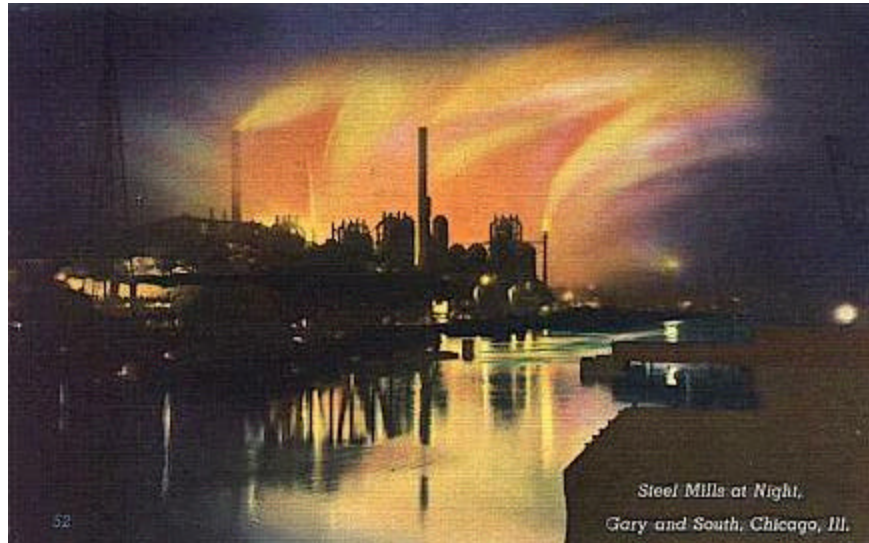


# Some Notes on Neo-Fordism and the Industrial City<sup>1</sup>

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## Abstract

This paper will explore how global steel markets are understood in an industrial city situated in an After-Fordist context. Specifically, this paper will focus on the application of the concepts based in territorially-defined national economies and the Fordist compromise in a context of a globalizing steel industry and a reconfiguration of the city-state-industry relations. This case addresses the political economy literature on reconfiguration of Fordist urban and institutional forms in a global context. Two cases are presented in this paper. First, organized labor has long created a “buy American” campaign that is based in the premise of a territorially bound US labor force. Second, environmental claims have continuously been made in the industrial city, but the form in which they were enacted differs by historical moment. Intersecting both cases is the approach that claims for the Fordist Compromise can be situated in political economy by employing an analysis of everyday life in an industrial city. This paper will argue that understanding the global consolidation in the steel industry and after-Fordist urban development derives from an industrial habitus that is historically informed by Fordism.

## Introduction

The industrial city has fallen off the map of academic research since the crisis of Atlantic Fordism and the associated decline of the focus on manufacturing. The literature that is produced on the industrial city tends to focus on the emergence of its non-industrial developments. This focus leads to among those proposed are *post*-Fordism, *After*-Fordism, and some recognition of the importance of persisting industrial forms in the

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<sup>1</sup> This is a working draft. Please do not cite without the author’s permission. Please forward all comments to eboria@netnitco.net. Thank you.

concept of *neo*-Fordism. This paper revisits the political economy of the industrial city from the study of everyday life in an industrial city, the Calumet Region of Northwest Indiana.

The political economic basis of the industrial city is currently in a transition as fundamental as the establishment of steel in Northwest Indiana and the 1980's crisis in steel. The steel industry is currently at one of its most productive moments in history. Three out of the five largest steel companies along the southern Lake Michigan shoreline are now owned by the largest and most decentralized steel company on the planet. Mittal Steel USA is producing record levels of steel in East Chicago. Although this record production is accomplished at historically low levels of workers, steel industry employment in Northwest Indiana still nears twenty thousand. That number rises to sixty thousand workers when the steel service economy, the local industries that are tied to the steel mills, is included.

This renewed productivity is based in a new economic geography of the steel industry that takes advantage of low transportation costs and the liberalization of borders to profit from emerging regional economies and global market fluctuations in steel prices. However, conceptions of the industry in the everyday life of the industrial city and in organized labor continue to make claims based in the notions of a territorially bound national economy and labor force, a notion that conflicts with the realities of the industry.

