

## Geography 364

## Globalization, cities & regions

Fall 2020

Instructor:

Jamie Peck

Synchronous classes:

Mondays, 9.30-10.00 during term 1

Asynchronous classes:

Mondays & Wednesdays, online videos posted for each lecture (*for 7 days only*)

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### Course outline

September 9	No lecture today: Scholars Strike	Recommended readings and resources at page 6
September 14	Lecture 1 (synchronous + video)	Introduction to the course: Economic worlds in motion
September 16	Lecture 2 (video)	The rise and fall of globalization: From triumphalism to Trumpism
September 21	Lecture 3 (synchronous + video)	Pluralizing capitalism: Global shifts, regional fortunes
September 23	Lecture 4 (video)	Redividing labor: Jobs on the move
September 28	Lecture 5 (synchronous + video)	Boom, bubble, and bust: Geographies of financialization
September 30	Lecture 6 (video)	Capitalism, Chinese-style: Pearl River, silk roads
October 5	Lecture 7 (synchronous + video)	Neoliberalism in retreat? Reassessing the market paradigm
October 7	Lecture 8 (video)	On the hustle: Entrepreneurial urban sprawl
October 12	<i>Thanksgiving</i>	
October 14	Lecture 9 (video)	Austerity urbanism: Governing by extreme economy
October 19	Lecture 10 (synchronous + video)	Urban transitions and Midterm prep
October 21	<i>Midterm exam</i>	
October 26	Lecture 11 (synchronous + video)	Unreal estate: Unpacking Vancouver
October 28	Lecture 12 (video)	Creativity cults: Entrepreneurialism 2.0
November 2	Lecture 13 (synchronous + video)	Moving pictures: A view from the back lot
November 4	Lecture 14 (video)	After Fordism: Silicon dreams
November 9	Lecture 15 (synchronous + video)	Platform capitalism: Tracking Amazon
November 11	<i>Remembrance Day</i>	
November 16	Lecture 16 (synchronous + video)	Offshore worlds: the road to Robitistan
November 18	Lecture 17 (video)	The right to work: Deunionization at work
November 23	Lecture 18 (synchronous + video)	Workfare states: A hand up, not a hand out
November 25	Lecture 19 (video)	Conditioning cash: The new welfare?
November 30	Lecture 20 (synchronous + video)	Washington consensus? The World Bank's geography
December 2	Lecture 21 (synchronous + video)	Trumponomics? New (and old) economic politics
December 4	Submit projects by 5pm	

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## The approach

*Globalization, cities & regions* is concerned with the critical interrogation of issues relating to economic globalization, urban restructuring, and regional development. Its approach is to bring “global” processes and pressures down to earth, to ask where they come from, and to explore their (variable) causes and consequences in cities and regions. The course also provides an opportunity to apply, and evaluate, a range of theoretical claims and frameworks derived from recent work in economic geography and urban & regional political economy. The approach of the course, like that of these fields, is to learn *with and through* case studies of real places. Case studies are selected not simply to acquire “coverage,” or to provide straightforwardly generalizable lessons, but as a means of understanding how *processes work* (in particular situations), and to work through substantive claims and theoretical positions in the burgeoning literature on globalization, cities, and regions.

The dual objectives of *Globalization, cities & regions* are (a) to establish a sound understanding of substantive issues, key trends, and emergent developments in the globalizing economy, and the changing roles/positions of selected cities and regions in the context of globalization; and (b) to provide an appreciation of some of the most influential theoretical frameworks, concepts, and approaches in contemporary economic geography and urban & regional political economy. The latter, it will be emphasized is more a way of *seeing and understanding the world* just as much as it is a toolkit of theories or methods. The principal underlying goal of the course is to introduce students to this way of seeing; it is an invitation to geographical political economy.

## Learning objectives

The learning objectives for GEOG 364 “Globalization, cities & regions” are as follows:

- To develop an informed understanding of major trends and developments in the global economy, and in the economies of cities and regions around the world, in the period since 1970s;
- To acquire **skills of critical reading, inquiry, and evaluation** appropriate to understanding the transformation of real-world economies in a range of locations;
- To learn how to think *through*, and with the assistance of, different case studies and local experiences of political-economic restructuring;
- To value different theories, perspectives, and approaches in a field of inquiry, **geographical political economy**, that has been shaped by debates, different viewpoints, and a plurality of perspectives.

