

JPG1809H**Spaces of work: value, identity, agency, justice**

Mondays, 11am-1pm RM SS2124A

*~DRAFT~**Please note that some readings or assignments may change before September 12th*

Dr. Michelle Buckley

Fall 2016

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course will introduce students to Marxist, feminist, critical race, and anticolonial perspectives on ‘work’ and ‘labour’ in the twenty-first century. A key intention of this course is to prompt students to examine what forms of work – and also *whose* work – has been taken into account in geographical scholarship and to explore a number of prominent debates concerning labour, work and employment within (and geography over the last three decades. In doing so we will engage with foundational political economy texts on the relations of labour under capitalism, and texts within geography and sociology on work, labour, place and space. We will also examine a number of broad economic and cultural shifts in the nature of contemporary work and employment such as de-industrialization, the feminization of labour markets and service sector work, neoliberalization and the rise of the ‘precariat’. At the same time, students will be prompted to consider critiques of some of these transformational narratives to probe the colonial, patriarchal, and capitalist *continuities* shaping the contours of contemporary work. In this sense this is not an exhaustive course on labour and work in geography, but rather a series of discrete introductions to key scholarly arguments about work, often followed by a range of responses to those arguments in the following week. The course will touch on a broad range of topics, including unfree labour, labour organizing, precarious employment and social reproductive work which are tied together by four overarching themes that run through the course – value, identity, agency and justice. Overall this course aims to give students the chance to explore not only how work has been conceptualized and studied in geography, but how it could be.

COURSE STRUCTURE:**Seminar Participation: 20%****Seminar Presentation: 25%****Major Paper Outline: 20%****Major Paper: 35%****ASSIGNMENTS:**

Seminar participation: Participating in class discussions is a fundamental part of your work in this course. You are asked to do all of the required readings before class each week – including your peer’s weekly thought piece) and to come prepared to take part in respectful

and thoughtful discussion. It is recognized that we all come to the class with different backgrounds and comfort levels in engaging in group discussions. To that effect participation grades will not be based on those who speak the most or the loudest. Your evaluation will be based on the quality of your contributions, the constructiveness of your engagements both with your peers' comments and the course material, and your efforts to foster a supportive space in the classroom and a productive learning experience for everyone.

Seminar presentation: Each student (either in pairs or individually depending on enrollment) will make a 20 minute presentation introducing the week's readings to the class. This will not be just a summary but a critical introduction to the readings which highlights some of the key themes of the readings and ideas about how the readings might relate to each other. As part of your seminar presentation you will post a 500-word thought-piece on blackboard the day before class (Friday) that will offer a short synthetic discussion of the readings for this week. Please formulate three questions to pose to the class – these questions are intended to prompt critical and thoughtful discussion amongst the class, so care should be taken to make them open-ended, provocative and/or productive. You are also asked to facilitate the discussion for the first hour. The breakdown for assessment will be: presentation 10%; thought-piece 10%; questions and class facilitation 5%.

Major paper outline: You will be required to submit a three page proposal and a short annotated bibliography of a minimum of 5 academic sources that will introduce your proposed topic, and the specific issues or questions you think you will want to explore. This topic must be substantively different than (but can be related to or build from) the topic you present on in class. **Due in class: Week 7, October 24th.**

Major paper: Your final paper must be on a topic of your choosing that considers work and/or employment through one of the themes of the course – identity, agency, justice or value. It should be double spaced and around 14-15 pages long. **Due in class: Week 13, December 5th.**

N.B. Please be advised that some students who sign up for a seminar presentation in November or late October will not receive their first mark until after the course drop date.

ACCESSIBILITY SERVICES:

The University of Toronto is committed to accessibility. If you require accommodations or have any accessibility concerns, please visit <http://studentlife.utoronto.ca/accessibility> as soon as possible. Students may also want to contact Accessibility Services Office if they have problems arising from chronic issues or injuries sustained during the term that affect their ability to do assignments. For more information, see <http://www.accessibility.utoronto.ca/Faculty-and-Staff.htm>.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY:

Plagiarism is an academic offense at the University of Toronto. Plagiarism is quoting (or paraphrasing) the work of an author (including the work of fellow students) without proper use of citation (and quotations marks when using an author's words). Students also should

not be submitting any academic work for which credit has previously been obtained or is being sought, without first discussing with the instructor. Please consult the “Rules and Regulations” section of the Arts and Science Calendar (http://www.artsandscience.utoronto.ca/ofr/calendar/Rules_&_Regulations.html). For further information and check the ‘How not to plagiarize’ website at: <http://www.writing.utoronto.ca/advice/using-sources/how-not-to-plagiarize>. For further advice and suggestions for instructors around issues of academic integrity, see: <http://www.artsci.utoronto.ca/osai/facultyandstaff/prevention>.

