

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

Dr. Michelle Buckley

Fall 2018

Class: Mondays, 10am-1pm (Rm 5016, Sidney Smith bldg.)

Office hours: 1:30-2:30 Mondays, Rm SS5027D

~ Please note that this is a draft: some weekly readings or modules may be subject to change before Sept 10th ~

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 outside of geography over the last three decades. In doing so, we will engage with political economy texts on the social relations of labour under capitalism, and texts within geography and sociology on work, labour, place and space. We will 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, hetero-patriarchal, racialized 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 work and social reproductive labour which are tied together by four overarching themes that run through the course – value, identity, agency and justice. Ultimately 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%****Proposal Peer review: 5%****Seminar Presentation: 20%****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 peers’ 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 what you feel are 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 straightforward, provocative and/or productive. You are also asked to facilitate the discussion for the first hour. The breakdown for assessment will be: presentation, questions and class facilitation 10%; thought-piece 10% *N.B. Please be advised that some students who sign up for a seminar presentation in November or late October may not receive their first mark until after the course drop date.*

Proposal peer review: You will also be asked to conduct an in-class, oral 10-minute informal peer review of a draft of one of your peers' proposals during Weeks 6 and 7 (worth 5%). This will take the form of an informal conversation with the proposal writer in which you give feedback on how the writer might strengthen a number of dimensions, which could include: a) the central aims, questions or arguments of the paper (are the questions too broad? Are the concepts under scrutiny or the paper's aims unclear?); b) its size, scope or structure (is this too much work for one paper? Too easy?); and the proposed literature to be used (do the texts allow the writer to 'get at' their topic directly? Are there ones they are overlooked? Have they clearly articulated what each text is about and how it is going to help them write their paper?).

Major paper proposal: 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 8, October 29th.**

Major paper: Your final paper must be on a topic of your choosing that offers a spatial analysis of 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: By email by the Sunday of Week 13.**

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 10th - Introduction to each other and to the course

WEEK 2: September 17th

Labour/work/employment: Sociological and Marxian strands

- 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. pp. 283-319.
- Grint, K. (2005) "Chapter 1: What is Work?" in *The Sociology of Work*. Third Edition. Polity Press.

Further readings:

- If helpful, David Harvey offers a youtube lecture on chapters 7 and 8 here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7RmtkfVeK7w&list=PL0A7FFF28B99C1303&index=5>. It is long but you if you watch it pay close attention to excerpts 15m:30s-30m;

WEEK 3: September 24th

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

- 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.
- Coe, N. and Jordhus-Lier, D. C. (2011) Constrained agency? Re-evaluating the geographies of labour. *Progress in Human Geography*, 35(2), 211–233.

Further readings:

- *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, pp.239-260.

- 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.

WEEK 4: October 1st

Whose work counts? Destabilizing the capitalist working class and production

- 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)
- Hartmann, Heidi I. 1981. “The Family as the Locus of Gender, Class, and Political Struggle: The Example of Housework.” *Signs*, 366–94.

Further reading:

- Mullings, B. 2009. Neoliberalization, social reproduction and the limits to labour in Jamaica. *Singapore Journal of Tropical Geography* 30:174-188.
- Mies, Maria. 1998. *Patriarchy and Accumulation on a World Scale: Women in the International Division of Labour*. Palgrave MacMillan.

WEEK 5: October 8th [THANKSGIVING MONDAY – SPECIAL DATE TBD]

~ PROPOSAL PEER REVIEWS WEEK 1 ~

Laboured identities I: intersectional constructions of work

- Roberts, D.E. 1997. Spiritual and menial housework. *Yale Journal of Law & Feminism* 9.
- hooks, b. (2000) “Rethinking the nature of work” in *Feminist Theory: From Margin to Centre*. Cambridge: Pluto Press. Pp.95-106.

Further reading:

- McDowell, L.; A. Batnitzky; and S. Dyer. 2007. Division, segmentation, and interpellation: the embodied labors of migrant workers in a greater London hotel. *Economic Geography* 83:1-25.
- McDowell, L. 2009. *Working Bodies: Interactive Service Employment and Workplace Identities*. Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell.

WEEK 6: October 15th ~ PROPOSAL PEER REVIEWS WEEK 2 ~

Laboured identities II: legal, social and spatial subject formation

- Crenshaw, K. (1989) Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex: A Black Feminist Critique of Antidiscrimination Doctrine. *University of Chicago Legal Forum*. 1(8): 139-168.
- Wright, M. (1999) Crossing the factory frontier: gender, place and power in the Mexican maquiladora *Antipode* 29(3): 278-302.