## Arrangements for online instruction

The class will meet “live” (and synchronous) each Monday morning, which will serve as an introduction to the week’s lectures and readings. Normally, the live connection will be around 30 minutes, as videos will be posted for each lecture. There will usually be two 20-30 minute videos per lecture. The videos can be accessed at the [Media Gallery](#) tab at the Geography 364

page on Canvas. *It is essential that students keep up with the video lectures each week, as the videos will be taken down the following week.* Each of the videos will be complemented by a PDF file of the slides. The PDFs of the slides can be accessed at the Modules tab on Canvas. *Copies of the slides will remain on the Canvas web site throughout the term.*

There will be an option to “drop in” to the zoom meeting room on Wednesday mornings 9.30-10.00. This will mainly be a Q&A session, but there will be scope to adjust this, if necessary, as the term proceeds. Students may also contact the instructor directly by email at [jamie.peck@ubc.ca](mailto:jamie.peck@ubc.ca).

*International students*, connecting to the course from outside Canada, please take note of this important announcement from UBC’s Provost:

During this pandemic, the shift to online learning has greatly altered teaching and studying at UBC, including changes to health and safety considerations. Keep in mind that some UBC courses might cover topics that are censored or considered illegal by non-Canadian governments. This may include, but is not limited to, human rights, representative government, defamation, obscenity, gender or sexuality, and historical or current geopolitical controversies. If you are a student living abroad, you will be subject to the laws of your local jurisdiction, and your local authorities might limit your access to course material or take punitive action against you. UBC is strongly committed to academic freedom, but has no control over foreign authorities (please visit <http://www.calendar.ubc.ca/vancouver/index.cfm?tree=3,33,86,0> for an articulation of the values of the University conveyed in the Senate Statement on Academic Freedom). Thus, we recognize that students will have legitimate reason to exercise caution in studying certain subjects. If you have concerns regarding your personal situation, consider postponing taking a course with manifest risks, until you are back on campus or reach out to your academic advisor to find substitute courses. For further information and support, please visit: <http://academic.ubc.ca/support-resources/freedom-expression>

### **Academic conduct, integrity, concessions policy**

*We value an open, respectful, and constructive environment in classroom discussions.*

UBC provides resources to support student learning and to maintain healthy lifestyles but recognizes that sometimes crises arise and so there are additional resources to access including those for survivors of sexual violence. UBC values respect for the person and ideas of all members of the academic community. Harassment and discrimination are not tolerated nor is suppression of academic freedom. UBC provides appropriate accommodation for students with disabilities and for religious and cultural observances. UBC values academic honesty and students are expected to acknowledge the ideas generated by others and to uphold the highest academic standards in all of their actions. Details of the policies and how to access support are available here: <https://senate.ubc.ca/policies-resources-support-student-success>

In your written work for this course, please be advised of the UBC guidelines on academic integrity, appropriate citation, and plagiarism:

<http://learningcommons.ubc.ca/resource-guides/avoid-plagiarism/>

If you miss marked coursework for the first time (exam, participation in class, project) and the course is still in-progress, immediately submit a [Student Self-Declaration](#) to the instructor so that your in-term concession case can be evaluated. If this is not the first time you

have requested concession, or if classes are over, fill out Arts Academic Advising's [online academic concession form](#) immediately, so that an advisor can evaluate your concession case. (If you are a student in a different Faculty, please consult [your Faculty's webpage on academic concessions](#), and then contact the instructor where appropriate.)

### Reading for the course

Ongoing and critical reading is an essential component of this class. The lectures will assume some familiarity with the required readings, and the exams will evaluate your knowledge and understanding of the readings. Specifically, the required readings—usually one article-length item per class, or two shorter pieces—must be completed *in advance* of each class. The lectures will not summarize the readings, but instead are intended to complement and parallel them. Required (**REQ**) readings are available online at the Geography 364 page on Canvas (at the Library Online Course Reserves tab). They are marked on the syllabus and on Canvas, each with a **Reading** number. A selection of recommended (**REC**) readings is provided for those seeking a deeper understanding of the themes, issues, and concepts examined during the course. (These are not provided on Canvas, but are readily accessible via the library.) You may wish to explore some of the recommended readings in preparing your project (see below).