WEEKLY TOPICS AND READINGS:

WEEK 1: September 12th - Introduction to each other and to the course

WEEK 2: September 19th

Labour/work/employment: Sociological and Marxian lineages

- Marx, K. (1887) Chapters 7 and 8 of “Part 3: The Production of Absolute Surplus Value” in *Capital: A Critique of Political Economy (Volume 1)*. Progress Publishers, Moscow. P 283-319.
- Grint, K. (2005) “Chapter 1: What is Work?” in *The Sociology of Work*. Third Edition. Polity Press.

WEEK 3: September 26th

From locational inputs to active agents: ‘labour’ vs. ‘workers’ in labour geography

- Storper, M. and R. Walker (1983) The theory of labour and the theory of location. *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*. 7(1): 1-42.
- Herod, A. (1997) From a geography of labor to a labor geography: labor's spatial fix and the geography of capitalism. *Antipode*. 29(1): 1-31.
- Herod, Andrew. 2001. Chapter 4: “Spatial Sabotage: Containerization, Union Work Rules, and the Geography of Waterfront Work” in *Labour Geographies: Workers and Landscapes of Capitalism*. New York: Guilford Press. Pp 70-101.

WEEK 4: October 3rd

Whose work counts? Destabilizing ‘labour’ and value production under capitalism

- Dalla Costa, M. & James, S. (1972) The Power of Women and the Subversion of the Community” in *A Women’s Place* (3rd ed., Butler and Tanner Ltd. 1975).
- hooks, b. (2000) “Rethinking the nature of work” in *Feminist Theory: From Margin to Centre*. Cambridge: Pluto Press. Pp.95-106.

- England, K. and Lawson, V. (2005) “Feminist analyses of work: rethinking the boundaries, gendering and spatiality of work. *A Companion to Feminist Geography* 77-92. [For a useful overview of late 20th century feminist geographical scholarship on work and employment]

Further reading:

- Smith, P. (1978[2013]) “Domestic labour and Marx’s theory of value”, in A. Kuhn and A-M Wolpe (eds), *Feminism and Materialism: Women and Modes of Production*, Routledge and Kegan Paul: London. pp 198-219.
- Katz, C. (2004) “Disrupted Landscapes of Production and Reproduction” in *Growing Up Global: Economic Restructuring and Children's Everyday Lives*, University of Minnesota Press: Minneapolis, pp134-154.

WEEK 5: October 10th

Work/place and identities: redundant, suitable, and (un)desirable bodies in the new economy

- McDowell, L. (1997) “The Contemporary Crisis of Masculinity” in *Redundant Masculinities*. pp. 56-92.
- Wright, M. (1999) Crossing the factory frontier: gender, place and power in the Mexican maquiladora *Antipode* 29(3): 278-302.
- Akalin, A. (2015) Motherhood as the value of labour. *Australian Feminist Studies* 30(83): 65-81.

WEEK 6: October 17th

From temping to triangular employment: confronting debates on nonstandard employment and what it means to be ‘precarious’

- Standing, G. (2011) Chapters 1 & 2 in *The Precariat: The New Dangerous Class*. Bloomsbury Press. Pp. 1-58.
- Theodore N and Peck J (2002) The temporary staffing industry: growth imperatives and limits to contingency. *Economic Geography* 78(4): 463-493.
- Beck, U. (1992) “Destandardization of labor”, in *Risk Society: Towards a New Modernity*. Sage Publications: London. pp. 139-154.

Further reading:

- Wills, J. 2009. Subcontracted employment and its challenge to labour. *Labor Studies Journal* 34 (4):441-460.
- Bourdieu, P. (1998), ‘*La précarité est aujourd'hui partout, [’Precariousness is Everywhere Nowadays’]*’, in *Contre-feux*, Paris: Raisons d'agir, 96–102.

- Tilly, C. (1996) *Half A Job: Bad and Good Part-Time Jobs in a Changing Labor Market*. Temple University Press: Philadelphia.

WEEK 7: October 24th <<MAJOR PAPER OUTLINE DUE>>

Unpacking the geographies of the Precariat I: situating narratives of epochal change

- McDowell, L (2015) The lives of others: transformational narratives and service sector work. *Economic Geography*. 91(1) 1-23
- Sangster, J. (2010) “Aboriginal Women and Work in Prairie Communities”, in *Transforming Labour: Women and Work in Post-war Canada*. University of Toronto Press, Toronto. Pp199-232.
- Hill Collins, P. (1990) “Work, Family and Black Women’s Oppression.” In *Black Feminist Thought: Knowledge, Consciousness and the Politics of Empowerment*. Routledge: New York. Pp 43-66.