## Review of the Literature

In the rush to identify the end of Fordist-Keynesianism and characterize the subsequent period, the path dependency of Fordist-Keynesian institutions have often been lost. Industrial cities have been dominated by the trope of deindustrialization in the literature (Bensman and Lynch 1987; Dandaneau 1996). Images of a decimated manufacturing base, a surplus population, and all of its associated contradictions, dominate the academic landscape of the industrial city (Harrison and Bluestone 1982; Piore and Sabel 1984). This perspective has the, sometimes unintended, effect of reducing the agency in and of industrial cities to influence their own industrial futures. Industrial cities arguably carry the heaviest legacy of embedded Fordist-Keynesian institutions.

Fordism has often been presented as a stable entity since the concept's inception (Gramsci 1971). A more accurate conception is that of an emergent property that consists of a myriad of arrangements from institutional to the level of everyday life. Fordism is an umbrella term to denote a particular spatio-temporal fix of global capital accumulation and the subsequent regulation of its crisis tendencies (Jessop 2000). Here, Fordism is not limited to refer to the system of production developed by Henry Ford, but to the complex social, political, institutional, and lifeworlds that were characteristic of the period in which the Fordist mode of assembly production saw its brightest moments. "What ultimately separates Fordism from Taylorism [was Ford's] explicit recognition that mass production meant mass consumption, a new system of the reproduction of labour power, a new politics of labour control and management, a new aesthetics and psychology, in short, a new kind of rationalized, modernist, and populist democratic society" (Harvey 1990:126). There are two key definitions of Fordism that are relevant to this paper. First, the institutions of a managerial style of governmental regulation of the economy oriented towards the national scale. It is important to remember that more than once, the president of the US made public demands of the big steel companies (hereafter referred to as Big

Steel).<sup>2</sup> Second, mass consumption translated to everyday life in the form of the Fordist compromise, a compromise with industry that resulted in high manufacturing wages and routine employment careers.

Fordist relations were embedded in the urban and institutional infrastructure of manufacturing regions, especially steel cities. As these cities formed in the height of Fordist production processes, economic governance was structured around subsidy and a division of social responsibility with the national scale being preeminent. Workers and residents were raised in a social institutional context in rough but existent jobs, concerned mainly with the execution of those specific job requirements and the redistribution of wealth that provided the social space and the personal finances to devote oneself to building a life at home. These relations are not just embedded in the urban and institutional infrastructure, but in people's consciousness and subculture. As momentary as this period was in urban and national history, it formed powerful imaginaries of governance, life, economy, and work, the ruins of which persist today inscribed in the expectations and bodies of the city's residents.<sup>3</sup> In terms of everyday life, the Fordist regime of accumulation was understood as the matching of mass production with mass consumption (Lipietz 1992). The system through which this is executed is known as the Fordist compromise. The most commonly visible element in this compromise is that of collective bargaining. This compromise emerged not only as an institutionalized system of regulation but of a context that pervaded the general thought and action of an historical period. It created what can be generally called the *American way of life* - a form of consumer-driven, individual happiness. There were few critics of this productivist model and way of life. One of the prominent few was Herbert Marcuse who critiqued the anti-democratic and anti-liberatory aspects and Henri Lefebvre who critiqued the life based in notions of mass society (Marcuse 1964; Lefebvre 1991). This is an important critique to understand the relationship between the Fordist compromise and the rise of mass society.<sup>4</sup>

This relative period of stability of Historical Fordism was destabilized in the 1970s and 1980s by the rise of global competition and a crisis of the Atlantic form of Fordism (Lipietz 1987). The crisis of Fordism and the emerging period of Post-Fordism can be characterized by a particular agglomeration of technological, social, and

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<sup>2</sup> Months before his assassination, president Kennedy made a public speech demanding that US Steel not raise the price of steel.