### Assessment

There are three components in the assessment for this course:

<i>Midterm exam:</i>	25% of total marks (75 minutes; 2 essay answers) <b>October 21, 2020</b>
<i>Project:</i>	40% of total marks (essay addressing project question drawing on suggested course themes and readings), <b>due 5pm, December 4, 2020</b>
<i>Final exam:</i>	35% of total marks (120 minutes; 3 essay answers), during <b>December exam period</b>

The same basic philosophy holds across all three elements of the assessment: a premium is placed on (a) the ability to *link together* key theories and concepts introduced during the course (e.g. the spatial division of labor, neoliberal urbanism, post-Fordism) and the various illustrations, examples, and case studies covered in both the lectures and in the readings; and (b) the ability to develop coherent and compelling arguments in response to the questions, drawing on evidence, relevant concepts, and appropriate references to the literature.

Please note: there are no “standard” or template answers to the questions raised in this course, in the examinations, or in the project. Geographical political economy is a field shaped by arguments and counter-arguments, drawing on evidence and examples.

The *midterm exam* will comprise broadly framed essay questions. Students will be required to answer two questions from approximately ten, drawing on key themes from the first half of the course.

The take-home *project* should be written during the second half of the term. Details of the project are provided below. The deadline for submission of essays will be strictly enforced. Late submissions will receive a 3 percentage-point per day penalty.

The *final exam* will follow a similar format to the midterm, comprising broadly framed essay questions. Students will be required to answer three questions from circa ten, relating to key themes, issues, and topics from the *course as a whole*. The examination is cumulative.

## The project

Write an essay-style paper in response to the following question:

Relying *primarily* on resources, cases, and arguments derived from Geography 364, supplemented by an engagement with the following readings, address the following contention:

**“The phase of economic ‘globalization’ that began in the early 1990s has now come to an end”**

In addition to readings from Geography 364, you may also engage with the following papers (which can be found at the Geography 364 page on Canvas [Library Online Course Reserves tab], where they are each marked with the tag **Project**).

Bello W (2013) The virtues of deglobalization. *TNI.org* September 3.  
<https://www.tni.org/en/article/the-virtues-of-deglobalisation>

Ghemawat P (2017) Globalization in the age of Trump. *Harvard Business Review* 95(4): 112–123

Economist (2020) Covid-19’s blow to world trade is a heavy one. *Economist* May 16: 57-59  
<https://www.economist.com/briefing/2020/05/14/covid-19s-blow-to-world-trade-is-a-heavy-one>

Rodrik D (2020) Will COVID-19 remake the world? *Project Syndicate* April 6  
<https://www.project-syndicate.org/commentary/will-covid19-remake-the-world-by-dani-rodrik-2020-04>

Projects should be written in essay style (introduce your argument; develop your key points referring both to illustrations/evidence and to the readings; conclude by reinforcing your key points). The essay should be typed, adhering strictly to the following format:

- Up to 8 pages of 1.5 spaced text (12-point font with standard margins), or approximately 2,750 words
- Tables, figures and maps may be appended to the end of the essay; these do not count towards the 8-page word limit for the main text
- A bibliography (also *in addition* to the 8-page limit for the main text), listing all academic sources referred to in the text, presented in the citation style in this syllabus.

Projects should be saved as PDFs and submitted via Canvas no later than 5pm, December 4, 2020. (There will be a 3 percentage point per day penalty for late submissions.)

The marking rubric for the take-home project is as follows: facility in summarizing, applying, and critically evaluating key concepts from the course and the readings (50%); effectiveness of examples and illustrations used (30%); overall presentation, including style and structure of argument, quality of writing, and bibliographic referencing (20%).

### **Scholar Strike, September 9-10**

There will be no class during the Scholar Strike for racial justice, on Wednesday September 9. This action, involving a planned pause on scheduled teaching and administrative duties, is to protest anti-Black, racist and colonial police brutality in the U.S., Canada and elsewhere.

Students are encouraged to make use of the resources posted at <https://scholarstrikecanada.ca/> and to participate in Scholars Strike activities on the days of the action.

