

LABRST 740: LABOUR GEOGRAPHY

Winter – 2019

Instructor: Dr. Suzanne Mills

Office: KTH 701 B

Meetings by appointment

E-mail: smills@mcmaster.ca

Labour Studies: <http://www.labourstudies.mcmaster.ca/>

Class meeting time:

Thursdays, 2:30-

5:30pm in KTH-734

Course description

Space is critical to how work is organized as well as to how workers and worker movements leverage power. This course will ask: How have workers shaped the geography of capitalism? How do unions use space to gain power and further their interests? To what extent do workers who characterized as marginalized have agency? We will adopt a spatial lens that is attentive to how social categories such as gender, racialization, Indigeneity, and sexual orientation shape worker experiences. We will begin by examining the geography of capitalism and key concepts in labour geography such as scale and place before moving on to discuss key debates and emerging topics in labour geography.

Course materials

Materials are available online through the university library or Avenue to Learn

Course approach

This course is structured as a seminar and follows a peer learning mode. All students are expected to contribute to the learning process by: 1. coming prepared to discuss assigned readings, 2. by providing questions and feedback to presenters, and 3. by delivering a short presentation to the class on two occasions.

Formal evaluation	% of final grade	Due date (<i>all assignments due at 2:30</i>)
1. Participation	25%	In Class
2. Presentations	20%	TBD (assigned in class)
3. Blog (submitted online)	15%	Wed., Feb. 12 th , 4pm
4. Symposium research		
Discussion reflection 1	5%	On or before Tuesday, Feb 25, 2pm
Discussion reflection 2	5%	On or before Tues. March 16 th , 2pm
Annotated Bibliography	10%	Monday, March 9 th , 3pm
5. Symposium paper & presentation	20%	April 2 nd , in class

Participation

The starting point of each class is that all seminar members have read the assigned readings and having prepared a reader response for use in seminar discussion. Notes must include your understanding of the main argument or salient issues of each piece, key concepts and vocabulary as well and **at least two questions about each reading**. At least one question for each reading must 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 unpack or better understand a core concepts or argument of the reading. These questions will be taken up in the first half of each class. Questions that help promote comparison, analysis or evaluation will drive discussion in the second half of the class.

At the beginning of each class, notes will be traded with another student. Students making comments will write a short commentary for each reading and will write their name at the top of the reading notes. Annotated notes will be handed into the instructor at the end of each class.

Students will be graded each week on the basis of: 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 to discussion, and their ability to support and develop other students' ideas through supportive commentary (written and oral). Note that since students come to the course from different academic and personal backgrounds 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.

Presentations

On two occasions, students will be responsible for delivering a brief presentation to the class about the readings. In the first week of class, students will select one theme of interest. Presentations should be short (10-15 minutes long, and must include:

- a) A brief introductory statement outlining the importance of the week's topic
- b) A (very) brief biography of each of the authors
- c) A **cursor** overview of the main arguments of each reading

Presenters should prepare a one-page hand-out for each member of the class that outlines the main arguments of the readings, important concepts and five questions for class discussions. These questions should promote comparison, analysis and evaluation by bringing articles into conversation with one another or with previous readings in the course.

After their presentation, we will begin by clarifying any unclear concepts and arguments/sub-arguments in each of the readings. The instructor, presenter and other class members will share responsibility for answering student questions and the instructor will moderate the class.

After the break, the presenter will begin by sharing their questions for class discussion to deepen student's understandings of the readings. Other students will share their analysis questions as well.

Symposium assignments

A symposium is a workshop or conference that includes a collection of essays on a particular topic. In this class, we will hold a symposium to answer the question: How does Labour Geography help us understand the rise of populism and its relationship to work and workers in Canada? 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.

Blog commentary

Students will write a blog for their peers that relates one of the concepts introduced in the first half of the class to either right wing or left-wing populist movements. Maximum length = 750 words (blogs over 750 words and that do not include the word count will be penalized). Blogs should draw on the readings for week 6 as well as one additional reading of your choice. Blogs need to be posted on Avenue to Learn by the above time and due date to avoid penalty. Blog posts should be thoughtful commentaries and must use the Chicago (author, date) citation style.

Symposium research

Students will be graded on the research and thought processes used to develop their symposium paper. This will include one annotated bibliography as well as two reflections of discussions with their peers.