<sup>3</sup> Richard Sennett, in *Corrosion of Character* describes this inscription using the case of Rose, a working class woman who attempted to return to a Post-Fordist model of working relations. She eventually returned to working in the bar. Despite her qualifications of technical expertise of the field, her mode of social relations were characteristic of the Fordist period and caused continual conflict in the new setting. (I specifically and intentionally avoid the terminology of "social skills" as they imply a specific set of knowledges and actions that can be simply learned and applied. Rose, like the residents of the city in my study, perceive and act through a mode of social relations. This is a lifeworld, a complete perspective through which meaning and action of life are understood, not a set of skills people use and manipulate to act towards the world, as if they were commodities.)

<sup>4</sup> Emancipation and liberation are common themes associated with resistance struggles, but are by no means exhaustive or representative, for most are in effect exclusionary, nationalistic, and often racist Shanks-Meile, S. and B. Dobratz (2000). *White Power White Pride! The White Separatist Movement in the United States*. Baltimore and London, The Johns Hopkins University Press.

productive relations. Contemporary globalization theorists (Ash Amin, Jessop, Harvey, Sassen) mark the beginning of the crisis of Fordism as the industrialization of global competitor nations and the new context of global competition that subsequently arose. The early stages of this crisis were characterized largely by the development of the industrial might of post-war European nations and later East Asia.

To begin to analyze patterns in global cities, the transformations of globalization, the object of that transformation has to be identified. Globalization is a term that encompasses the various attempts to resolve, albeit temporarily, the global crisis of Fordism. The global moment is characterized by the entrance of newly industrializing countries (NIC), and former state owned enterprises (SOE) into the global economy (Robinson 1996). This development created a new global context which precipitated the rise of a decentralized model of global production and urban entrepreneurialism, combining the industrialized countries and the NICs in a new global geography of production. There has not been a sociospatial fix that resolves these crisis tendencies with such ubiquitous dominance as the Atlantic Fordist mode of regulation (Peck and Tickell 1994). For this reason, this paper follows the preference of Peck and Tickell for the term *After-Fordist* fix. But the extent to which various sociospatial fixes are explored and implemented to resolve various aspects of the crisis tendencies of global capital in the sense of a rupture from Fordism, the term Post-Fordist is commonly used (Amin 1994).

This research has followed the transformations of the steel industry particularly through the 1990s and into the new millennium, following Mittal Steel (formerly Ispat International) as the industrial geography moved from a model of vertically integrated plants to a model of decentralized production, characteristic of Post-Fordist flexible accumulation strategies. The global consolidation of the steel industry radically alters the geography of command and control within the company. The implications of this transformation upon cities and the industrial everyday life that was fixed in the height of Fordist are discussed below. The crisis of this mode of accumulation, and its subsequent rearticulation in alternative forms inscribed particularly deep into the urban fabric of old industrialized cities. This crisis though was manifest universally through the uneven network of markets.

## **Discussion of the Case**

The argument in this paper is based in two cases. Firstly, the concept of a “US steel industry” is an ideological construction that is created in contradistinction to the emerging global markets for steel. These markets mirror both the earlier decentralization of steel consumers like the auto industry and the emerging markets from former State Owned Enterprises (SOE) such as China, Eastern Europe and Ukraine, and Newly Industrializing Countries (NIC) like India and Mexico. Secondly, will be explored how Fordism can be defined in the context of the global consolidation of steel; whether this can be termed “neo-Fordist” consumption; and where historically, Fordist claims are finally realized, such as labor-environmental alliances.

Without considering the extensive steel service economy, the industries directly and indirectly dependent upon the steel industry, the top employers in the industrial Calumet region of Northwest Indiana are still the remaining steel companies, including also the power generating plant, public services, and the oil refinery British Petrol/Amoco (NIRPC 2003). As of the 2000 census, 969 manufacturing establishments employing over

sixty five thousand workers remain in Lake county (Census 2000), which are further concentrated almost absolutely in the northern Calumet Region - in the cities of Hammond, Gary, and East Chicago. The portion of the Northwest Indiana economy that consists specifically of steel is at seven percent. In 1991, steel fourteen percent of the Northwest Indiana economy.