The following readings are recommended for Geography 364. They are posted with the other course readings at the Library Online Course Reserves tab on Canvas:

- REC Gilmore RW (1999) Globalisation and US prison growth: from military Keynesianism to post-Keynesian militarism. *Race & Class* 40(2-3): 171-188 **Reading 0**
- REC Pulido L (2016) Flint, environmental racism, and racial capitalism. *Capitalism Nature Socialism* 27(3): 1-16 **Reading 00**

## Lectures and readings

### Lecture 1 Introduction to the course: Economic worlds in motion

This session serves as an introduction to the course, its approach, and key themes. The lecture will outline the distinctive position and perspective of geographical political economy, not just as a disciplinary approach but as a distinctive way of seeing (and understanding) the economy, economic change, and economic difference. Key themes and concepts: economic geography; spatial division of labor; questioning globalization; comparing capitalism(s); neoliberal urbanism; flexible accumulation

REC Coe NM, Kelly PK and Yeung HWC (2013) Thinking geographically. In Coe NM, Kelly PK and Yeung HWC *Economic Geography: A contemporary introduction*. Oxford: Wiley, 3-26 [Reading 1](#)

### Lecture 2 The rise and fall of globalization: From triumphalism to Trumpism

The lecture asks where “globalization” came from and where it might be going. In the course of the past 25 years or so, we have gone from a period in which (economic) globalization was thought to be an inevitable, unstoppable, integrating, and modernizing force, according to some, the beginning of worldwide convergence and even “the end of geography,” to a time of profound uncertainty, extending to premonitions of the “death” of globalization. Assessing these debates, the lecture will trace the rise (and possible fall) of globalization, focusing on the period between early 1990s triumphalism and present-day pessimism. Key themes and concepts: new international division of labor; deindustrialization; economic populism; uneven development.

REQ Barnes TJ and Christophers B (2018) Globalization and uneven development. In Barnes TJ and Christophers B, *Economic Geography: A Critical Introduction*. Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 187-210 [Reading 2](#)

REC Stiglitz J (2017) The overselling of globalization. *Business Economics* 52(3): 129-137

### Lecture 3 Pluralizing capitalism: Global shifts, regional fortunes

Taking seriously the idea that capitalism is a geographically differentiated system, the lecture examines the bipolar viewpoint of the varieties of capitalism school, the challenge of the BRICS, and the issue of mutual interdependence. Globalization is not producing a new form of singular capitalism, or universalizing the market; it is generating new geographies of growth, decline, and inequality, as well as new contradictions. The variegation of capitalism is therefore an ongoing process. Key themes and concepts: uneven development; varieties of capitalism; variegated capitalism; BRICS.

REQ Werner M (2016) Global production networks and uneven development: exploring geographies of devaluation, disinvestment, and exclusion. *Geography Compass* 10(11): 457–469 [Reading 3](#)

REC Peck J (2016) Macroeconomic geographies. *Area Development and Policy* 1(3): 305-322

### Lecture 4 Redividing labor: Jobs on the move

Economic geographers have been tracking the movement of jobs (and the geography of employment regimes) for decades now, from the emergence of the new international division of labor in the 1970s, through the acceleration of deindustrialization since the 1980s, to the emergent geographies of the

“offshore” economy. The lecture will explore the historical geography of recent employment change, explaining the fundamental conceptual framework that is the spatial division of labor. Key themes and concepts: new international division of labor; spatial division of labor; deindustrialization; labor arbitrage; offshoring; automation.

- REQ Massey D (2004) Uneven development: social change and spatial divisions of labor. In TJ Barnes, J Peck, E Sheppard and A Tickell (eds) *Reading economic geography*. Oxford: Blackwell, 111–124  
**Reading 4**
- REC Dunford M (2017) Spatial divisions of labour: Social structures and the geography of production, *Regional Studies* 51(6) 973-976

### Lecture 5 Boom, bubble, and bust: Geographies of financialization

The lecture explores explanations of the origins, form, and consequences of the global financial crisis that began in late 2008. The crisis displayed a distinctive economic geography and spawned different regulatory and political responses, many of these with long-run consequences, often with roots in the project of neoliberal globalization. Key themes and concepts: financialization; financial geography; social studies of finance; regulation theory; neoliberalism; shareholder value.

