**LABRST 740: LABOUR GEOGRAPHY**

FALL 2022

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| Instructor: Dr. Suzanne MillsOffice hours: by appointmentE-mail: smills@mcmaster.ca Labour Studies: <http://www.labourstudies.mcmaster.ca/>Zoom link for meetings: https://mcmaster.zoom.us/j/8166061269 | Location: KTH Tuesday 2:00-5:00pm

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# **Course Description**

This course adopts a spatial perspective to understand the world of work. Space is critical to how capitalism and work are organized as well as to how workers leverage power. Applying concepts such as uneven development, scale, place, and landscape, we will explore how different spatial processes affect workers. We will ask questions such as: How do unions use space to gain power and further their interests? To what extent do workers who characterized as marginalized have agency? How do processes such as colonialism, racism, gender and heteronormativity shape industries, workplaces and workers’ lives? We will begin by examining the geography of capitalism and key concepts in labour geography before moving on to discuss key debates and emerging topics in labour geography.

# **Course Learning Objectives**

Students should have the ability to:

* critically evaluate competing theories and explanations about the geography of labour and capitalism
* read, comprehend and summarize theoretical and empirical academic work
* develop strong oral communication skills, including the ability to:
	+ explain and sumarize complex ideas
	+ constructively build on, and critique, the ideas of others
	+ ask strong questions that increase comprehension, expand discussion, and encourage the participation of others
* develop strong academic writing skills, including the ability to:
	+ clearly summarize and organize academic literature into themes
	+ correctly cite and build on or refute the thoughts of others in their writing
	+ develop critical arguments that are well-supported and situated in academic literature
* evaluate and further develop concepts and theories in the area of Labour Geography.

# **Required Materials and Texts**

All materials are available on Avenue to Learn and or are available through the McMaster library system.

# **Course Evaluation Breakdown**

**Formal evaluation % of final grade Due date**

1. Participation 25% In class

2. Presentation 15% TBD (assigned in class)

3. Article commentary 15% Monday, Oct 25th (in class)

4. Annotated bibliography 10% Friday, Nov 18th (online submission)

5. Symposium *paper* Friday, Dec 2nd (online submission)

*& presentation* 35% Friday, Dec 6th (in class)

# **Participation**

In a seminar class, the readings are the course. As such, students should come to class having read, and made written notes on each reading. These should include:

a) your understanding of the main argument(s) or salient issues of each piece,

b) the key concepts or insights and their meaning/relevance and/or definitions

c) at least two questions for the class. At least one question each week should be a clarification question. A clarification question can be either a concept or idea that you did not understand in the reading or a question designed to help the students unpack or better understand a core concepts or argument of the reading. Clarification questions will be taken up in the first half of the class.

Other questions should help promote comparison, analysis or evaluation of the ideas presented in the readings. These questions will drive discussion in the second half of the class.

Participation grades will be based on students’ level of preparation, their ability to speak to each of the assigned readings in an informed way, the questions that they bring to the class, the thoughtfulness of their contributions, and the extent to which they support and develop other students’ ideas.

Students come to the course from different academic and personal backgrounds and there will be an emphasis on maintaining a learning environment that is respectful and accessible to all.

Note: student behavior that hinders the delivery of the course or the respectful participation of all students will negatively affect participation grades. Examples include, but are not limited to: coming to class late or leaving early; interrupting other students; not following the speakers list; using electronic devices for non-class purposes.

# **Presentation**

On one or two occasions, students will be responsible for delivering a brief presentation (see below) creating a list of the most important concepts in the reading as well as list of 5-8 questions to help guide class discussion.

The presentation (no longer than 15 minutes) should consist of:

1. A drawing that visually respresents the relationship between different concepts presented. The student will explain what they created or curated, how it relates to the reading(s) and field questions from their classmates.
2. Brief biographies of the authors of each reading.

List of concept questions

The presenter will also create a list of concepts and questions that can be drawn upon to help promote discussion:

* 1. Key concepts for the week in question (with definitions in the student’s own words)
	2. Questions that will help clarify readings
	3. Questions to promote evaluation, comparison, and critique of material introduced.

