



UNIVERSITA' DEGLI STUDI DI TRENTO
DIPARTIMENTO DI INFORMATICA E STUDI AZIENDALI

Via Inama, 5 - 38100 TRENTO - Tel. 0461/882126 - Fax 0461/882124 - Email: disa@cs.unitn.it - Web: <http://www.cs.unitn.it>

DISA Seminari

ROCK SEMINAR

**Experiencing Time in the Market: Evidence
from Technical Contracting**

Stephen Barley

Stanford University

Venerdì 7 novembre, ore 15.00

Aula 2C

Sociologists and other observers often contend that white-collar workers are unable to achieve work-life balance because they cannot effectively resist the normative pressures that organizations place on them as employees. Analysts imply that if people could but free themselves from organizational control, they would enjoy greater flexibility and balance in their lives. We examine this contention by using data from a multi-year ethnography of technical contracting to explore how technical contractors experience, interpret and allocate their time. Technical contractors offer a unique opportunity for examining our assumptions about organizations, work and time because technical contractors are itinerant professionals who operate in a market outside any single organizational context. We find that contractors do experience a subjective sense of flexibility and a few achieve an objective flexibility unattained by most permanent employees doing similar work. But the majority work longer hours and devote less time to life outside work than full time employees in similar occupations. We offer some suggestions for why this is the case.

Referente

Prof. Marco Zamarian (tel. 0461/882154 e mail: zamarian@cs.unitn.it)