

Department of Marketing



Research Seminars Series

Fleura Bardhi, City University of London (UK)

November 23, 2023 | 13:00 - 15:00 | AD.0.114 Sitzungssaal 1

Consumptive Work: Consuming to Work in Coworking

Abstract: This study introduces the concept of consumptive work as the process of strategically enlisting consumption in productive value creation in the workplace. Consumer research has historically paid little attention to the role of consumption in the workplace. This research examines the recent re-entanglement of consumption and work in the knowledge and digital economy to understand the productive role of consumption in the workplace. It relies on an ethnographic study of coworking spaces in two global cities, Paris and London, over four years. The findings show that consumptive work is flexible, hedonic, inconspicuous and market mediated. Consumption transforms work into an experience while it incorporates exchange as an essential work activity. Further, consumptive work is experienced as disalienating and empowering in the workplace; however, it also entails a darker side through the instrumentalization of leisure and care, as well as new lifestyle and body exclusions. Consumptive work emerges as a shift in attitudes towards office work as well as the incorporation of consumption ideology into the workplace. We contribute to the research on consumption in the workplace, the relation between consumption and workplace alienation, and the new ways of working.