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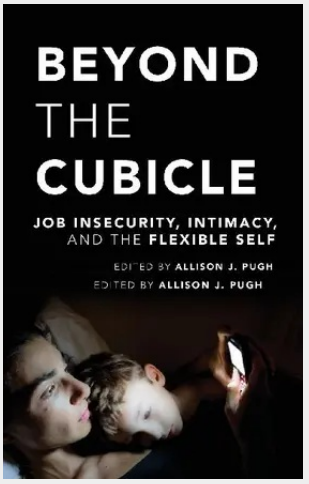
Beyond the Cubicle



How does the insecurity of work affect us? We know what job insecurity does to workers at work, the depressive effect it has on morale, productivity, and pay. We know less about the impact of job insecurity beyond the workplace, upon people's intimate relationships, their community life, their vision of the good self and a good life. This volume of essays explores the broader impacts of job precariousness on different groups in different contexts. From unemployed tech workers in Texas to single mothers in Russia, Japanese heirs to the iconic salaryman to relocating couples in the U.S. Midwest, these richly textured accounts depict the pain, defiance, and joy of charting a new, unscripted life when the scripts have been shredded. Across varied backgrounds and experiences, the new organization of work has its largest impact in three areas: in our emotional cultures, in the interplay of social inequalities like race, class and gender, and in the ascendance of a contemporary radical individualism. In Beyond the Cubicle, job insecurity matters, and it matters for more than how much work can be squeezed out of workers: it shapes their intimate lives, their relationships with others, and their shifting sense of self. Much more than mere numbers and figures, these essays offer a unique and holistic vision of the true impact of job insecurity.

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