The list of questions and concepts should be e-mailed to the instructor by noon on the day of the class. The presenter should also have this reference document in hard copy on hand on the day of class as they will be asked to read out concepts and questions during the class.

# **Symposium**

A symposium is a workshop or conference that includes a collection of essays on a particular topic. In this class, we will discuss geographies of the future of work. Specifically, students are asks to address the question: How will the ‘future of work’ alter the geographies of work and labour geographies in Canada? For example, students might ask how Covid transformed work and non-work landscapes, or explore how changes in spatial organization of work will influence racial or gender inequality. Students will develop distinct perspectives informed by conversations with one another and shared and distinct readings. The development of final symposium papers will build on a number of smaller assignments.

**Commentary**

Students will write a short paper that they will present to their peers that provides a commentary on a newsper article about how work is changing in Canada drawing on at least three of the mandatory or optional assigned readings on October 25th, the Future of Work. The maximum length = 750 words.

**Annotated bibliography**

The annotated bibliography should begin with one short paragraph that describes your working thesis and annotations for 15 academic articles or essays that are not part of the required course readings. Each annotation should include: bibliographical information of the piece, a very short summary of the main argument and methods used and a brief description of how the piece relates to your overall thesis. Annotations for academic books will be longer than those for articles and can replace three articles/essays.

**Symposium (paper and presentation)**

On the last day of class student will present their paper to the class orally. Presentations cannot exceed 10 minutes in length. Symposium papers must be thoughtfully written and well-referenced and cannot exceed 2000 words (8 double spaced pages). Symposium papers should provide an informed and well-supported commentary or intervention on the topic.

# **PROVISIONAL CLASS SCHEDULE**

## PART I: THE GEOGRAPHY OF CAPITALISM

## September 13 – WEEK 1: INTRODUCTION

Brookfield, Stephen 1995. Through the Lens of Learning: How the Visceral Experience of Learning Reframes Teaching. IN: Boud, D., Cohen, R, Walker, D. (eds), Using Experience for Learning, Open University Press.

## September 20 – WEEK 2: UNEVEN DEVELOPMENT

Smith, Neil, 1984. Uneven Development: Nature, Capitalism and the Production of Space. Athens, Georgia: University of Georgia Press, 314p.

* Chapter 4: Toward a Theory of Uneven Development I: the Dialectic of Geographical Differentiation and Equalization. 97-130
* Chapter 5: Toward a Theory of Uneven Development II: Spatial Scale and the See-Saw of Capital. 131-154.

Werner, Marion. 2016. Global Displacements : The Making of Uneven Development in the Caribbean, John Wiley and Sons ltd https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/mcmu/detail.action?docID=4040062

* Introduction: Power and Difference in Global Production 18-40.

## September 27 – WEEK 3: SPATIAL DIVISIONS OF LABOUR

Smith, N. 1986. Review: Spatial Division of Labor: Social Structures and the Geography of Production by Doreen Massey. Geographical Review. 76(3):350-352.

Massey, Doreen, 1994. Space, Place, and Gender. University of Minnesota Press. Minneapolis.

* Chapter 4 - Uneven Development: Social Change and Spatial Divisions of Labour p 86-112
* Chapter 8 – Space, Place and Gender p185-190.

Hudson, Ray, 2001. Producing Places. The Guilford Press. New York.

- Chapter 7 - Divisions of Labour: Cleavage Planes and Axes of Cooperation pg 217-254

Johns, Rebecca A. 1998. Bridging the gap between class and space: U.S. worker solidarity with Guatemala. Economic Geography 74(3): 252-271.

## October 4– WEEK 4: RACIAL CAPITALISM

Melamed, J. 2015. Racial capitalism. Crit. Ethnic Stud. 1, 76–85. [doi.org/10.5749/jcritethnstud.1.1.0076](https://doi.org/10.5749/jcritethnstud.1.1.0076)

Gurminder, B. K. and J. Holmwood. 2018. Colonialism, Postcolonialism and the Liberal Welfare State. New Political Economy 23(5):574-587.