The political form of mass society materialized in a national scalar model of democratic relations. The national model is based on mass representations, such as corporatist negotiation between unions, employer federations, and the state (Piore and Sabel 1984; Evans 1995). It is through these mass representations that social interaction and political behavior materialize in a national economy. Alain Lipietz frames one leg of the Fordist mode of regulation as the separation of conception and execution of the technicality of production (Lipietz 1994). The economic dominance of U.S. steel companies reinforced the spatial separation of responsibility in the social world of the factory. The responsibility of the workers was to produce, as the common protest chant of "Let's Make Steel!" attests; and this was very much separate from the responsibility of the industry to generate wealth through the sale of its product. Production and wealth creation were separated into the historic labor - management divide.

*Understanding the Global Steel Market:* Five years after Mittal Steel (then Ispat International) consolidated Inland Steel in East Chicago into a transnational steel company and displaces US Steel Company from its long-standing primary position in the US economy, US Steel too began consolidating activities. First it targeted its lakefront neighbor National Steel, then followed up with a Serbian and Polish mill. US Steel beat German-based AK Steel in a court ruling to keep steel as they claimed, "American". The court proceedings in Chicago were accompanied by a union-sponsored protest rally on the street below the courthouse. The United Steelworkers of America (USWA) initially came to a contract with bidder USS, but did not forge a contract with bidder AK steel, which outbid its U.S. competitor. AK could not win the bid to purchase National Steel Corporation if it did not forge a labor agreement. Therefore, it was arguing that the USS contract was a non-competitive contract and was attempting to get the court to rule it void. Steelworkers were bused by their unions from across the Midwest to the intersection of Adams and Dearborn in Chicago to march and protest AK steel. They wanted, and succeeded, to get their voices heard in the courtroom, quite literally from the streets. We often looked up to see if anyone in the legal offices were looking out of their windows upon the march below. Their main claims were to keep U.S. mills "American" by helping US Steel win the bid [fieldnotes Nov. 2003]. They stated fear of what a German company would do to American workers given that they had no loyalty to the US workforce. They were successful and AK Steel lost the court challenge.<sup>5</sup> In the spaces of the steel city, these claims for corporate responsibility according to this particular social imaginary become valorized and visible. The fact that the protests were at the base of the courthouse and at the mill gates in the streets of Gary, Indiana held weight because these are the places of production, the fixed component of the steel industry.

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<sup>5</sup> One interesting point here is that this challenge was possibly the legal territory of the WTO, but was settled in US courts. This point is testament that international market disputes constitute a confluence of existing national and institutionalizing international legal apparatus.

There are two interesting factors in this development, and they arrive from opposite directions. First, it is quite a change for a tired, Fordist industry like steel to reorganize according to a global, neo-liberal economy, that is characterized by the liberalization of borders, privatization of state-owned companies, deregulation of industries, and digitalization of production (Sassen 2001). In fact, the global decentralized model of steel production precisely utilizes transportation technologies to link places of production, which are often privatized and fledgling state-owned steel companies, into a cross-border network that can meet the flexible demands of a global market. But the second interesting factor derives from its exact opposite, instead of increasing the connectivity and intensity of interaction between places of production across national borders, there has been a recent attempt to territorialize steel production within the constraints of the national territory - the case of the Section 201 steel tariffs.

This question of tariffs raises larger issues, namely the production of global, decentralized companies cannot be measured in terms of a national economy because it is not contained within those borders. Second, if there is an attempt to territorialize production, it raises the question of whether the state will re-impose a Fordist-Keynesian, steel city from which an industrial livelihood was crystallized over decades in the Calumet Region. The U.S. implementation of the tariffs against foreign steel presents one powerful example that steel companies have returned to positions of decision-making and national power, precisely because in this case, steel producers have, for the moment, surmounted the interests of the steel consumers, mainly the quarter-century dominance of the auto industry in setting the price of steel they will accept.<sup>6</sup> The tariffs were the product of the active political work of unions that was oriented to the federal government. It must be noted here that this discourse of the national-orientation of Fordist-Keynesianism is reproduced in, and continuously emerges from, the Fordist perspective of unions. It is the perspective of the United Steel Workers of America (USWA) of the existence of nationally based economies and the degradative impact of the concept of *foreign steel*. “Foreign steel” is a discursive category that has been created to define the import of steel created by non-US steel companies and its unit of analysis is the nation-state, thus are imagined Japanese, Chinese steel invading a US market. This is a concept that has been used for national solidarity, company loyalty, and is extremely value-laden. It is identified with the decline of “*our*” lifestyle (meaning the US workforce as a unified entity), the social contract, and is extremely overlaid with racism and ethnocentrism. The thrust of this argument is based in and resonates strongly with the everyday life of residents in the Calumet Region. The lived experience of the manufacturing worker is used to valorize the aforementioned social imaginary even though, ironically, the rise and might of the U.S. steel industry was created by immigrant labor that exploited racial inequality.