- REQ Fields D (2017) Urban struggles with financialization. *Geography Compass* 11(11) e12334  
**Reading 5**
- REC Christophers B (2015) The limits to financialization. *Dialogues in Human Geography* 5(2) 183–200

### Lecture 6 Capitalism, Chinese-style: Pearl rivers and silk roads

The story of China’s meteoric rise, in the space of a few decades, to the position of second-largest economy in the world and a cornerstone of the global trading system is without precedent in world history. It can be read as a process of “opening up” (and marketization) in the period since the late 1970s, but it is also important to recognize that this occurred under broadly favorable conditions in the global economic system, when trade relations were being (neo)liberalized and when Western corporations were actively extending their production networks. Today, China is articulating its own version of global integration under the name of the “belt and road” initiative. Key themes and concepts: inclusive globalization versus neoliberal globalization; belt and road initiative; Chinese variety of capitalism; global production networks.

- REQ Lin S, Sidaway JD Woon CY (2019) Reordering China, respacing the world: Belt and Road Initiative (一帶一路) as an emergent geopolitical culture. *Professional Geographer* (3): 507–522 **Reading 6**
- REC Summers T (2016) China’s “New Silk Roads”: sub-national regions and networks of global political economy. *Third World Quarterly* 37(9): 1628-1643

### Lecture 7 Neoliberalism in retreat? Reassessing the market paradigm

This lecture will examine the implications of the rise of “neoliberalism” as a governing ideology since the 1970s, drawing out some of the implications for cities and regions, and for economic and social policy. If the beachheads of neoliberalism as a governing project were established Chile in the 1970s and the UK and US in the 1980s, since the 1990s neoliberal approaches had become dominant within the multilateral agencies—the so-called Washington consensus—while centrist politicians also adopted a



softer version of neoliberalism known as the “Third Way.” The Wall Street crash of 2008 has been read by some as the beginning of the end for neoliberalism, even as a successor has yet to emerge. Key themes and concepts: Washington consensus; free market economics; roll-back and roll-out neoliberalism; neoliberalization; Wall Street crash; creative destruction. Please take a moment to watch this short video on neoliberalism before class (3:40 mins), from the BBC’s A-Z of isms series: <https://www.bbc.com/ideas/videos/neoliberalism-the-story-of-a-big-economic-bust-up/p06ltnvp>

REQ Harvey D (2007) Neoliberalism as creative destruction. *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 610: 21–44 **Reading 7**

REC Lerner W (2000) Neo-liberalism: policy, ideology, governmentality. *Studies in Political Economy* 63(1): 5-25

## Lecture 8 On the hustle: Entrepreneurial urban sprawl

It has been argued that economic globalization and neoliberalizing political conditions leave cities and regions with little practical alternative but to become more externally oriented and entrepreneurial. For European and American city leaders and urban policymakers, entrepreneurial strategies based on place promotion, the attraction/retention of mobile capital, the development of “hallmark” events and “urban spectacles,” and the cultivation of a “good business climate” seem increasingly to represent the one-best-way in urban economic policy. Alternatively, critics maintain that just because this is the only game in town, it does not mean that it is sustainable, let alone desirable. Key themes and concepts: entrepreneurial urbanism; neoliberalism; Keynesianism; urban growth machines; zero-sum competition.

REQ Lauermaun J (2018) Municipal statecraft: revisiting the geographies of the entrepreneurial city. *Progress in Human Geography* 42(2): 205-224 **Reading 8**

REC Theodore N and Peck J (2012) Framing neoliberal urbanism: translating “common sense” urban policy across the OECD zone. *European Urban and Regional Studies* 19(1): 20-41

## Lecture 9 Austerity urbanism: Governing by extreme economy

Austerity budgeting in state and local government, selectively targeting the social state, is a long-established trait of neoliberal governance, but it has been enforced with renewed vigor in the wake of the Wall Street crash of 2008. The lecture develops the argument that conditions of long-run austerity are defining a new operational matrix for urban politics. Examining some of the leading and bleeding edges of austerity’s “extreme economy” in the United States (including the recent rash of municipal bankruptcies), the lecture locates these developments in the context of mutating processes of neoliberal urbanism, commenting on some of its social and spatial consequences. Key themes and concepts: neoliberal urbanism; austerity urbanism; financialization; municipal bankruptcies; devolution.

REQ Hinkley S (2017) Structurally adjusting: narratives of fiscal crisis in four US cities. *Urban Studies* 54(9): 2123–2138 **Reading 9**

REC Donald B, Glasmeier A, Gray M and Lobao L (2014) Austerity in the city: economic crisis and urban service decline? *Cambridge Journal of Regions, Economy and Society* 7(1): 3–15

**Lecture 10 Urban transitions and Midterm prep**

This short lecture will (re)visit the role and place of cities in political-economic transformations and transitions. Key themes and concepts: late-stage entrepreneurialism, neoliberalization, financialization, geographies of theory.