The annotated bibliography should include the bibliographical information as well as a description of the topic, main argument/approach and methods used for 16 academic articles or essays that are not part of the formal course materials. If students read academic books, each book will replace 3-4 articles/essays (depending on the length of the book).

Discussion reflections (2)

On two occasions, each student must meet with two or more peers to discuss their thoughts about the readings that they have done for the assignment.

The first discussion will occur in the second half of the class on Thursday, February 13th. The first discussion will draw on readings assigned for week 6 as well as on additional readings that students referenced in their blog posts. The second discussion

will occur on a date of the students choosing but must occur before Tuesday, March 16th. The second discussion will be based on a minimum of five readings that are distinct from those included in the first discussion. Students may have either overlapping or distinct readings for the discussion.

Symposium (paper and presentation)

On the last class each student will hand in a written symposium paper and 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 opinion on the topic above.

Course guidelines

A. Handing in assignments: I do not accept assignments by e-mail. Written assignments must be handed in HARD COPY

B. Late policy: Late assignments will only be accepted in extenuating circumstances.

C. Email: Please ask detailed questions about course material and assignments in person. I only use e-mail to answer administrative/organizational questions that can be answered in one sentence.

It is the policy of the Faculty of Social Sciences that all e-mail communication sent from students to instructors 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 becomes aware that a communication has come from an alternate address, the instructor may not reply at his or her discretion.

D. Laptop Policy:

There is no reason to use a laptop or any electronic device since discussion is the primary form of instruction. Please contact me if you require accommodation.

E. Academic Ethics

<http://www.mcmaster.ca/univsec/policy/AcademicIntegrity.pdf> Academic dishonesty consists of misrepresentation by deception or by other fraudulent means and can result in serious consequences, e.g. the grade of zero on an assignment, loss of credit with a notation on the transcript (notation reads: "Grade of F assigned for academic dishonesty"), and/or suspension or expulsion from the university. This applies to both oral presentations and written assignments.

It is your responsibility to understand what constitutes academic dishonesty. For

information on the various kinds of academic dishonesty please refer to the Academic Integrity Policy, specifically Appendix 3, located on the website above.

The following illustrates only three forms of academic dishonesty:

- Plagiarism, e.g. - the submission of work that is not one's own or for which other credit has been obtained. Note – this includes using sentences and paragraphs that are not clearly cited as originating in the work of another in oral presentations or written assignments.
- Improper collaboration in group work.
- Copying or using unauthorized aids in tests and examinations.

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 course websites weekly during the term and to note any changes.

Student Accessibility Services

(MUSC-B107) <http://SAS.mcmaster.ca> 905-525-9140 x28652

Students can find academic support services, including **help with writing skills, time management, motivation, personal concerns and problems, confidential services for students with disabilities, etc.** Special arrangements may be made for students with disabilities. The course instructor and McMaster University welcome feedback on disability issues. Please inform the instructor if there are disability needs that are not being met. University Accommodation Policy: [mcmaster.ca/policy/Students-Academic Studies AODA](http://mcmaster.ca/policy/Students-Academic-Studies-AODA) website: mcmaster.ca/accessibility

PROVISIONAL CLASS SCHEDULE

PART I: THE GEOGRAPHY OF CAPITALISM: KEY CONCEPTS

January 9th – 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.

January 16th – 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.

Bond, P. and Ruiters, G. 2017. Uneven Development and Scale Politics in Southern Africa: What We Learn from Neil Smith. *Antipode* Vol. 49 No. S1 2017 ISSN 0066-4812, pp. 171–189

January 23rd – WEEK 3: SPATIAL DIVISIONS OF LABOUR

Massey, Doreen, 1984. *Spatial Divisions of Labour*.

- Chapter 3 Uneven Development and Spatial Structures pg 67-124

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

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

January 30th – WEEK 4: RACIAL CAPITALISM

Melamed, J. 2015. Racial capitalism. *Crit. Ethnic Stud.* 1, 76–85.
doi.org/10.5749/jcritethnstud.1.1.0076

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

Bobby M. Wilson, 2005, Race in Commodity Exchange and Consumption: Separate but Equal, *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, 95:3, 587-606, DOI: 10.1111/j.1467-8306.2005.00476.x

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

Gilmore, R.W., 2002. "Fatal Couplings of Power and Difference: Notes on Racism and Geography." The Professional Geographer 54 (1): 15–24. doi: 10.1111/0033-0124.00310

February 6th – WEEK 5: SCALE

Herod, Andrew, 2011. *Scale*. Routledge. New York, NY.

