

## SEMINAR SERIES - EMOTIONS AT WORK: PRACTICES, CULTURES, TRANSFORMATIONS



Organized by **Marco Alberio**, Board Member of CR30 of the International Sociological Association

In recent decades, economic, organizational, and cultural transformations have profoundly reshaped work and its forms of subjective and collective experience. Alongside the growing managerialization of organizations, the spread of digital technologies, and sociodemographic changes (ageing, feminization, and the diversification of professional trajectories), there has been a renewed attention to the relational and affective dimensions of work. The so-called *affective turn* in the social sciences has brought to the center the role of emotions as social constructions and as structural components of work practices. In multiple professional domains – from care work to education, from public services to the third sector, as well as in technical and creative fields – the expression, management, and regulation of emotions have become integral to professional performance and identity. At the same time, emotions offer a privileged lens through which to examine identities, power relations, organizational cultures, and the broader transformations of contemporary work. With the aim of fostering an empirically grounded and interdisciplinary dialogue on these issues (including in sectors beyond health and social care), we are proposing a **cycle of 4 online seminars**, to be held between **March and May 2026**. The seminars is organized around 2 deeply interconnected thematic axes: 1. Emotions, Professional Practices, and Organizational Cultures; 2. Well-being, Identity, and Emotional Justice in Contemporary Workplaces

### MARCH 13<sup>TH</sup> 2026

2.30-4.30 Pm (Rome Time)

#### SEMINAR 1

### Emotional Labor, Professional Practices, and Organizational Cultures in Early Childhood Education

Carolina Gamba, Facultad Latinoamericana de Ciencias Sociales (FLASCO), Argentina

### Confessional Labor: Internal Mining and the Creation of the Professional Self in Hollywood's Writers' Rooms

Julia Dessauer, Indiana University, United States

### MARCH 27<sup>TH</sup> 2026

2.30-4.30 Pm (Rome Time)

#### SEMINAR 2

### Building Commitment Through Emotions: The Experience of Unionized Domestic Workers in Latin America

Jorgelina Loza, Facultad Latinoamericana de Ciencias Sociales (FLASCO) / CONICET, Argentina

### Emotional Styles on the Production Floor: The Case of the Argentine Cement Company Loma Negra (2015–2025)

Victoria Marquez, Universidad Nacional de Mar del Plata / CONICET, Argentina

### APRIL 24<sup>TH</sup> 2026

2.30-4.30 Pm (Rome Time)

#### SEMINAR 3

### Job Satisfaction and the Plurality of Meanings of Work in the Italian Context

Rossella Di Federico, University of Teramo, Italy

### Emotional abuse, bullying and psychological violence at work: Why inequality matters

Premilla D'Cruz, Ernesto Noronha, Indian Institute of Management Ahmedabad (IIMA), India

### MAY 22<sup>ND</sup> 2026

2.30-4.30 Pm (Rome Time)

#### SEMINAR 4

### Beyond the rhetoric of active ageing: emotional justice, recognition, and the ambivalent value of experience in the Italian healthcare sector

Marino Pezzolo, Giustina Orientale Caputo, University of Naples Federico II, Italy

### The Ambivalence of Well-Being in the Workplace

Stéphane Moulin, Université de Montréal, Canada





## SEMINAR 1

Inscription :  
[here](#)

### Sub-stream 1: Emotions, Professional Practices, and Organizational Cultures

March 13<sup>th</sup>, 2026 - 2.30-4.30 Pm (Rome Time), Online



Chair : **Marco Alberio**, University of Bologna, Italy ([marco.alberio2@unibo.it](mailto:marco.alberio2@unibo.it))

Discussant : **Beata Buhlungu**, Gordon Institute of Business Science, South Africa ([buhlungub@gibs.co.za](mailto:buhlungub@gibs.co.za))

#### Paper 1.1 ***Emotional Labor, Professional Practices, and Organizational Cultures in Early Childhood Education***

**Carolina Gamba**, Facultad Latinoamericana de Ciencias Sociales (FLACSO) Argentina, ([cgamba@flacso.org.ar](mailto:cgamba@flacso.org.ar))

