

Małgorzata KUBACKA

kubacka1malgorzata@gmail.com

Adam Mickiewicz University, Poznań



BusyBored. The time, (post)modernity and boredom

Boredom is regarded both as an emotional state and as a social phenomenon. Sociologists believe boredom to be socially constructed. Living in a society, participating in its structures and social groups, playing the social roles may carry some obligations related to not being bored or some privileges of having the possibility of being bored (at sometimes). In general, experiencing this (so-called) trivial emotion causes damages to social order (drug abuse, violence, crime, and deviant activity involvement) or brings about distress among individuals (boredom as all-purpose index of dissatisfaction). Presentations of boredom as the root of all evil may be seen as a convenient way of analysis that perfectly fits to well-established manners of thinking. In (post)modernity, experience of boredom at work seems to touch a delicate issue of capitalistic demands referring to efficiency, effectiveness, and productiveness. The current discourses of 'valuable work' and 'successful worker' are sated with information about the need of being constantly creative in order to reach scheduled goals and chance for better future. They also popularise the Csikszentmihaly's concept of flow and regard flow as the most desirable state of human. But, in reality, the experience of flow is relatively rare. Much more common is the state of being 'busy-bored' – the most enduring, overwhelming and undesired type of experience when the workload increases and challenge decreases, when one is bored and busy at the same time. My presentation focuses on deconstruction of the concept of being busy-bored and examines its stems and consequences in relation to broader social and cultural changes.