Fraser, N., 2017, Roepke Lecture in Economic Geography: From Exploitation to Expropriation: Historic Geographies of Racialized Capitalism. Economic Geography 94(1):1-17.

Dorries, H., Hugill, D. and J. Tomiak, 2019. In Press. Racial Capitalism and the Production of Settler Colonial Cities. Geoforum [doi.org/10.1016/j.geoforum.2019.07.016](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.geoforum.2019.07.016)

Pulido, L. 2016. Flint, Environmental Racism, and Racial Capitalism. Capitalism Nature Socialism 27 (3):1-16.

## October 11 – FALL BREAK, NO CLASS

## PART II: LABOUR GEOGRAPHY

## October 18 – WEEK 5: GEOGRAPHY AND THE FUTURE OF WORK

Cockayne, D. (2021). The feminist economic geographies of working from home and “digital by default” in Canada before, during, and after COVID‐19. *The Canadian Geographer/Le Géographe canadien, 65*(4), 499-511.

MacLeavy, J., & Lapworth, A. (2020). A ‘post‐work’world: Geographical engagements with the future of work. *The Political Quarterly, 91*(2), 310-316.

Weeks, K. 2011. The problem with work: feminism, Marxism, anti-work politics, and postwork imaginaries. Chapter 1. Mapping the work ethic pp 37-77.

Renski, H., Smith-Doerr, L., Wilkerson, T., Roberts, S., Zilberstein, Branch, E. 2020. Racial equity and the future of work. Technology/Architecture and Design 4(1an 2;4(1):17–22. Available from: <http://resolver.scholarsportal.info.libaccess.lib.mcmaster.ca/resolve/24751448/v04i0001/17_reatfow.xml>

*Optional:*

Jarrahi, M. H. (2018). Artificial intelligence and the future of work: Human-AI symbiosis in organizational decision making. *Business Horizons, 61*(4), 577-586. doi:https://doi.org/10.1016/j.bushor.2018.03.007

Reid-Musson, E., Cockayne, D. Frederiksen, L. 2020. Feminist economic geography and the future of work. Environment and Planning A: Economy and Space. 52(7):1457-1468.

Pierce, J., Lawhon, M., & McCreary, T. (2019). From precarious work to obsolete labour? Implications of technological disemployment for geographical scholarship. *Geografiska Annaler: Series B, Human Geography, 101*(2), 84-101.

[ARTICLE COMMENTARIES AND PRESENTATIONS]

## October 25 – WEEK 6: LABOUR GEOGRAPHY AS A DISCIPLINE

Lier, D. C., 2007. Places of work, scales of organising: a review of labour geography. *Geography Compass*, 1(4), 814-833. (19 pages)

Dutta, Madhumita, 2016, Place of life stories in labour geography: why does it matter? Geoforum 77:1-4. doi.org/10.1016/j.geoforum.2016.10.002

Herod, A., 1991. The Production of Scale in United States Labour Relations. Area, Vol. 23, No. 1 (Mar., 1991), pp. 82-88 <https://www.jstor.org/stable/20002923>

Strauss, K., 2019, Labour geography III: Precarity, racial capitalisms and infrastructure. Progress in Human Geography. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0309132519895308>

## November 1 – WEEK 7: LABOUR MARKET SEGMENTATION

Peck, J. 1989. Reconceptualizing the local labour market: space, segmentation and the state. Progress in Human Geography. 13(1):42-61.

Bauder, H. 2001. Culture in the labor market: segmentation theory and perspectives of place. Progress in Human Geography 25 (1), 37-52

Massey, D. 1994. Chapter 7: A Place Called Home. IN: Massey, D. 1994. Space, Place and Gender. Cambridge: Polity Press. Pp157-173.

Dutta, M. 2019. Becoming’ factory workers: understanding women’s geographies of work through life stories in Tamil Nadu, India. Gender, Place & Culture: A Journal of Feminist Geography. 26(6):888-904

Lewis, N. and Mills, S. 2016. Seeking security: gay labour migration and uneven landscapes of work. Environment and Planning A.

