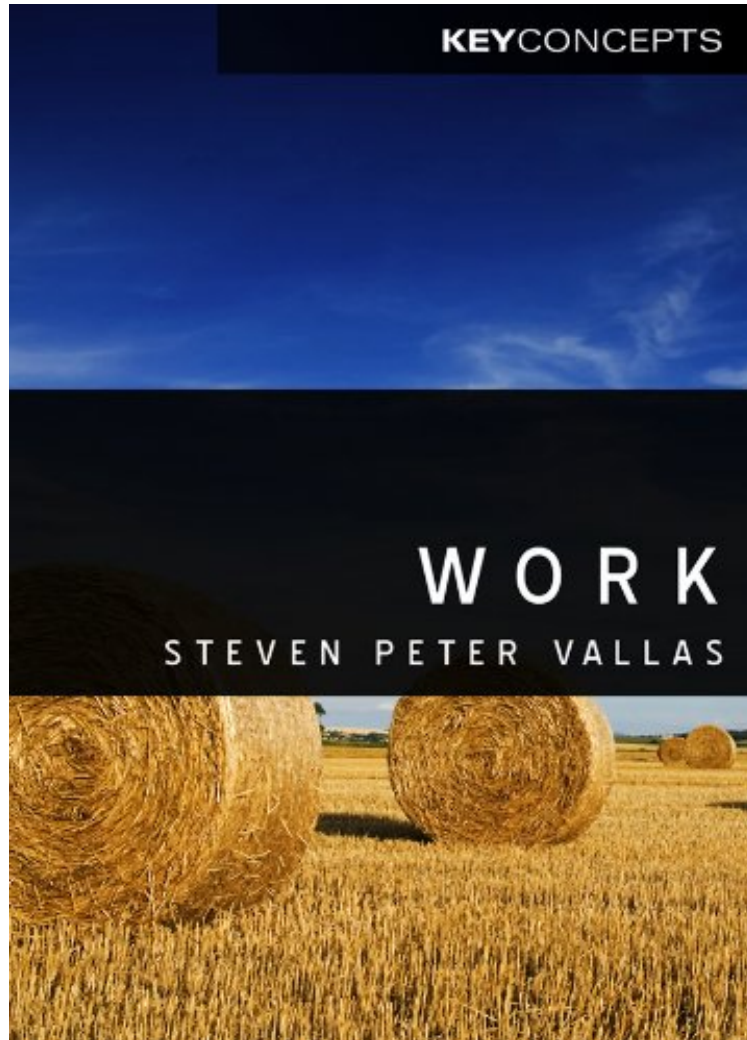


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Work: A Critique (Key Concepts)

Steven Vallas

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This book provides a critical overview of the myriad literatures on "work," viewed not only as a product of the marketplace but also as a social and political construct. Drawing on theoretical and empirical contributions from sociology, history, economics, and organizational studies, the book brings together perspectives that too often remain

balkanized, using each to explore the nature of work today. Outlining the fundamental principles that unite social science thinking about work, Vallas offers an original discussion of the major theoretical perspectives that inform workplace analysis, including Marxist, interactionist, feminist, and institutionalist schools of thought. Chapters are devoted to the labor process, to workplace flexibility, to gender and racial inequalities at work, and to the link between globalization and the structure of work and authority today. Major topics include the relation between work and identity; the relation between workplace culture and managerial control; and the performance of emotional labor within service occupations. This concise book will be invaluable to students at all levels as it explores a range of insights to make sense of pressing issues that drive the social scientific study of work today.

"I highly recommend this book. It addresses all the important issues of work in our time." *International Sociology* "An exhaustive study of a concept that has, over the past half-decade or so, been brought under the lenses of scholars in a variety of different fields of research, from sociology to economics, politics to philosophy ... Work fosters a dialogue that cuts across [these] disciplines." *Marx Philosophy* "A leading sociologist in the fields of work, organizations, economy, and social theory, Vallas provides an innovative, erudite, exhaustive, and lucidly written synthesis and depiction of the evolution of research in the sociology of work. Linking the discipline to important economic and political developments of the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries, the book illumines pathways in this dynamic and central field of sociology for students, scholars and practitioners who are researching, teaching, and humanizing the world of work." Daniel B. Cornfield, Vanderbilt University "Steven Vallas's *Work* has the great virtue of providing a strong theoretical overview of the sociology of work, at the same time as it discusses work's historical emergence and ongoing development under capitalism. The combination will make the text an invaluable resource for students at all levels." Leslie Salzinger, University of California, Berkeley "Steven Vallas's *Work* is an important piece of scholarship and easily the best book on what is happening to work, workers and the workplace to be published in the last decade. Vallas synthesizes multiple strands of research into an integrated whole. The volume is a must read for anyone interested in from where we've come and to where we're headed." Stephen R. Barley, Stanford University
About the Author Steven Peter Vallas is Professor and Chair of the Department of Sociology and Anthropology at Northeastern University.