**Abstract:** Contemporary educational discourses in Latin America increasingly emphasize care and socio-emotional wellbeing, especially after COVID-19. This “emotionalization” of schooling reshapes professional practices and organizational cultures in education. However, policies often highlight children’s emotional needs while obscuring teachers’ emotional labor and unequal working conditions. From a gender perspective, new affective mandates reinforce the feminization of teaching and deepen structural precarity. This presentation draws on a doctoral study based on 28 in-depth interviews with early childhood teachers in Buenos Aires. It uses Hochschild’s concept of emotional labor to examine emotional demands, deep/surface acting, and emotional dissonance. It also situates teaching within feminist care economy debates, where care is naturalized as “women’s work” and undervalued. Organizational cultures create unequal “emotional geographies” that shape what teachers can feel and express. Findings show that authenticity and “love” are expected, becoming both a mandate and a key source of recognition. Emotional rewards often compensate for poor material conditions, overload, and lack of institutional support. Teachers face surveillance and contradictory expectations, producing stress and heightened emotional dissonance. The study argues for a pedagogy of care that also cares for caregivers through recognition, time, resources, and fair conditions.

#### Paper 1.2 ***Confessional Labor: Internal Mining and the Creation of the Professional Self in Hollywood’s Writers’ Rooms***

**Julia Dessauer**, Indiana University, United States, ([jmdessau@iu.edu](mailto:jmdessau@iu.edu))

**Abstract:** In creative industries, where judgement of qualifications is often subjective, how do writers justify themselves as qualified to author? This paper uses the case of television and streaming writers in Hollywood to show how writers are compelled to perform confessional labor. Writers perform confessional labor by mining and offering forth autobiographical experiences, including memories, anecdotes, and incidents of trauma, to be received, interpreted, approved, and rejected by showrunners. In job interviews and writers’ rooms, TV writers are compelled to enact three types of confessional labor: 1) generative—the confession serves to spark discussion, 2) surrogative—the confession legitimates the writer to serve as a proxy for a character or element in the show, and 3) corrective—the confession counteracts a (mis)representation within the world of the show. As workers outside of creative industries increasingly use autobiographical narratives to generate career opportunities, the concept of confessional labor reveals new ways in which workers are compelled to utilize and monetize the self.



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## SEMINAR 2

Inscription :  
[here](#)

### Sub-stream 1: Emotions, Professional Practices, and Organizational Cultures

March 27<sup>th</sup>, 2026 - 2.30-4.30 Pm (Rome Time), Online



Chair : **Marco Alberio**, University of Bologna, Italy ([marco.alberio2@unibo.it](mailto:marco.alberio2@unibo.it))

Discussant : **Rebecca Plachesi**, University of Bologna, Italy ([rebecca.plachesi2@unibo.it](mailto:rebecca.plachesi2@unibo.it))

#### Paper 1.3 ***Building Commitment Through Emotions: The Experience of Unionized Domestic Workers in Latin America***

**Jorgelina Loza**, Facultad Latinoamericana de Ciencias Sociales (FLASCO) / CONICET, Argentina ([jloza@flasco.org.ar](mailto:jloza@flasco.org.ar))

**Abstract:** In the late 1980s, domestic workers' organizations in Latin America established the Latin American Confederation of Domestic Workers (CONLACTRAHO), which aimed to expose the informal labor conditions and persistent human rights violations experienced by domestic workers. The social and economic crisis precipitated by the COVID-19 pandemic reinforced the global nature of the care crisis, underscoring the vulnerability of domestic workers, the fragility of labor unions, and the inaction of state actors. In this context, pre-existing solidarity networks and the initiatives of workers' organizations, such as CONLACTRAHO, proved resilient, devising strategies to maintain support for their members. The pandemic also served as a catalyst for reevaluating protest tactics and articulating new organizational objectives. Empirical research conducted with members of organizations throughout the region reveals a distinctive feature of domestic workers' unions: emotional labor as an organizational strategy that strengthens women's commitment and worker identity. This strategy also acknowledges the emotional toll of discrimination and abuse endured by domestic workers. Employing a qualitative, intersectional, and decolonial framework, this study examines these strategies both as mechanisms for constructing unionized women workers' identities and as means of consolidating a strategic Latin American identity, shaped by the cultural and political processes enabled by collective mobilization.