Chapter 1. What is scale and how do we think about it? Pg 1-58.

Herod, Andrew, 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>

Tomiaik, J. 2016. Unsettling Ottawa: Settler colonialism, indigenous resistance, and the politics of scale. *Canadian Journal of Urban Research*, 25(1), 8-21. Retrieved from

<http://libaccess.mcmaster.ca.libaccess.lib.mcmaster.ca/login?url=https://search-proquest-com.libaccess.lib.mcmaster.ca/docview/1826887123?accountid=12347>

Hubbard, P. 2013. Kissing is not a universal right: Sexuality, law and the scales of citizenship. *Geoforum* 49:224-232.

February 13th – WEEK 6: POPULISM / SYMPOSIUM PREPARATION & SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION

Fraser, N. 2017. The End of Progressive Neoliberalism. *Dissent*, January 2, <http://www.bresserpereira.org.br/terceiros/2017/fevereiro/17.02-End-of-Progressive-Neoliberalism.pdf>

Thomas, M. P., & Tufts, S. 2016. Austerity, right populism, and the crisis of labour in Canada. *Antipode*, 48(1):212-230.

Givens, T. 2017. How the Left Can Right Itself. *World Policy Journal*. 34(1) Spring 2017:26-29. Institute DOI: 10.1215/07402775-3903700

Morton, G.D. 2018. Neoliberal eclipse: Donald Trump, corporate monopolism, and the changing face of work. *Dialect Anthropol* 42: 207. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10624-017-9465-6> <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s10624-017-9465-6#aboutcontent>

February 20th – READING BREAK NO CLASS

PART II: LABOUR GEOGRAPHY

February 27th – WEEK 7, PLACE AND LABOUR MARKET SEGEMENTATION

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.

Weller, Sally A. 2008. Are Labour Markets Necessarily 'Local'? Spatiality, Segmentation and Scale. *Urban Studies* 45(11): 2203-2223.

Dutta, Madhumita. 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.

March 5 – WEEK 8: 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)

Herod, A. 1997, Labor's spatial praxis and the geography of contract bargaining in the US east coast longshore industry, 1953–1989. *Political Geography*, 16(2), 145-169.

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

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

March 12 – WEEK 9: WORKER AGENCY AND WORKER CONTROL

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

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.

Kelly, P.F., 2002, Spaces of labour control: comparative perspectives from Southeast Asia. *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers*, 27: 395-411. doi:10.1111/1475-5661.00062

March 19 – WEEK 10: INTRA-LABOUR AGENCY

Hastings, T., 2016. Moral Matters: De-Romanticising Worker Agency and Charting Future Directions for Labour Geography. *Geography Compass*, 10: 307– 318. doi: 10.1111/gec3.12272.

Warren, A., 2019. Labour Geographies of Workplace Restructuring: An Intra-Labour Analysis. *Antipode*, 51:681-706. doi:10.1111/anti.12432

Ince, A., Featherstone, D., Cumbers, A., MacKinnon, D. and Strauss, K., 2015. British Jobs for British Workers? Negotiating Work, Nation, and Globalisation through the Lindsey Oil Refinery Disputes, *Antipode*, 47, pages 139– 157. doi: 10.1111/anti.12099.

March 26 – WEEK 11: DIFFERENCE AND LGBTQ2S+ WORKERS

Puar, Jasbir, 2010, In the Wake of It Gets Better. *The Guardian*, November 16, 2010.

Puar, Jasbir, 2002. Circuits of Queer Mobility: Tourism, Travel, and Globalization. GLQ: A Journal of Lesbian and Gay Studies, Volume 8, Number 1-2, 2002, pp. 101-137

Hines, Sally, 2010. Queerly situated? Exploring negotiations of trans queer subjectivities at work and within community spaces in the UK, Gender, Place & Culture, 17:5, 597-613, DOI: [10.1080/0966369X.2010.503116](https://doi.org/10.1080/0966369X.2010.503116)

Lewis, N. & Mills, S., 2016. Seeking security: Gay labour migration and uneven landscapes of work. Labour Mobilities. Environment & Planning A. 48(12): 2484-250. doi: 0308518X16659773

April 2 – WEEK 12: SYMPOSIUM