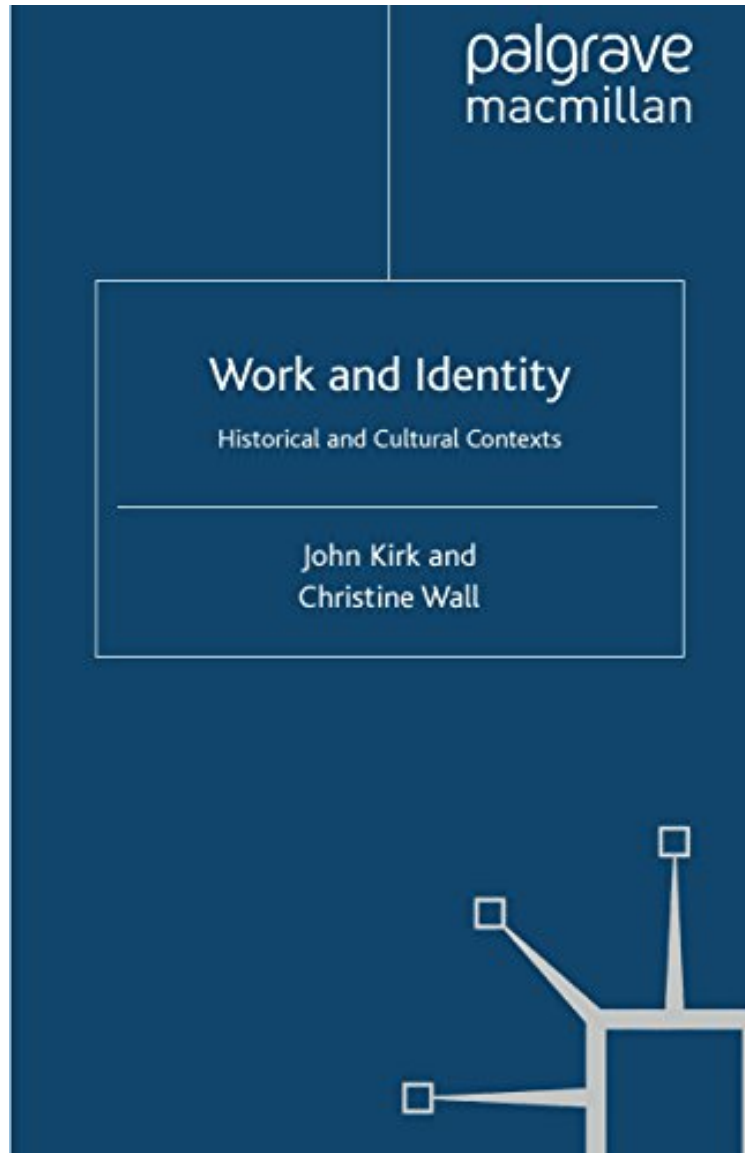


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Work and Identity: Historical and Cultural Contexts (Identity Studies in the Social Sciences)

J. Kirk, C. Wall

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J. Kirk, C. Wall : Work and Identity: Historical and Cultural Contexts (Identity Studies in the Social Sciences) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Work and Identity: Historical and Cultural Contexts (Identity Studies in the Social Sciences):

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. A worthwhile read for a small number of social scientists and historiansBy super slothFirst of all, this book is incredibly overpriced - and I say that as someone who listed my copy

in the Marketplace for \$75.65. The cost is all the more shocking because I have to imagine that, if paid at all, the authors were woefully undercompensated - but, alas, such is the nature of contemporary academic publishing. And to think that I picked this up for free at the student book giveaway at a sociology conference! As for the book itself, I thought that the core of the book - the chapters about banking, railway work, and teaching, were fascinating case studies in the British national context. I scribbled down a few notes in my dissertation ideas notebook about how technology has changed the nature of work and generational shifts in occupational identity. However, I thought that this book was lacking a strong, overarching thesis or set of arguments. (Of course, I know that the same could be said of my M.A. thesis!) Additionally, several chapters were either just a statement of historical trends that should be familiar to most social scientists or an illustration of qualitative research methods - though the methodology chapters did convey the passion that the authors have for their research subjects. Scholars pressed for time (and who isn't?) could probably skip Chapters 1, 2, 7, and 8 without missing much of this book's (scattered) contributions. I would recommend an abbreviated reading of this book for the few hundred occupations and labor process scholars out there with an interest in occupational identity and/or the 20th century British workplace.

This book presents an accessible and fascinating account of theoretical debates around identity and work, recent empirical trends and methodological arguments concerning the role of oral testimony and its interpretation. Focusing on three occupational sectors in particular teachers, bank workers and the railway industry it also presents an argument that is both more general than this and theoretically and analytically wide-ranging. The book explores some important questions: how are workers, both in the past and the present juncture, socialised into work cultures? What are the cultural and structural differences with regard the world of work across class, gender, and generation? What are the historical conditions of which these differences play a part? How is the idea of work found in a range of representations, from artistic production to sociological discourse expressed and explored? The development of concepts such as 'structures of feeling' and affect, and the weaving in of historical and visual material, make the book important to a wide range of readers including ethnographers, cultural sociologists and narrative researchers. In turn, this book offers an authoritative and sophisticated summary and analysis of work and identity and is an important intervention into mainstream sociology concerns.

About the Author JOHN KIRK Senior Research Fellow at the Working Lives Research Institute, London Metropolitan University, UK. He is author of *Class, Culture and Social Change: On the Trail of the Working Class*, and *The British Working Class in the Twentieth Century: Film, Literature and Television*. He is currently completing a book on European identity communities. nbsp; CHRISTINE WALL Senior Research Fellow at the School of Architecture and the Built Environment, University of Westminster and Deputy Director of ProBE (Centre for Research into the Production of the Built Environment). She is currently Principal Investigator on the Leverhulme Trust funded research project 'Constructing Post-War Britain: building workers' stories 1950-70'.