## November 8 – WEEK 8: SOCIAL REPRODUCTION

Mitchell, K., Marston, S.A. and Katz, C. (2003). Life’s Work: An Introduction, Review and Critique. Mitchell, K., Marston, S. A., and Katz, C. Antipode 35(3): 415-442.

Winders, J. and Smith, B.E. 2018. Social reproduction and capitalist production: a geneology of dominant imaginaries. Progress in Human Geography: 1-19.

Freshour, Carrie. 2017. “Ain’t no life for a mother!” Racial capitalism and the crisis of social reproduction. Essay. Environment and Planning D: Society and Space magazine. Nov 7, 2017. *https://www.societyandspace.org/articles/aint-no-life-for-a-mother-racial-capitalism-and-the-crisis-of-social-reproduction*

Mullings, B. 2021. Caliban, social reproduction and our future yet to come. Geoforum 118: 150-158.

*Optional*

*Nakano Glenn, Evelyn. From Servitude to Service work: Historical Continuities in the Racial Division of Paid Reproductive Labour. Signs Vol 18(1): 1-43.*

## November 15– WEEK 9: WORKER AGENCY AND CONTROL

Rogaly B., 2009, Spaces of Work and Everyday Life: Labour Geographies and the Agency of Unorganised Temporary Migrant Workers. *Geogrpahy Compass* 3: 2009.

Doutch, Michaela 2021. A gendered labour geography perspective on the Cambodian garment workers’ general strike of 2013/2014, Globalizations, DOI 10.1080/14747731.2021.1877007

Mitchell, Don, 2001, The Devil’s Arm: points of passage, networks of violence, and the Californial Agricultural Landscape. New Formations: A Journal of Culture/Theory/Politics. 43(Spring): 44-60.

Bridi, M. R., 2013, Labour Control in the Tobacco Agro spaces: Migrant Agricultural Workers in South Western Ontario. Antipode 45(5):1070-1089.

## November 22 – WEEK 10: NATURE, WORK AND LABOUR

Natarajan, N. 2020. ‘After me, all this is over’: exploring class-entangled geographical agency in a shifting climate among tobacco farmers in South India.

Curley, A. (2018). A failed green future: Navajo Green Jobs and energy “transition” in the Navajo Nation. Geoforum, 88(Complete), 57–65. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.geoforum.2017.11.012

Nikki Luke (2022): Just Transition for All? Labor Organizing in the Energy Sector Beyond the Loss of “Jobs Property”, Annals of the American Association of Geographers, DOI: 10.1080/24694452.2022.2079471

Stevis, D., Uzzell, D. and Räthzel, N. (2018) The labour–nature relationship: Varieties of labour environmentalism. *Globalizations*, 15(4), 439-453.

## November 29– WEEK 11: INDIVIDUAL MEETINGS

## December 6 – WEEK 12: PRESENTATIONS

# **Course Policies**

## Submission of Assignments

Weekly participation assignments and article critiques will be submitted on avenue to learn.

Case studies will be submitted using Turnitin.

## Grades

Grades will be based on the McMaster University grading scale:

| **MARK** | **GRADE** |
| --- | --- |
| 90-100 | A+ |
| 85-90 | A |
| 80-84 | A- |
| 77-79 | B+ |
| 73-76 | B |
| 70-72 | B- |
| 67-69 | C+ |
| 63-66 | C |
| 60-62 | C- |
| 57-59 | D+ |
| 53-56 | D |
| 50-52 | D- |
| 0-49 | F |

## Late Assignments

There is no allowance for late assignments except in extenuating circumstances.

## Absences, Missed Work, Illness

Students may be absent from one class without it affecting their participation grade. All other absences will affect a student’s participation grade. If a student is unable to participate in the synchronous lecture component of a given class because of technical difficulties, they have the option of submitting an additional article critique for that class en-lieu of participation.