There will also be a review of themes from the course in anticipation of the upcoming midterm examination.

REQ Peck J (2014) Entrepreneurial urbanism: between uncommon sense and dull compulsion.

*Geografiska Annaler B* 96(4): 396-401 [Reading 10](#)

REC Roy A (2009) The 21st-Century metropolis: new geographies of theory. *Regional Studies* 43(6): 819–830

**Lecture 11 Unreal estate: Unpacking Vancouver**

Vancouver, according to received accounts, is a city that works. Indeed, its development model—which often travels under the name of *Vancouverism*—has become an object of emulation (not to say envy) for many cities around the world. Vancouver seems to have ridden most of the recent “waves” of urban development—such as those associated with the new economy, the creative city, new urbanism, globalization, and sustainability—with quite conspicuous success. But this is also Canada’s most unequal metro area; the celebrated stories of the world’s most “liveable” city jar with localized experiences of poverty and an endemic affordability crisis; a manifestly “successful” urban transition, from staples capital to cosmopolitan hub, has been accomplished in the context of relatively anemic economic performance. So what are we to make of Vancouver? Key themes and concepts: urban liberalism; neoliberal urbanism; real-estate complex; growth coalitions; Vancouverism.

REQ Ley L (2017) Global China and the making of Vancouver’s residential property market.

*International Journal of Housing Policy* 17(1): 15–34 [Reading 11](#)

REC Peck J, Siemiatycki E and Wylie E (2014) Vancouver’s suburban involution. *City* 18(4-5): 386-415

**Lecture 12 Creativity cults: Entrepreneurialism 2.0**

Cities are increasingly entering into competition for “talent.” An influential argument, associated with Richard Florida, has it that cities and regions will only be successful in attracting the new elite of “creative” workers if they combine leading-edge technological capabilities with an open and tolerant “social climate.” The lecture will examine the Florida thesis and comment on its impact. A critique of the creative cities thesis will be presented, focused on the case of Amsterdam, one of many cities to adopt this cultural (re)development model. It is argued that the creativity “script” operates in the context of neoliberal urbanism, extending competitive logics to the spheres of the arts and street-level culture, while enrolling new actors in the project of individualistic and competitive urbanism. Key themes and concepts: creative class; creative urbanism; city branding; cultural gentrification; gurus.

REQ Peck J (2012) Recreative city: Amsterdam, vehicular ideas, and the adaptive spaces of creativity policy. *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 36(3): 462–485 [Reading 12](#)

REC He S (2019) The creative spatio-temporal fix: creative and cultural industries development in Shanghai, China. *Geoforum* 106: 310-319

**Lecture 13 Moving pictures: The view from the back lot**

“Hollywood” was for more than half a century the epitome of a localized industry, but since the 1970s has displayed an increasingly global reach. Alternative centers of production now flourish in various locations around the world (for example, Bollywood, Hong Kong), while Hollywood’s own subcontracting networks extend deep into Canada, Europe, and Australasia (including “Hollywood North” in Vancouver). This lecture examines the changing form and geography of the global movie industry, which has not only internationalized in a dramatic fashion since the 1970s, but which has also made its own kind of transition from Fordist mass production to flexible specialization. Locally, the movie industry can be a perplexing partner: it can be a promotional asset, but it is also subsidy sensitive; its economy combines centralized (financial) control with dispersed risk; it generates highly unequal, gig-style employment relations. Key themes and concepts: flexible specialization; vertical disintegration, market fragmentation, market control.

- REQ Scott AJ and Pope NE (2007) Hollywood, Vancouver, and the world: employment relocation and the emergence of satellite production centers in the motion-picture industry. *Environment and Planning A* 39(6): 1364-1381 **Reading 13**
- REC Coe N M (2000) On location: American capital and the local labour market in the Vancouver film industry. *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 24(1): 79-94

**Lecture 14 After Fordism: Silicon dreams**

For decades now, Silicon Valley has been seen as the epitome of the new, flexible economy. This lecture will look at the origins and dynamics of Silicon Valley’s spectacular pattern of industrialization, calling attention to its distinctive capacities as well as its deep contradictions. This case also illustrates the locational dynamics and geographical tendencies of the “post-Fordist” economy, following Allen Scott’s influential argument that “new industrial spaces” are characterized by renewed tendencies for regional agglomeration and localized clustering. Key themes and concepts: post-Fordism; flexible accumulation; industrial networks; vertical disintegration; agglomeration; clusters.