Further reading:

- Poster, W. (2007) Who's on the line? Indian call center agents pose as Americans for U.S.-outsourced firms. *Industrial Relations: A Journal of Economy and Society*, Vol. 46, No. 2, pp. 271-304.

WEEK 7: October 22nd ~ PROPOSAL PEER REVIEWS WEEK 3 ~

From temping to triangular employment: confronting nonstandard employment and what it means to be 'precarious'

- Standing, G. (2011) Chapters 1, 2 and 3 in *The Precariat: The New Dangerous Class*. Bloomsbury Press. Pp. 1-88.

Further reading:

- Beck, U. (1992) "Destandardization of labor", in *Risk Society: Towards a New Modernity*. Sage Publications: London. pp. 139-154.
- Tilly, C. (1996) *Half A Job: Bad and Good Part-Time Jobs in a Changing Labor Market*. Temple University Press: Philadelphia.

WEEK 8: October 29th ~ PAPER PROPOSALS DUE ~

Critiquing the Precariat I: continuities vs. epochal change

- McDowell, L (2015) The lives of others: transformational narratives and service sector work. *Economic Geography*. 91(1) 1-23.
- 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:

- Bourdieu, P. (1998), 'La précarité est aujourd'hui partout,' [*Precairousness is Everywhere Nowadays*'], in *Contre-feux*, Paris: Raisons d'agir, 96–102.
- Meehan, K. and Strauss, K. (eds) (2015) *Precairous Worlds: Contested Geographies of Social Reproduction*. Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press.

WEEK 9: November 5th ~~ NO CLASSES – READING WEEK ~~

WEEK 10: November 12th

Critiquing the Precariat II: decolonizing labour studies

- Scully, B. (2016) Precarity North and South: a southern critique of Guy Standing *Global Labour Journal* 7(2) 160-173.
- Sanyal, K. (2007) "Difference as Hegemony: Capital and the Need Economy" in *Rethinking Capitalist Development: Primitive Accumulation, Governmentality and Postcolonial Capitalism* p.189-251.

Further reading:

- Mezzadra, S. (2012) How Many Histories of Labor? Towards a Theory of Postcolonial Capitalism. *European Institute for Progressive Cultural Policies*.
- Munck, R. (2013) The precariat: A view from the south. *Third World Quarterly* 34(5): 747-762.

WEEK 11: November 19th

Racial formations, labour hierarchies and the imperial present:

- Roediger, D. (2005) Part 1: Seeing Race in New Immigrant History. In *Working Toward Whiteness: How America's Immigrants Became White*. Basic Books: New York. Pp 1-35.
- Montgomery, David. 2000. "Empire, Race, and Working-Class Mobilizations." *Racializing Class, Classifying Race: Labour and Difference in Britain, the USA and Africa*, 1–31.

Further reading:

- Nakano Glenn, E. (2002) Chapter 2: Integrating Race and Gender in in *Unequal Freedom: How Race and Gender Shaped American Citizenship and Labor*. Cambridge, USA Harvard University Press.

WEEK 12: November 26th

Citizenship, migrant status and the state

- De Genova, N. 2002, "Migrant 'illegality' and deportability in everyday life", *Annual Review of Anthropology*, 31.
- Silvey, R. (2007) Transnational domestication: State Power and Indonesian Migrant Women in Saudi Arabia.

Further reading:

- LeBaron, G. (2014) 'Reconceptualizing debt bondage: debt as a class-based form of labor discipline.' *Critical Sociology*. 40(5): 763-78.
- For a very different view on 'unfreedom' via wage slavery and non-indentured labour, and how the condition of 'freedom' under capitalism undergirds labour's existence as a commodity/non-commodity, See Marx, K (1867) *Capital* Volume 1. P.272-273 (Penguin: USA).

Week 13: December 3rd <<MAJOR PAPER DUE END OF THIS WEEK>>

Labouring futures: unemployment, basic income and refusals of work

- Denning, M (2010) Wageless life. *New Left Review*. 66:79-97
- Howard, M.W. (2016) Exploitation, labor, and basic income. *Analyse und Kritik*. 37(1-2): 281-303.

~OR~

New spaces, new solidarities: re-engineering labour organization

- Tait, V., Fletcher, B., Tzinzun, C. (2016) Chapter 1 – Unionizing the Movements in *Poor Workers' Unions: Rebuilding Labor from Below*. South End Press, Cambridge Mass.

- Wills, J. and M. Simms (2004) Building reciprocal community unionism in the UK. *Capital and Class*. pp. 59-72.