

Work, Post-Work and Labour: Claims on Value in Contemporary Literature

This seminar considers the increasing focus on work and labour in recent critical theory and literary analysis. Whether these concerns are addressed in an idiom of universal basic income, unemployment, wagelessness, social reproduction, post-work, or cultural labour, scholars have returned to and begun to expand on the sort of critical theories of labour first generated in the 1960s and 70s, including those by Silvia Federici, Harry Braverman, and the Autonomists. Likewise, scholars have attempted to re-situate labour itself in the face of neoliberal claims of its banishment under the sign of human capital as well as to respond to the challenge set forth by Foucauldian notions of biopolitics.

This seminar looks to offer a bold and diverse set of views on what labour is, what labour does, and how labour capacitates forms of subjectivity. Panelists may wish to reflect on the question of labour as a conceptual abstraction; the intersection of labour with categories of social identity, particularly race and gender, in the service of social reproduction; and, finally the use of labour as a tool for literary periodisation.

Abstracts (250 words plus brief bio) are due **January 25th, 2019**

Contact: Laura Finch lafinch@mit.edu