- REQ Schoenberger E (1988) From Fordism to flexible accumulation: technology, competitive strategies, and international location. *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 6(3): 245–262 **Reading 14**
- REC Sturgeon TJ (2003) What really goes on in Silicon Valley? Spatial clustering and dispersal in modular production networks. *Journal of Economic Geography* 3(2): 199–225

**Lecture 15 Platform capitalism: Tracking Amazon**

Technology entrepreneurs are conventionally represented as the heroes of the new economy, visionary leaders who have seen the future. In recent years, much of the hype has been focused on the rise of the “sharing economy” or what is also known, more critically, as platform capitalism. Enabled by the web and massive amounts of speculative capital, companies like Uber, Airbnb, and Amazon have come to epitomize a mode of networked, digital capitalism, often posing a significant challenge to existing business models and systems of regulation. The lecture will explore the rise of platform capitalism including a case study of Amazon. Are platform and sharing economy business models harbingers of a new mode of capitalism? Or are they just a fad, or a bubble? Could they be all of these things? Key themes and concepts: digital economies, financialization, monopolization, gig economy.

- REC Kenney M and Zysman J (2020) The platform economy: restructuring the space of capitalist accumulation. *Cambridge Journal of Regions, Economy and Society* 13(1): 55–76 [Reading 15](#)
- REC Cusumano MA, Yoffie DB and Gawer A (2020). The future of platforms. *MIT Sloan Management Review* 61(3): 46–54

### Lecture 16 Offshore worlds: the road to Robotistan

Offshore outsourcing is predicated on the principle of labor arbitrage, the exploitation of geographical differentials in the cost and control of labor. The corporate practice of “shipping jobs overseas,” typically to lower-wage locations like India, the Philippines, Eastern Europe, has been driven by the (business) benefits of cost-suppression, functional specialization, and organizational rationalization. Offshore outsourcing was initially seen as the epitome of globalization’s “world-flattening” logic. But offshoring is more than an organizational and technical matter of relocating selected job functions, usually of a more routine nature, across national boundaries and time zones to far-off lands, it is also a situated sociocultural phenomenon. It reflects an anxious view of the world as seen as from vantage points in the Global North, particularly from higher-income regions rendered newly vulnerable to job insecurity. Key themes and concepts: spatial division of labor; rustbelt; offshore and nearshore; automation.

- REQ Peck J (2017) *Offshore*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, chapter 2 [Reading 16](#)
- REC Levy DL (2005) Offshoring in the new global political economy. *Journal of Management Studies* 42(3): 685–693

### Lecture 17 The right to work and rights at work

The focus of this lecture is the changing nature of work in North American labor markets, with particular reference to the rise of contingent work and “at-will” employment relations. One of the markers of the ascendancy of flexible accumulation has been the concomitant rise of contingent or “non-standard” forms of work, especially since the 1980s. Deindustrialization and shift away from the Fordist social contract have also be associated with deunionization of the workforce, both at the enterprise level and in terms of prevailing regulatory norms. A case study of the “right to work” movement in the United States will be presented. Key themes and concepts: deunionization; contingent work; labor-market insecurity; gig economy.

- REQ Theodore N (2016) Worlds of work: changing landscapes of production and the new geographies of opportunity. *Geography Compass* 10(4): 179–189 [Reading 17](#)
- REC Peck J (2016) The right to work, and the right at work. *Economic Geography* 92(1): 4-30

### Lecture 18 Workfare states: A hand up, not a hand out

It is now widely held that the nation state is being “hollowed out” in the sense that its powers are moving upwards (to supranational institutions like the IMF and the World Bank) and downwards (to local and regional institutions). Indeed, some writers have been claiming that the era of sovereign national governments is coming to an end, while others insist that accounts of the death of the nation state have been exaggerated. The lecture will focus on the implications of nation-state restructuring for regions, asking whether hollowing out is likely to lead to a resurgence in the power and political-economic capacity of regions, or another round of buck-passing, “downloading,” and scapegoating. It will explore the example of welfare reform and the associated ascendancy of “workfare” policies in this context. Workfare, which mandates work participation for welfare recipients, can be seen as a complex case of

“hollowing out,” for the dominant critique of welfare states is intricately connected to the move away from “big government” and federal interventionism, while workfare strategies are nearly always delivered through locally-based, market-oriented systems. The lecture will also consider alternatives to workfare and neoliberal labor regulation. Key themes and concepts: hollowing out; rescaling; roll-out neoliberalism; workfare; welfare dependency.

