive effort that has tradable economic value	Capitalism, industrialization, economics
Occupational Citizenship	Activity pursued by human members of a community entitled to certain rights	Citizenship ideals, theology, industrial relations
Disutility	Lousy activity tolerated to obtain goods and services that provide pleasure	Utilitarianism, economics
Personal Fulfillment	Physical and psychological functioning the (ideally) satisfies individual needs	Liberal individualism, systematic management, psychology
Social Relation	Human interaction embedded in social norms, institutions, and power structures	Industrialization, sociology, anthropology
Caring	Physical, cognitive, and emotional effort required to maintain and attend to others	Women's movements, feminist economics, sociology, anthro.
Identity	A method for understanding who you are and where you stand in the social structure	Psychology, sociology, philosophy
Service	Devotion of effort to others, such as God, household, community, or country	Theology, Confucianism, republicanism, humanitarianism

Source: John Budd. *The Thought of Work*. Cornell University Press/ILR



WORK VALUES IN TIME & SPACE

- **Curse**
 - Hard work = punishment for “original sin”
 - Penal and forced labour
- Saint Thomas Aquinas: not *all* work is a curse or necessary evil
 - Dualistic/ambiguous conception of work



Jan Brueghel the Elder, Peter Paul Rubens, [The Garden of Eden with the Fall of Man](#), c. 1615



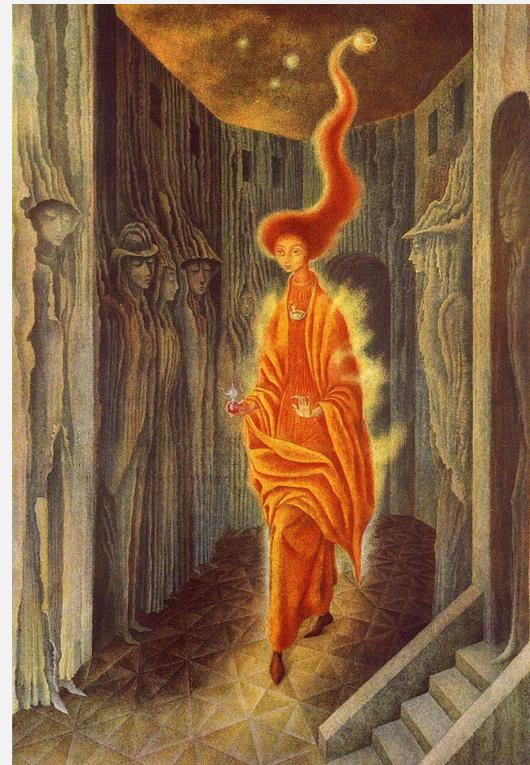
WORK VALUES IN TIME & SPACE

- **Service/vocation**

- Protestant Reformation and Martin Luther
 - Work as **central** component of human life
 - Work as a “**calling**”

- **Personal fulfillment**

- The humanist tradition
 - Human beings as creators
 - Work should be fulfilling/liberating
- Control over labour and its products key (Marx & alienation)
 - Is capitalism an underlying problem?
- Humanist beliefs embraced by IR scholars, sociologists, theologians (e.g., the current pope)



WORK VALUES IN TIME & SPACE

- **Freedom**

- Freedom from nature: creative activity done independently of daily necessities
- Freedom from coercion of other people: contractual relation between legal equals, free to pursue their own interests

- **Identity**

- Work as a source of self-identification, self-definition incorporating personally relevant attributes, social roles, and group categorization



NEW WORK VALUES?

- **Gorz (1982) *Farewell to the Working Class***
 - Higher unemployment gives people more free time to participate in non-paid work and leisure activities
- **Rifkin (1995) *The End of Work***
 - New technologies and global production with traumatic impacts for workers
 - New work values for more volunteer work
- **Bunting (2004) *Willing Slaves***
 - Culture of overwork
 - Need return to traditional work ethic



WORK ORIENTATIONS

- **What motivates Canadian workers?**
 - Success and wealth?
 - Opportunity to work hard and contribute?
 - Personal satisfaction and fulfillment?
- **Do work orientations vary at all by ...**
 - Gender?
 - Age?



INSTRUMENTAL WORK ORIENTATIONS

- **David Lockwood's (1966) “orientations”**
 - Proletarian workers: “us against them”
 - Deferential workers: accept status quo
 - Instrumental orientations
 - “Privatized workers”
 - Dominant feeling “one of indifference”
 - Work as “instrument” to obtain better standard of living
- **Workers with a variety of orientations?**



GENDER & WORK ORIENTATIONS

- Gender-role socialization?
- Gendered labour markets?
- Intrinsic versus extrinsic work orientations and gender?
- Division of household labour and balancing work and family



JOBS/CAREERS AS INDIVIDUAL FIT

- **Match workers' orientation to work and unique personality to the demands of the job**
- **Find a job that matches your needs/personality/wants**
 - Align your orientation with a particular job



BACKGROUND

- **Industrialization & bureaucracy in late 1800s/early 1900s**
 - Proliferation of positions → fitting people to jobs
- **Rise of psychology and testing of individual skills**
 - IQ measures and ability (about 1890)
 - Aptitude & technical competence
 - Interest and personality