## Turnitin.com

In this course we will be using a web-based service (Turnitin.com) to reveal plagiarism. Students will be expected to submit their work electronically to Turnitin.com so that it can be checked for academic dishonesty. Students who do not wish to submit their work to Turnitin.com must still submit a copy to the instructor. No penalty will be assigned to a student who does not submit work to Turnitin.com. All submitted work is subject to normal verification that standards of academic integrity have been upheld (e.g., on-line search, etc.). To see the Turnitin.com Policy, please to go [www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity](http://www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity).

## Course Modifications:

The instructor and university reserve the right to modify elements of the course during the term. The university may change the dates and deadlines for any or all courses in extreme circumstances. If either type of modification becomes necessary, reasonable notice and communication with the students will be given with explanation and the opportunity to comment on changes. It is the responsibility of the student to check their McMaster email AND Avenue to Learn (if used by instructor) regularly during the term to note any changes.

## Email Communication Policy of the Faculty of Social Sciences:

All e-mail communication sent from students to instructors (including TAs), and from students to staff, must originate from the student’s own **McMaster University e-mail** **account**. This policy protects confidentiality and confirms the identity of the student. It is the student’s responsibility to ensure that communication is sent to the university from a McMaster account. If an instructor/TA receives a communication from an alternate address, the instructor may not reply at his or her discretion. **Please always include student name, ID and course # in the subject line of messages.**

# **University Policies:**

CONDUCT EXPECTATIONS

As a McMaster student, you have the right to experience, and the responsibility to demonstrate, respectful and dignified interactions within all of our living, learning and working communities. These expectations are described in the Code of Student Rights & Responsibilities (the “Code”). All students share the responsibility of maintaining a positive environment for the academic and personal growth of all McMaster community members, whether in person or online.

It is essential that students be mindful of their interactions online, as the Code remains in effect in virtual learning environments. The Code applies to any interactions that adversely affect, disrupt, or interfere with reasonable participation in University activities. Student disruptions or behaviours that interfere with university functions on online platforms (e.g. use of Avenue 2 Learn, WebEx or Zoom for delivery), will be taken very seriously and will be investigated. Outcomes may include restriction or removal of the involved students’ access to these platforms.

ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATION OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Students with disabilities who require academic accommodation must contact Student Accessibility Services (SAS) at 905-525-9140 ext. 28652 or sas@mcmaster.ca to make arrangements with a Program Coordinator. For further information, consult McMaster University’s Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities policy.

REQUESTS FOR RELIEF FOR MISSED ACADEMIC TERM WORK

McMaster Student Absence Form (MSAF): In the event of an absence for medical or other reasons, students should review and follow the Academic Regulation in the Undergraduate Calendar “Requests for Relief for Missed Academic Term Work”.

ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATION FOR RELIGIOUS, INDIGENOUS OR SPIRITUAL OBSERVANCES (RISO)

Students requiring academic accommodation based on religious, indigenous or spiritual observances should follow the procedures set out in the RISO policy. Students should submit their request to their Faculty Office normally within 10 working days of the beginning of term in which they anticipate a need for accommodation or to the Registrar's Office prior to their examinations. Students should also contact their instructors as soon as possible to make alternative arrangements for classes, assignments, and tests.

COPYRIGHT AND RECORDING

Students are advised that lectures, demonstrations, performances, and any other course material provided by an instructor include copyright protected works. The Copyright Act and copyright law protect every original literary, dramatic, musical and artistic work, including lectures by University instructors

In this class, seminar discussions will in principle not be recorded. However, the recording of lectures, tutorials, or other methods of instruction may occur at some point during the course. Recording may be done by either the instructor for the purpose of authorized distribution, or by a student (upon request only) for the purpose of personal study under special circumstances. Students should be aware that their voice and/or image may be recorded by others during the class. Please speak with the instructor if this is a concern for you.

EXTREME CIRCUMSTANCES

The University reserves the right to change the dates and deadlines for any or all courses in extreme circumstances (e.g., severe weather, labour disruptions, etc.). Changes will be communicated through regular McMaster communication channels, such as McMaster Daily News, A2L and/or McMaster email