**LABRST 740: LABOUR GEOGRAPHY**

FALL 2020

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| Instructor: Dr. Suzanne MillsOffice: KTH 701 BMeetings by appointmentE-mail: smills@mcmaster.ca Labour Studies: <http://www.labourstudies.mcmaster.ca/>Zoom Meeting link:<https://mcmaster.zoom.us/j/97477552740?pwd=ZFBEbWdNblpPaXBLU1VacUlmcEJqQT09> | Class meeting time:Mondays, 2:30-5:30pm

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# **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 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**

Perry, A. and M.J.L. McCallum, 2018. Structures of Indifference: An Indigenous life and death in a Canadian city. University of Manitoba Press.

https://uofmpress.ca/books/detail/structures-of-indifference

All other 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% Friday at 4pm prior to class and in class

2. Presentation/co-moderator 20% TBD (assigned in class)

3. Book review 20% Friday, Oct 16th, 4:30pm

4. Final paper 30% Friday, Nov 27th, 4:30pm

5. Paper presentation 5% Monday, Dec 2nd, in class

# **Participation**

Participation will be graded on the basis of:

* written notes submitted electronically **on or before 4pm** on the Friday prior to class [instructions in first class].
* oral participation in synchronous component of class. Notes must include your understanding of the main argument(s) or salient issues of each piece in **your own words**, and 5 key concepts or vocabulary from each reading 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 hour of each class. Questions that help promote comparison, analysis or evaluation will drive discussion in the second half of the 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.

# **Presentation/online moderation**

On two occasions, students will be responsible for delivering a brief presentation and providing online moderation during the synchronous version of the class.

The presentation will consist of:

1. Brief biographies of the authors of the week’s readings
2. Presenting a drawing a picture that explains one of the key concepts that you prepared prior to the online class and explaining it to your fellow students
3. Creating a global list of discussion items drawing on the contributions of classmates and the presenter. This should include:
	1. Key concepts or words that require clarification and/or are ‘important/central concepts’ for the week in question
	2. Other points of interest
	3. A curated list of discussion questions for the class. Questions should be separated into a) questions designed to help clarify the understanding of the readings, and b) questions that will promote discussion, evaluation, critique and reflection.
4. Both the list of questions and concepts (without definitions) and the conceptual picture must be posted on avenue to learn and e-mailed to the instructor by 2pm on the day of the class.

Prior to 2pm on the day of the class, the presenter will submit notes from number 3 and 4 to the instructor.

Note: presentations should be less than 5 minutes.

We will begin each class with the presentation of the drawing and the biographies.

For the remainder of the online class, the student moderator will assist the instructor in facilitating the synchronous discussion by providing key concepts and questions for discussion when called upon and by monitoring the synchronous chat for student contributions and reading out questions and/or comments when appropriate.

Grading rubric for presentation:

* Preparation (the extent to which the student researched biographies, thoroughly read all readings and student submissions and spent time thinking about and organizing the material and how to draw the concept)
* Comprehension (depth of understanding of the readings – assessed by the quality of the questions posed, the organization of material and the illustration/diagram)
* Clarity (emphasis on minimizing jargon and maximizing comprehension)
* Moderation and class participation (quality of online moderation and extent to which the student’s questions and moderation of chat help foster the participation of other students).

# **Book review**

Students will write a review of the book: *Perry, A. and M.J.L. McCallum, 2018. Structures of Indifference: An Indigenous life and death in a Canadian city* following the conventions of Labour/Le Travail http://www.lltjournal.ca/miscfiles/LLT\_StyleGuide\_Eng.pdf (no more than 1200 words). For examples of book review formats, please see other reviews in Labour/Le Travail.

# **Final paper**

Students can choose one of two options for their final paper. Students may write a literature review or an argumentative essay about the relevance of space and geography to a specific case or situation involving workers, worker organizations and/or unions. All topic ideas (one paragraph) must be submitted to the instructor by noon on October 27th for review.

*Literature review (15-20 pages double spaced, no more than 5000 words not including references – please include word count on title page)*

The aim of the literature review is to organize, present and critique a subset of the labour studies literature examining the relationship between space/geography and one type of workers or one aspect of work or worker organizing. The review should serve to introduce the reader to one or more critical debates or questions in the subfield while providing a commentary on the approaches presented. The critique should also identify a question or gap in the literature. Additional information and resources about writing a literature review will be posted online.

*Case study (15-20 pages double spaced, no more than 5000 words* ***including*** *references – please include word count on title page)*

The aim of the case study/problem paper is for students to apply the concepts and theoretical perspectives from the labour studies literature to a contemporary labour relations event, campaign or worker situation that has not been examined extensively in the academic literature. The aim is not to choose a topic that has been written about academically but instead to apply the knowledge from literature about other campaigns to the topic. This paper will therefore involve reviewing grey literature (reports, union materials, newspaper articles) as well as academic literature.

# **Paper presentation**

Students will present a summary of their paper to the class either by creating a short video (<5 minutes) or by presenting their paper synchronously over zoom. Paper presentations do not require the use of power point (though they may) but they must be well prepared and organized and include one question to foster class discussion.

# **PROVISIONAL CLASS SCHEDULE**

**PART I: THE GEOGRAPHY OF CAPITALISM**

## September 14 – 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 21 – 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.

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

## September 28 – 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

## October 5– 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)

Bhambra, Gurminder K. and J. Holmwood. 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)

## October 12 – FALL BREAK, NO CLASS

## October 19 – WEEK 5: INDIGENOUS ECONOMIES AND COLONIALISM

Gombay, N. 2012. Placing economies: lessons from the Inuit about economics, time and existence. Journal of Cultural Geography 29(1):19-38.

Perry, A. and M.J.L. McCallum, 2018. Structures of Indifference: An Indigenous life and death in a Canadian city. University of Manitoba Press.

Owen, D. 1965 High Steel. National Film Board. <https://www.nfb.ca/film/high_steel/>

## October 26 – WEEK 6: SCALE

Herod, A., 2011. Scale. Routledge. New York, NY.

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

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>

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

**PART II: LABOUR GEOGRAPHY**

## November 2 – WEEK 7: 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, From a Geography of Labor to a Labor Geography: Labour’s Spatial Fix and the Geography of Capitalism. Antipode 29(1):1–31

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

## November 9 – WEEK 8: 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, S.A. 2008. Are Labour Markets Necessarily ‘Local’? Spatiality, Segmentation and Scale. Urban Studies 45(11): 2203-2223.

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

## November 16– 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.

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

## November 23 – WEEK 10: DISABILITY AND WORK

Russell, Marta. “What Disability Civil Rights Cannot Do: Employment and Political Economy.” *Disability &#x26; Society*, vol. 17, no. 2, Mar. 2002, pp. 117–135,

Hall, Edward, and Robert Wilton. 2011. "Alternative spaces of ‘work’ and inclusion for disabled people." Disability & Society 26 (7):867-880. doi: 10.1080/09687599.2011.618742.

Wilton, Robert D. 2004. "From flexibility to accommodation? Disabled people and the reinvention of paid work." Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers 29 (4):420-432. DOI: 10.1111/j.0020-2754.2004.00139.x.

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

## November 30– WEEK 11: GENDER, SEXUALITY AND WORK

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.libaccess.lib.mcmaster.ca/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

## December 2 – WEEK 12: PAPER 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