

Sociology 940: Seminar – Sociology of Economic Change
Fragmented Labor: Gig work, migration, precarity, and changing labor strategies
Spring 2019 – University of Wisconsin-Madison

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Office hours: Thursdays 12:15 to 2:15 or by appointment.

Sociologists of work face new questions, and new challenges, as the 21st century unfolds. Those challenges are pressing, and confusing. This seminar will explore changing patterns in the world of work, exploring the impact of automation and the gig economy, the globalization of production, the changing role of the state, the rise of precarity and the expansion of circular migration, and new organizational strategies for labor movements.

PLEASE NOTE: This seminar will explore changing labor dynamics in the US as well as in the global South, comparing and contrasting the impacts of these changes across different contexts, and paying attention to the way global as well as local dynamics shape social processes.

This reading list is tentative, especially for the second half of the course. We may decide to change readings around, depending on participants' interests, and on new suggestions for readings.

Readings will be available on Canvas.

I. January 24

Introduction

Colin Crouch, "A long-term perspective on the gig economy" (2017)

DePillis, "There are fewer gig jobs than you think", Jan 10, 2019

II. January 31

The Fissured Workplace

David Weil, *The Fissured Workplace* (2014)

III. February 7

Dan Clawson and Naomi Gerstel, *Unequal Time: Gender, class and family in employment schedules* (2014)

IV. February 14

Steve Viscelli, *The Big Rig: Trucking and the decline of the American Dream* (2016)

V. February 21

The gig economy

David Rosenblatt, *Uberland* (2018)

VI. February 28

Precarity, labor process, and context

Arne Kalleborg and Steve Vallas, "Probing Precarious Work: Theory, Research and Politics" in *Precarious Work* (2018), 1-30

Michael Wallace and Joonghyun Kwak, “Bad Jobs in a troubled economy: The impact of the great recession in America’s major metropolitan areas”, *Precarious Work* (2018) 125-156

Additional:

Guy Standing, *The Precariat* (2011)

VII. March 7

Is the ‘informal economy’ just another word for ‘precarity’?

Alejandro Portes and John Walton, “Unequal exchange and the urban informal sector”, in Portes and Walton, *Labor, Class and the International System* (1981)

Alejandro Portes and Manuel Castells, “The World Underneath: The Origins, Dynamics, and Effects of the Informal Economy,” in Portes, Castells and Benton (eds), *The Informal Economy* (1989)

Michael Rogan et al, “Informal employment in the global South: Globalization, production relations, and ‘precarity’” *Precarious Work* (2018), 307-334

Additional:

Lourdes Beneria, “Subcontracting and employment dynamics in Mexico City,” in Portes, Castells and Benton (eds), *The Informal Economy* (1989)

VIII. March 14

Migrants in urban labor markets

Douglas Massey and Magaly Sanchez-R, “World of Work,” *Brokered Boundaries* (2010)

Ruth Milkman, *L.A. Story: Immigrant Workers and the Future of the U.S. Labor Movement* (2006), chapters tba

David Dyssegaard Kallick, “Immigrants in New York City’s Economy”, in Foner et al (eds), : *New York and Amsterdam: Immigration in the New Urban Landscape* (2014)

Additional:

Michael Burawoy, “The functions and reproduction of migrant labor”, *AJS* (1976)

Additional:

Douglas Massey, “International Migration at the dawn of the 21st century: the role of the state”, Population Council (1999)

Seth Holmes, *Fresh Fruit, Broken Bodies* (2013)

Miriam Wells, *Strawberry Fields: Politics, Class and Work in California Agriculture* (1996)

Kathleen Schwartzmann, *The Chicken Trail: following workers, migrants, and corporations across the Americas* (2013)

Roger Waldinger and Michael Lichtman, *How the Other Half Works* (2003)

Doug Massey and Kirsten Gensch, “Undocumented migration to the United States and the wages of Mexican immigrants”, *International Migration Review* (Summer 2014), 48: 2, pp. 482–499

IX. March 28

New approaches to organizing in the US

Ruth Milkman and Ed Ott (eds), *New Labor in New York: Precarious Worker Organizing and the Future of Unionism* (2014), chapters tba

Janice Fine, *Workers Centers*

Additional

Jennifer Chun, *Organizing at the Margins: The Symbolic Politics of Labor in South Korea and the United States* (2009), chapters tba

X. April 4

Organizing migrants

Carolina Bank-Munoz, *Transnational Tortillas: Race, Gender and Shop Floor Politics in the United States and Mexico* (2008)

Additional

Jennifer Gordon, “Holding the line on workplace standards: What works for immigrant workers – and what doesn’t,” in Luce, Luff, McCartin and Milkman, eds. (2013)

Juan De Lara, Ellen Reese, Jason Struna, “Organizing temporary, subcontracted, and immigrant workers: Lessons from Change to Win’s Warehouse Workers United campaign” *Labor Studies* (2016)

XI. April 11

New strategies in the global South

**these readings subject to change*

Rina Agarwala, *Informal Labor, formal politics, and dignified discontent in India* (2013), chapters tba

Roberto Pires, “Promoting sustainable compliance: Styles of labour inspection and compliance outcomes in Brazil” *International Labour Review* (2008)

Ben Selwyn, *Workers, state and development in Brazil: powers of labour, chains of value*, (2012), chapters tba

Adam Fishwick and Ben Selwyn, “Labor-centered development in Latin America: Two cases” *Geoforum* 2015

XII. April 18

Transnational labor strategies

Richard Appelbaum, “From Public Regulation to Private Enforcement: How CSR Became Managerial Orthodoxy” in Appelbaum and Lichtenstein (eds) (2016)

Nelson Lichtenstein, “The Demise Of Tripartite Governance And The Rise Of The Corporate Social Responsibility Regime”, in Appelbaum and Lichtenstein (eds) (2016)

Scott Nova and Chris Wegemer, “Death at an Early Age: Why A Shift from Voluntary “CSR” to Binding Commitments that Constrain Brand Sourcing Decisions is Essential to Stop Mass Fatalities in Garment Factories” in Appelbaum and Lichtenstein (eds), 2016

Additional:

Jamie McCollum, *Global Unions, Local Power: The New Spirit of Transnational Labor Organizing* (2013)

Mark Anner, “Labor control regimes and worker resistance in global supply chains,” *Labor History* (2015)

Sabrina Zajak, “International allies, institutional layering and power in the making of labour in Bangladesh,” *Development and Change* (2017)

XIII. April 25

New Challenges

Ching Kwan Lee, The Spector of Global China (2018)

XIV. May 2

Conclusion