#### Paper 1.4 ***Emotional Styles on the Production Floor: The Case of the Argentine Cement Company Loma Negra (2015–2025)***

**Victoria Marquinez**, Universidad Nacional de Mar del Plata / CONICET, Argentina ([vickymarquinez@hotmail.com](mailto:vickymarquinez@hotmail.com))

**Abstract:** Industrial labour has been widely studied, yet its emotional dimension remains comparatively underexplored. This paper examines a cement production plant in Argentina to analyze how “emotional styles” are constructed at work. Following Gammerl (2012), emotional styles refer to context-specific ways of expressing and managing emotions. The study compares two workplace spaces: offices/laboratories and the production floor. Differences in tasks, spatial design, and company expectations produce distinct emotional repertoires. It focuses on technical artefacts, managerial techniques shaping emotional dispositions, and workers' own emotional strategies. The case study is Loma Negra, the leading cement company in Argentina and a historically masculinized workplace. In 2021, the company introduced policies to include women as machine operators during a modernization and automation project. This setting allows analysis of how technological upgrading reshapes emotional styles and gendered meanings at work. The research is part of a broader project on machines, bodies, emotions, and gender in industrial environments. Methodologically, it relies on qualitative interviews, observations, and analysis of judicial and regulatory documents.

### Sub-stream 2: Well-being, Identity, and Emotional Justice in Contemporary Workplaces

April 24<sup>th</sup>, 2026 - 2.30-4.30 Pm (Rome Time), Online

Chair : **Marco Alberio**, University of Bologna, Italy ([marco.alberio2@unibo.it](mailto:marco.alberio2@unibo.it))

Discussant : **Maria Aishwarya**, Stella Maris College, India ([mariaaish03@gmail.com](mailto:mariaaish03@gmail.com))



#### Paper 2.1 ***Job Satisfaction and the Plurality of Meanings of Work in the Italian Context***

**Rossella Di Federico**, University of Teramo, Italy ([rdifederico@unite.it](mailto:rdifederico@unite.it))

**Abstract:** The study measures job satisfaction in the Italian labor market and examines how organizational and individual factors shape it. It also identifies different work cultures (functional, entrepreneurial, instrumental, neo-traditional, nomadic, etc.) and links satisfaction to workers' productive sectors. Grounded in an interpretive framework that sees work as a source of meaning, the research started in February 2025 and is ongoing. Data are collected through a 28-question semi-structured questionnaire administered online. The survey covers seven areas, including socio-demographics, job position, organizational and individual factors, satisfaction, meanings of work, and future intentions. The sample is stratified and quota-based to reflect key labor market characteristics (gender, age, region, sector, contract type). Analyses include descriptive and bivariate statistics using advanced tools. Preliminary results show that work remains a key source of identity and meaning, but this symbolic balance is increasingly fragile. A new paradigm is emerging: workers seek "meaningful" workplaces rather than simply "safe" ones. Recognition and work-life compatibility appear more stabilizing than contractual security alone. The findings challenge HR practices and encourage institutions to design policies aligned with changing meanings of work. The study is original in covering multiple sectors, addressing a gap in both Italian and international research.

#### Paper 2.2 ***Emotional abuse, bullying and psychological violence at work: Why inequality matters***

**Premilla D'Cruz** ([pdacruz@iima.ac.in](mailto:pdacruz@iima.ac.in)), **Ernesto Noronha** ([enoronha@iima.ac.in](mailto:enoronha@iima.ac.in)), Indian Institute of Management Ahmedabad (IIMA), India

**Abstract:** Through an extensive engagement with the extant international literature, we highlight the link between the unethical behaviour of workplace emotional abuse, bullying and psychological violence and inequality, bringing a new theoretical lens to the substantive area. Societal inequality, which permeates workplaces, triggers and sustains workplace emotional abuse, bullying and psychological violence in two ways: through the inherently unequal employment relationship and through categorical distinctions which result in hierarchies, intersectionality, normative in-groups and disenfranchised out-groups. Not surprisingly, targets of workplace emotional abuse, bullying and psychological violence report powerlessness and defenselessness, feeling unequal to the bullies. Nonetheless, targets display resistance in individualized routine forms and/or collective formal ways, attempting to recalibrate the equality-inequality dynamic. Employee efforts to address workplace emotional abuse, bullying and psychological violence reflect social change efforts towards democratic organizing and equality.