After-Fordism is characterized by changes in the process of global production; it is an important transformation for the ability and process of making claims on industrial production. The Fordist model, where localized firms produce products while their markets may exist on various scales, had the privilege of focusing on the central location of production. But, an After-Fordist model where not only the markets, but the

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<sup>6</sup> One important constraint intensifying the crisis in the steel industry is that due to the monopoly position of the auto industry, the steel consumers have the power to set the price at which steel companies must produce, regardless of the cost of raw materials or labor conditions (fieldnotes, October 2003).

production process itself may exist along various scales. The claims making process has to be rescaled as well as focused on diverse components of production, including plants, transportation, finance strategies, et cetera. The geographical transformation of production and market locales has wider implications for the nature of agglomeration. Under Fordism, vertically integrated production sites had a wide diversity of production needs at the centralized location of production, thus spurring local economic growth to service the needs of the larger corporations (Silver 2003). The common infrastructural model was the industrial city, where residents, workers were located surrounding larger industrial plants. In this urban agglomeration a type of small business flourished by servicing that agglomeration of business and people along with the specialized needs of the major plants that were not furnished in-house. Thus, when these larger plants left, closed down, or simply reduced its production capacity, the ripple effects upon workers and small businesses were felt throughout the entire city (Harrison and Bluestone 1982). The “ripple effect” is an important concept as it ties the steel company to the everyday life and local economies in the city that are tied to and heavily dependent upon Big Steel (Markusen 1985).

But agglomeration economies, especially in high technology are again on the rise (Markusen 1994; Storper 1997; Scott 1998). This does not necessarily mean that we will see the revitalization of industrial cities. While there are localities in which small business is thriving from new agglomeration economies, such as high technology districts (Scott 1996), flexible accumulation strategies require the partial devolution of vertically-integrated companies to specialized production facilities with its specialized components outsourced or distant in a networked form of locational production. That means the diversity of needs that each site which supported a range of small businesses under Fordism, is reduced to a level where the vitality of local economies of industrial cities is unsustainable. Thus, major steel companies can function and even thrive in a dilapidated industrial city because it can more efficiently rely on suppliers and services rendered from production localities at a distance than the largely inflexible reserve of resources within the industrial city. This is the basis for flexible, decentralized, network productivity strategies. It is here that the specificity and importance of the industrial city is seen with respect to the globally decentralized steel company.

### **Industrial Specificity**

*Environmental:* When the vista of research descends to the complexities of everyday life, people and their actions are not categorically either global or national, but exhibit various tendencies contingent on contextual specificity. The global cannot be seen as a formula that determines the outcome of transnational practices in specific local sites. These are contingent on the outcome of the struggle of the various actors vying for control over that space. One case for instance, that exemplifies this contextual specificity is that of the environmental movement and the steel industry. These have historically been two sets of actors from very different positions that struggle for the same political and geographical space. The industrial city is the site that emerges where these claims are contested. Traditionally under Fordism, environmentalists and labor have been pitted against each other (Hurley 1995). With respect to one another, the struggle has been a zero-sum game. Bonanno and Constance show in the case of the tuna industry that the “victory” of the environmentalists was achieved at the cost of alienated labor support (Bonanno and

Constance 1996). Yet, the political-economic basis that has pitted these two positions as oppositional has been shifting.

One characteristic of After-Fordism is that certain claims and forms of organizing are emerging, forms that were repressed under Historical Fordism. One such form is the emergence of labor-environmental alliances. Following the history of the crisis in manufacturing, one could view this as an attempt to consolidate the power of two continuously weakening sectors of organization. While quantitatively this has elements of truth, another possibility emerges. With the continuous decline of Fordist organizations, their dominance over the political spaces of industrial cities also weakens. Combined with the contracting political positionality of the steel company within the city as it becomes a segment of a transnational company, new political spaces emerge for the formation of new claims, or the enacting of formerly repressed claims.