BACKGROUND

- **IQ measures and ability (about 1890)**
 - WWI and need to place military personnel effectively
- **Aptitude & technical competence**
 - Emerged during Depression to place the unemployed
 - Development of Dictionary of Occupational Titles in US as part of this project of defining skills and aptitudes necessary for different jobs
- **Interest and personality**
 - Strong Vocational Interest (1940s) one of most widely used
 - Compared individual's preferences to the preferences of people who already held the job
 - Assumed that *interest* and *motivation* were driving predictors of success in a job, not just skills and abilities



MATCHING TESTS

- What did it measures?
- What assumptions does it make?
- Like or didn't like? Why?
- How did you judge the assessment and whether it was worthwhile?
- How was it marketed and what messages does it send?
- What might be some dangers of such assessments?
 - People are multi-dimensional
 - Primacy of occupations over organization & job



BASIC ASSUMPTIONS OF MATCHING

- People are different & suited to different occupations
- People and occupations have a distinct profile
- Assessment tools can help people make a good “match”
- Psychological tests of individual differences are reliable and valid
- One life, one career
- People don't change; occupations don't change
 - Work adjustment theory
 - People work best when they fit, but they will also take action to make it fit
 - Also possible that the job changes the person



BASIC ASSUMPTIONS OF MATCHING

- **Individual**

- Abilities
- Skills
- Personality
- Values
- Interests
- Anchors
- Preferred work conditions

- **Position**

- Skills required
- Types of tasks
- Working conditions

- **Other factors**

- Organization
- Occupation
- Jobs available



Directive

Directive persons like to take charge and control situations. They like to take responsibility for projects that require planning, decision making and co-ordinating the work of others. They are able to give direction and instructions easily. They enjoy organizing their own activities. They see themselves as independent and self-directing.



Social

Social persons like dealing with people. They enjoy caring for and assisting others in identifying their needs and solving their concerns. Social persons like working and co-operating with others. They prefer to be involved in work that requires interpersonal contact.



Innovative

Innovative persons like to explore things in depth and arrive at solutions to problems by experimenting. They are interested in initiating and creating different ways to solve questions and present information. They enjoy scientific subjects.

Innovative persons prefer to be challenged with

Occupations matching your interests

- 100% Art directors
- 100% Choreographers
- 100% College and other vocational instructors
- 100% Directors
- 100% Film, radio, television and video game producers
- 100% Home economists
- 100% Housing policy analysts
- 100% International aid and development project officers
- 100% Management Consultants
- 100% Social policy researchers
- 100% Social services planners
- 100% Social survey researchers
- 100% University professors and lecturers
- 98% Agricultural representatives, consultants and specialists
- 98% Architects
- 98% Forestry professionals

- 98% General practitioners and family physicians
- 98% Landscape architects
- 98% Professional occupations in advertising
- 98% Specialists in clinical medicine
- 98% Urban and land use planners
- 97% Architecture and science managers
- 97% Business development officers and marketing researchers and consultants
- 97% Computer and information systems managers
- 97% Dietitians and nutritionists
- 97% Editors
- 97% Engineering managers
- 97% Program officers unique to government
- 95% Advertising managers
- 95% Conference and event planners



Synthesizing information

Discover new facts or knowledge by combining elements from several sources.

Instructing – Consulting

Transfer knowledge to teach or train people, or provide subject matter expertise.

Driving – Operating

Drive a vehicle such as a car, tractor, train or boat; or operate machinery such as aircraft, cranes or forklifts.

Occupations matching your results

95% Art instructors and teachers

95% Biologists

95% Biomedical engineers

95% Chemists

95% Community pharmacists and hospital pharmacists

95% Conductors

95% Database analysts

95% Engineering physicists and engineering scientists

95% Geoscientists

95% Graphic designers

95% Oceanographers

95% Software engineers and designers

95% Soil scientists

91% Aerospace engineers

91% Agricultural and bio-resource engineers

91% Architects

91% Astronomers

91% Chemical engineers

91% Civil engineers

91% Computer and telecommunications hardware engineers



DO WHAT YOU LOVE?

In the Name of Love

BY

MIYA TOKUMITSU

“Do what you love” is the mantra for today’s worker. Why should we assert our class interests if, according to DWYL elites like Steve Jobs, there’s no such thing as work?



THE STONE

A Life Beyond ‘Do What You Love’

BY GORDON MARINO

MAY 17, 2014 2:30 PM

■ 524



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Student advisees often come to my office, rubbing their hands together, furrowing their brows and asking me to walk along with them as they ponder life after graduation. Just the other day, a sophomore made an appointment because he was worrying about whether he should become a doctor or a philosophy professor. A few minutes later, he nervously confessed that he had also thought of giving stand-up comedy a whirl.

As an occupational counselor, my knee jerk reaction has always been, “What are you most passionate about?” Sometimes I’d even go into a sermonette about how it is important to distinguish between what we think we are supposed to love and what we really love.

But is “do what you love” wisdom or malarkey?