Further reading:

- Doogan, K. (2009) “Job Insecurity and Manufactured Uncertainty”, in *New Capitalism? The Transformation of Work*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Meehan, K. and Strauss, K. (eds) (2015) *Precarious Worlds: Contested Geographies of Social Reproduction*. Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press.

WEEK 8: October 31st

Unpacking the geographies of the Precariat II: decolonizing labour scholarship

- Scully, B. (2016) Precarity North and South: a southern critique of Guy Standing *Global Labour Journal* 7(2) 160-173.
- Munck, R. (2013) The precariat: A view from the south. *Third World Quarterly* 34(5): 747-762.
- Gidwani, V., and K. Sivaramakrishnan. 2003. Circular migration and the spaces of cultural assertion. *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 93 (1):186-213.

Further reading:

- Mezzadra, S. (2012) How Many Histories of Labor? Towards a Theory of Postcolonial Capitalism. *European Institute for Progressive Cultural Policies*.

WEEK 9: November 7th NO CLASSES – FALL BREAK

WEEK 10: November 14th

Migrant status, non-citizenship and the multiplication of labour

- Marx, K. (1887) “Progressive Production of a Relative Surplus Population or Industrial Reserve Army” and “Different Forms of the relative Surplus Population. The General Law of Capitalist Accumulation. *Capital Vol.1* pp774-798.

- De Genova, N. 2002, “Migrant ‘illegality’ and deportability in everyday life”, *Annual Review of Anthropology*, 31.
- McIntyre, M. H.J. Nast (2011) *Bio(necro)polis: Marx, Surplus Populations, and the Spatial Dialectics of Reproduction and “Race” Antipode*

WEEK 11: November 21st

Colonial and lived continua of ‘unfree’ labour: carceral employment, forced labour and debt bondage

- LeBaron, G. (2014) ‘Reconceptualizing debt bondage: debt as a class-based form of labor discipline.’ *Critical Sociology*. 40(5): 763-780
- Peck and Theodore (2009) *Carceral Chicago: making the ex-offender employability crisis international. International Journal of Urban and Regional Research.*
- Lewis, H., Dwyer, P., Hodkinson, S. and Waite, L. (2014) *Hyper-precarious lives: migrants, work and forced labour in the global north. Progress in Human Geography.*

Further reading:

- Wacquant, L. (2001) 'Deadly symbiosis: When ghetto and prison meet and mesh'. *Punishment & Society*, 3(1): 95-133.
- Gilmore, R. (2007) “The Prison Fix”, from *Golden Gulag: Prisons, Surplus, Crisis, and Opposition in Globalizing California*. University of California Press.

WEEK 12: November 28th

Beyond borders, beyond unions: rethinking labour organization and worker agency

- Coe, N. and Jordhus-Lier, D. C. (2011) *Constrained agency? Re-evaluating the geographies of labour. Progress in Human Geography*, 35(2), 211–233.
- Munck, R. (2015) “Globalization, Trade Unions, and Labour Migration: A Transformationalist Approach” *Migration, Precarity, and Global Governance: Challenges and Opportunities for Labour*. Oxford : Oxford University Press.
- Wills, J (2012) *The geography of community and political organisation in London today. Political Geography* 31(2):114-126.

Further reading:

- Swider, S. (2006) “Working Women of the World Unite? Labor Organizing and Transnational Gender Solidarity Among Domestic Workers in Hong Kong”, In Feree and Tripp (Eds) *Global Feminism: Transnational Women's Activism, Organizing, and Human Rights*, p.110-140.
- *For the full reading of Coe’s brief discussion above about Katz’s 3Rs: Resilience, Reworking, Resistance, see Katz, C. 2004) “Negotiating the Recent Future” in Growing up Global: Economic Restructuring and Children's Everyday Lives, University of Minnesota Press: Minneapolis, pp239-260.*

Week 13: December 5th <<MAJOR PAPER DUE>>

Beyond decent employment: anti-work politics in the twenty-first century

- Weeks, K. (2011) Chapters 1, 2 and 3 from *The Problem with Work: Feminism, Marxism, Antiwork Politics, and Postwork Imaginaries*. Duke University Press.

Further reading:

- Weeks, K. (2007) *Life within and against work: affective labor, feminist critique, and Post-Fordist politics*.