While this represents two Fordist sectors attempting a new synthesis of claims-making, the local level has been more prevalent in producing organizations that move beyond the Fordist social relations. First, labor ceases to be a separate entity. Thus, new syntheses such as labor-environmental organizing become possible. Second, the agent is not confined to national citizenship or employment status. Claims are emerging for the urban resident, for an environmental justice that also maintains an economic justice.<sup>7</sup> Labor has been recently organizing with environmental groups in an unlikely coalition for the development of the lakefront. In this heavily political work, “environmental” has been redefined as a component of economic productivity, not a concession thereof.

In one specific case in Gary, Indiana, labor and environmentalists seem to have organized together on the basis of shared interest. Organized labor desired the state to come in and clean up the lakefront to remove a century of waste and make the land more economically productive through lowered risk of environmental contamination. The environmental group involved, however had an understanding that the state would recreate the “natural” environment that existed prior to the establishment of the steel industry over a century ago. They have organized with the government at the city, state, and federal levels for what appear to be similar goals. But upon discussion with their members, differences emerge with regard to the mechanism and outcomes, differences in definitions of *environmental* that have not yet emerged in organizing:

1. “Cowles developed the theory of ecological succession of plant life right here on the dunes where Inland Steel now stands. Now that Big Steel doesn’t need that land anymore we can recover the rich diversity of plant life that was here. We can have a big nature preserve that families and kids can enjoy right there on the lakefront.”

2. “This place has been a toxic soup. They put all the pollution here because they can. They don’t live here. First thing is get them to stop putting more pollution here. We can have the jobs and not have the smoke coming in our windows. They know how to do it; they just need to be forced to do it. We need to get the pollution out of our homes. Take a look around see how much cancer there is. Look at everybody, they all have asthma”

[fieldnotes November 2004]

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<sup>7</sup> This expansion of claims from the factory floor to the spaces of the city have also expanded claims for worker’s rights instead of more tightly defined labor rights.

Above are two excerpts from interviews that exemplify a basic rift in defining the term environmental, a rift that has consequences for the outcome of their organizing. In this paper, I will argue that one factor explaining this rift in definition derives from the path dependency of an historical memory.

Overwhelmingly, those who organize around the first statement live in the Southern and Eastern suburbs of the Calumet Region, while those who organize around the second definition largely live in one of the lakeshore cities of East Chicago, Hammond, or Gary. The key distinction here is the lived experience of industrialism. Of note here is that the industrial everyday life is the accumulation of over one hundred years of raw industrialism in Northwest Indiana (this is without situating Northwest Indiana within the longer history of industrialism). This history has created a value for physical labor and the products of physical ability. What has emerged is an everyday life that is deeply embedded and sensitive to the relationship to the body. An industrial everyday life is well acknowledged to be an embodied everyday life (Beaud and Pialoux 2001). Thus, the term environmental is defined to be a very personal, and embodied, concept. Environmental issues of note are those which affect the body, namely pollution. This is quite clear in the following comment: “yeah trees are nice. But you hear, trees improve health. Just look at the neighborhoods with trees. They are all healthy there.” This definition is in stark contrast to the comments from members of the environmental group, mainly suburban based, which define nature more as a concept external to the body, the discursive concept of “nature”.

*Craft production:* The basis of the above difference in definitions of environmental lie in the valuation of the physical. But, this is only part of a larger project of industrialism: that of inscribing technical precision in the body for work or craft production. This valuation is heavily imported from the momentum of history. “One is responsible for oneself in the present; it is one’s virtue, one’s powers of doing and changing things in the immediate environment that matters... The belief that one’s life must be invented, rather than inherited...that of making oneself is the very mark of modernity, as opposed to living out the roles of a traditional society” (Sennett 1990). The value of the industrial subject is defined precisely by the ability to create with one’s body, with one’s hands.