- REQ Wacquant L (2010) Crafting the neoliberal state: workfare, prisonfare, and social insecurity. *Sociological Forum* 25(2): 197–220 **Reading 18**
- REC Peck J (2002) Political economies of scale: fast policy, interscalar relations, and neoliberal workfare. *Economic Geography* 78(3): 331-360

### Lecture 19 Conditioning cash: The new welfare?

Conditional cash transfer programs (which “condition” modest cash-welfare payments on family circumstances and appropriate behaviors) first emerged in Latin America in the second half of the 1990s; they have since spread to scores of countries and have also been the focus of experimentation in parts of the Global North. Some see CCTs as the basis for a 21<sup>st</sup> Century alternative to the welfare state, others as the internationalization of the neoliberal workfare model; others still as a pathway to the establishment of citizens’ or basic income approaches. The lecture will examine the rise, spread, and meaning of the CCT wave, drawing on examples from Latin America and elsewhere. Key themes and concepts: conditional welfare; basic income; workfare; neoliberalization; fast policy.

- REQ Garmany J (2016) Neoliberalism, governance, and the geographies of conditional cash transfers. *Political Geography* 50: 61–70 **Reading 19**
- REC Peck J (2011) Global policy models, globalizing poverty management: international convergence or fast-policy integration? *Geography Compass* 5(4): 165–181

### Lecture 20 Washington consensus: The World Bank’s geography

The World Bank’s annual *World Development Report* is the organization’s signature document, and the principal indicator of its shifting strategic priorities. Previous *WDR*’s have focused on themes like good governance (1997), attacking poverty (2001), sustainable development (2003), and equity and development (2006). The 2009 report focused on “reshaping economic geography,” proposing the controversial embrace of spatially unequal growth as a necessary feature of dynamic economic development: “economic growth will be unbalanced,” the report stated, “To try to spread it out is to discourage it—to fight prosperity, not poverty.” The lecture will provide a critical reading of the *WDR* and its presuppositions, exploring its consequences for economic discourse and public policy. Key themes and concepts: global governance; unbalanced growth; regulatory imaginaries; structural adjustment; social capital; post-Washington consensus.

- REQ Gough V, Fold N, Bebbington A, Bryceson DF, Rigg J, Agergaard J and Tacoli C (2009) The World Development Report 2009 “reshapes economic geography”: geographical reflections. *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers* 34(2): 128–136 **Reading 20**
- REC Peck J and Sheppard E (2010) Worlds apart? Engaging with the *World Development Report 2009: reshaping economic geography*. *Economic Geography* 86(4): 331-340

**Lecture 21      Trumponomics? New (and old) economic politics**

The election of Donald J Trump to the presidency of the United States was widely interpreted as a threshold moment, or game-changing event, by supporters and opponents alike. Campaigning as a populist, he appealed to those “left behind” by the growth model of neoliberal globalization, as well as to those “left out” of bicoastal, elite, and “globalist” forms of (cultural) politics. The question of whether Trump voters did, or did not, vote against their own economic interests, or whether the Democratic Party would have served those interests better, remains a deeply controversial and still somewhat open one, as the material and ideological course of “Trumponomics” has taken shape. In the immediate aftermath of the presidential election, the lecture will offer an assessment of Trumponomics, placing in this in the context of realignments in conservative and mainstream policy paradigms since the 1980s.

Key themes and concepts: economic discourse; neoliberalization; free trade: small state ideology: deregulation; third way; fourth way.

REQ    McQuarrie M (2017) The revolt of the rust belt: place and politics in the age of anger. *British Journal of Sociology* 68: S120–S152 [Reading 21](#)

REC    Rosenberg J and Boyle B (2019) Understanding 2016: China, Brexit and Trump in the history of uneven and combined development. *Journal of Historical Sociology* 32(1): e32–e58