**Sub-stream 2: Well-being, Identity, and Emotional Justice in Contemporary Workplaces**May 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2026 - 2.30-4.30 Pm (Rome Time), OnlineChair : **Marco Alberio**, University of Bologna, Italy ([marco.alberio2@unibo.it](mailto:marco.alberio2@unibo.it))Discussant : **Gabriele Pinna**, University of Cagliari, Italy ([gabriele.pinna@unica.it](mailto:gabriele.pinna@unica.it))Paper 2.3 ***Beyond the rhetoric of active ageing: emotional justice, recognition, and the ambivalent value of experience in the Italian healthcare sector*****Marino Pezzolo** ([marino.pezzolo@unina.it](mailto:marino.pezzolo@unina.it)), **Giustina Orientale Caputo** ([orientale@unina.it](mailto:orientale@unina.it)), University of Naples Federico II, Italy

**Abstract:** Demographic ageing challenges European welfare systems, and “active ageing” policies often extend working lives while neglecting subjective quality of life. Italy is a key case due to rapid ageing and strong welfare pressures, especially in healthcare where many workers are over 55. Despite retention policies, senior staff face rising demands and burnout risks, with limited age-management strategies. Using the affective turn, the study frames ageing at work as an emotional experience shaped by recognition and emotional justice. Theoretical grounding comes from Social Quality Theory, linking sustainability to security, cohesion, inclusion, and empowerment. It critiques productivist approaches that focus on employability and work ability while ignoring emotional costs in high-stress sectors. The research tests two hypotheses: the ambivalent value of experience (H1) and organizational disenchantment (H2). Methodology is qualitative and comparative, based on 30 biographical interviews with healthcare workers over 55. It compares Lombardy (efficiency-driven) and Campania (resource-constrained) to capture different emotional regimes. Findings show a crisis of recognition, with workers feeling invisible, replaceable, or abandoned across contexts. Post-pandemic shifts from “heroes” to targets of frustration intensify insecurity and weaken trust in institutions. Workers respond through emotional withdrawal and boundary-setting, highlighting the need for policies centered on emotional justice and dignity.

Paper 2.4 ***The Ambivalence of Well-Being in the Workplace*****Stéphane Moulin**, Université de Montréal, Canada ([stephane.moulin@umontreal.ca](mailto:stephane.moulin@umontreal.ca))

**Abstract:** Is work a source of fulfillment or a cause of harm and exhaustion? Rather than choosing between these familiar oppositions, this book argues that well-being at work is fundamentally ambivalent, and calls for a renewed dialogue between psychological and sociological perspectives. Drawing on compelling cases from Québec’s restaurant industry and academia, the book identifies three ambivalent profiles: the overworked, the disappointed, and the serene, situated between the rarer poles of the morose and the satisfied. To explain these mixed experiences, the book introduces a three-part framework centered on psychosocial exposures, ethical dispositions, and management strategies. The first dimension, psychosocial exposures, centers on six justice needs: respect, recognition, equity, participation, transparency, and control, whose uneven fulfillment shapes mixed experiences at work. The book thus connects how organizational justice is measured with how it is experienced at work. The second dimension focuses on ethical dispositions, especially hard work ethic and resilience, showing how these are shaped by moral orders and inhibited when justice needs are not fulfilled. In academia, the professorial ethos reveals conflicts between performance and collegiality, while the restaurant industry is divided into three subworlds, sales, craftsmanship, and conviviality, each marked by its own tensions. Finally, the book shows how management strategies, from self-management to organizational reforms, often privilege short-term coping or managerial micro-actions, revealing an insidious colonization of personal life by work. Timely and wide-ranging, this book brings new perspectives on work intensification, encouraging readers to rethink how work shapes everyday life.