The industrial spaces of the city valorize the industrial body, the disposition, and life narrative in the industrial city. These spaces of valorization provide dignity to the individual. These are the city spaces where working class and manufacturing jobs are honored and the strong, technically able body exalted. The idea is that these bodies are emblematic of the self-sufficient individual that they construct. In the ideology of Fordist-Keynesianism, this historical moment is the first time the working class individual could make his own life.<sup>8</sup> Shed from the communal and family obligations of the nineteenth century and the dependency on the state imposed by the Great Depression, manufacturing in the post-war years provided a unique moment of individual wealth without communal responsibility (Ranney 2003). The symbolism of the affluent working

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<sup>8</sup> In other terms, this exaltation of the individual was elaborated in Bellah, R., R. Madsen, et al., Eds. (1985). *Habits of the heart: individualism and commitment in American life*. Berkeley, University of California Press.

class was epitomized in the creation of suburbs that the manufacturing wage enabled. Thus, as Fordism consists of an entire political and institutional set of relations, the spaces of the Fordist city were created to valorize the Fordist subject through the dignity of technical precision inscribed in the body. One example is the application of this technical expertise to the car in the form of self-repair and modification, to the house and yard in terms of the inscription of the self of personal labor in its modifications and upkeep. Application of technical expertise in this way provides the dignity of having achieved the embodied technical precision of industry and the ability to reproduce it. In contrast, the middle class finds it more economically efficient to pay others to build and repair the car and house than to do it individually, even though maintenance is still the responsibility of the individual. This exalting of the productive is seen in the following quote.

“The sociologists ... share the habit of thinking about boxing as heroically productive men's work on the industrial model, but that traditional understanding has been under pressure since the passing of the high-industrial moment when America's heavy manufacturing sector and fight network rose in tandem to worldwide dominance. Postindustrial static has at least partially obscured the connection between body work in the ring and in the factory...within the ... special atmosphere, even men with little power or capital outside the gym can make something of their own—literally making something of themselves and thus reclaiming the heroic, productive virtue associated with manhood since the Industrial Revolution.” (Rotella 2002)

In contrast, post-Fordism is a term created to identify the period of transition or rupture from a relatively institutionalized Fordist-Keynesian fix (Jessop 2000) to yet-defined sociospatial arrangements (Amin and Thrift 1992). Much has been written on the emergence of a subject after Fordism (Inglehart 1997; Touraine 2002; Sassen 2003). The self of post-industrial subject is positioned in direct contradistinction to the Fordist subject. It is this subject which fundamentally transforms the valuation placed upon Fordist agency. Post-industrial values are emerging, but generations of Fordism have not dissolved into air. Instead, they are produced and within a city that is shaped by an industrial habitus. Whereas the everyday life of industrialism used to be produced from the factory floor (Kornblum 1974; Burawoy 1979), the site of production has shifted to the spaces of the industrial city itself, where industrialism continues to be valued.

Although the steel industry in Northwest Indiana is returning to prominence, employment in steel has fallen to under twenty thousand employees. However, manufacturing jobs maintain their status as enablers of an industrial life, mainly through the wage and clear separation of home and work time. “The wage packet is the provider of freedom, and independence: the particular prize of masculinity in work. This is the complement of, and is what makes possible, the fetishism of the wage packet. A trade is judged not for itself, nor even for its general financial return, but for its ability to provide the central, domestic, masculine role for its incumbent...the male wage packet is held to be central not simply because of its size, but because it is won in a masculine mode in confrontation with the ‘real’ world which is too tough for the woman” (Willis 1977). This is underlying basis of the claim for the “family wage”, as historically described by Paul Willis, enables both the time and the money to practice their crafts outside of the workplace, in the private spheres of life. The everyday life of Fordism was structured to

enable this distinction of work and home. It has been precisely this distinction that has been increasingly strained through the erosion of lifetime employment, job security, and benefits derived through employment (Ranney 2003). Overwhelmingly, those cut from the employee roll or who cannot find a job in industry take up employment in one of the building, construction, or repair trades that provides them the same valuation of technical precision in the body. Due to this shift, embodied industrialism is increasingly produced among the workers in the array of technical trades outside of the traditional factory jobs.

