

## **Researching value: Value theory and social research**

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The paper seeks to conceptualise Marxian value theory as a problem for social research to investigate. It is argued that so conceptualised, value can only be encountered by the study of the 'totality of social relations' in capitalist society, inside the workplace and outside in the wider sphere of everyday life. It first gives a brief overview of the author's interpretation of the theory of value. It then suggests a way of conceptualising the theory of value as an object of research. It is contended that such research requires the study of the different 'modes of existence' that value takes over the course of the production of commodities and their circulation in society. Possible research approaches are discussed. An approach is put forward inspired by feminist research into the 'life trajectory of the commodity', which incorporates the full totality of capitalist social relations into a broad and wide-ranging study of the different modes of existence taken by value both inside and outside the workplace, in production and circulation. Alongside this primarily theoretical project, some concrete recommendations are made for how this might pan out in practice.

### **Biography**

Frederick H. Pitts is a PhD student at the University of Bath, UK. His research is informed by a critical engagement with the Marxian critique of political economy, and concerns work and work-time in post-industrial occupations with specific reference to the cultural and creative industries.