This separation of the valuation of an industrial masculinity from the shop floor is seen in the following quote: “Pushing for access to the fight world, women have been part of a larger push, in both work and play, to claim once –‘manly’ virtues that boxing is supposed to nurture and embody: autonomy, physical competence, and discipline, all wrapped up with productive aggression... These women do not want to be industrial workers, they want command of body skills and associated character traits traditionally identified with industrial work and masculinity” (Rotella 2002). These are some of the practices where an industrial identity gets promoted and renegotiated independent of the presence of industrial work.

As demonstrated above, Fordist claims do not reside purely in discursive spaces, but are based in industrial socio-spatial arrangements. In other words, though historical Fordism no longer exists, Fordist relations persist and are recreated around the Fordist-style jobs and industries that continue to operate. Thus, these become the prime sites for the enactment of Fordist livability and Fordist claims in the face of a globalizing structural context.

## Conclusion

Although the historical moment of Fordism no longer exists, its institutional arrangements persist and provide a sort of path-dependency to understand the contemporary development of cities (Abu-Lughod 1999; Brenner and Theodore 2002). These institutions provide an industrial field in which Fordist imaginaries are negotiated with recent developments. Fordist claims in an After-Fordist context can be understood as a struggle to impact the changing lived experience of a steel city. The spaces of the industrial city, then enable agency based in an industrial habitus.<sup>9</sup>

One implication of this work is a redefinition of the working class as a concept. In the last couple decades given the reconfiguration of Fordist-Keynesianism, the notion of working class has become confused. Outside the context of Historical Fordism, the working class becomes an income category. With the proliferation of post-Fordist studies, industrial cities, have been largely characterized as in transition to a new arrangement. Working class agency, as has been argued in this paper, has been repositioned from a largely blue-collar base to the everyday life enabled by the industrial spaces of the city.

In their maturity, industrial cities have been pushing for the development of various forms of After-Fordism. However, this paper has shown that research fully embedded in the lived experience can reveal the depth of the social-psychological rupture

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<sup>9</sup> The relationship between a particular field that has accumulated over time and one that attempts to *convert* those relationships has been deeply theorized in Bourdieu, P. (2000). "Making the Economic Habitus: Algerian Workers Revisited." *Ethnography* 1(1): 17-41.

from the reconfiguration of industrial cities.<sup>10</sup> In conclusion, this research emphasizes the *partial* and *tendential* development of post-Fordism, not as elements pulling society towards a post-industrial future, but as the history and agents of historical Fordism pushing on familiar social relations, economies, and systems of regulation in an *After-Fordist* context. They are in essence, reconstructing Fordism in a context of the global consolidation of steel.

As the steel industry consolidates and emerges on a decentralized, global scale, we see the devolution of its national orientation and the expansion of governance on the local and regional scales (Rosenau and Czempiel 1992; Brenner 2000; Jessop 2000). Jessop, among other theorists, persistently emphasizes the dependent nature of a market society upon the state. Too often, the market is seen as an independent agent from state influence. But this does not imply the form of the state as it currently exists. Local and regional governments are important making specific localities productive. The state has to be “unthought”<sup>11</sup> as a static, national-scalar entity since it is precisely the form of the state where the industrial subject negotiates both the global consolidation of steel as well as the everyday life in the industrial city.

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<sup>10</sup> For an in-depth analysis of social-psychological rupture in a city with a changing economic base see for instance Wacquant, L. (1994). *The New Urban Color Line: The State and Fate of the Ghetto in PostFordist America*. *Social Theory and the Politics of Identity*. C. Calhoun. Oxford, Blackwell: 231-276.

<sup>11</sup> “Unthinking” in the tradition of Wallerstein in *Unthinking Social Science*. This requires revisiting disciplinary concepts, challenging their assumptions, and allowing them to be flexible as society changes. This does not mean new concepts should ignore the historical roots, but that reified concepts leave no intellectual capacity for understanding qualitative and quantitative social changes. This is also described with particular reference to globalization in Wacquant, L. and P. Bourdieu (2001). “Neoliberal Newsspeak: notes on the new planetary vulgate.” *Radical Philosophy*(108).

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