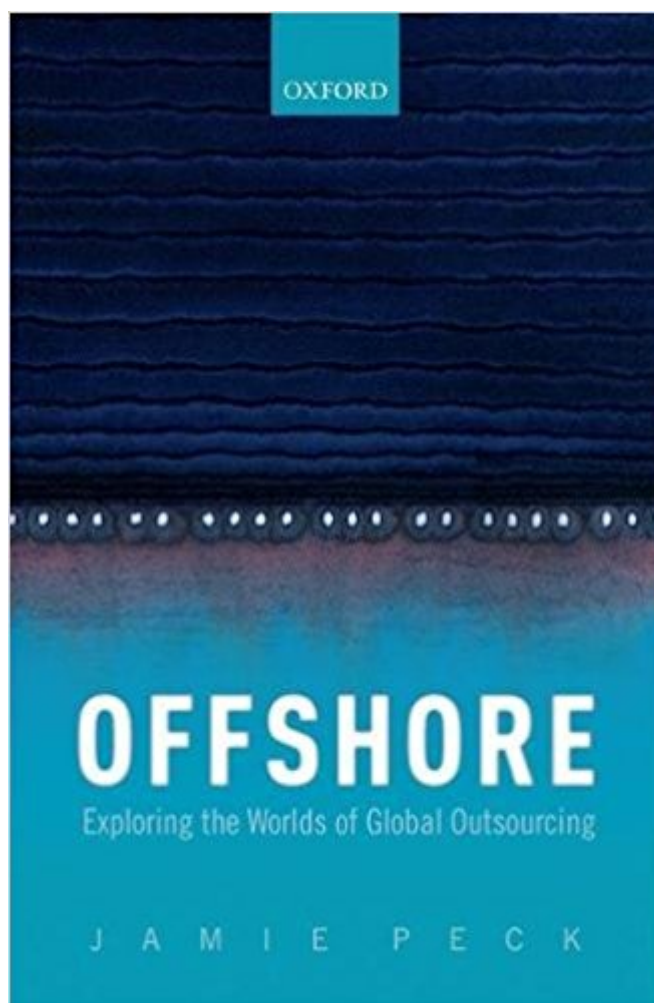


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Offshore: Exploring The Worlds Of Global Outsourcing



Synopsis

Offshore outsourcing-the movement of jobs to lower-wage countries-is one of the defining features of globalization. Routine blue-collar work has been going offshore for decades, but the digital revolution beginning in the 1990s extended this process to many parts of the service economy too. Politically controversial from the beginning, "offshoring" is conventionally seen as a threat to jobs, wages, and economic security in higher-income countries-having become synonymous with the dirty work of globalization. Even though the majority of corporations make some use of offshore outsourcing, fearful of negative publicity most now choose to manage these activities in a discreet manner. Partly as a result, the global sourcing business, now reckoned to be worth more \$120 billion, largely operates under the radar, its ocean-spanning activities in low-cost labor arbitrage being poorly documented and poorly understood. Offshore is the first sustained investigation of the workings of the global sourcing industry, its business practices, its market dynamics, its technologies, and its politics. The book traces the complex transformation of the worlds of global sourcing, from its origins in the new international division of labor in the 1970s, through the rapid growth of back-office economies in India and the Philippines since the 1990s, to the development of "nearshore" markets in Latin America and Eastern Europe. Recently, this evolving process of geographical and organizational restructuring has included experiments in "backshoring" within low-cost, ex-urban locations in the United States and a wave of software-enabled automation, which threatens to remove labor from many back offices altogether. In these and other ways, the offshore revolution continues.

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Customer Reviews

Offshore is a revelatory exploration of the offshore outsourcing complex what many of us consider the heart of darkness of the modern global economy. Crossing oceans and continents in pursuit of his quarry, Jamie Peck examines it from every angle the corporations who see outsourcing as a way to cut expense and bother, the providers of outsourcing services who scramble for contracts in a dog-eat-dog competitive nightmare, the domestic politics and politicians, the constantly churning geography (offshore, nearshore, onshore) and the looming fear of automation. Who knew that the unhappy providers yearn for respect and dream of a time when they will be strategic partners rather than bottom feeders? Who knew that everyone in the business agrees that outsourcing hardly ever works well? Offshore is first-class research and fascinating to read. * Erica Schoenberger, Dept of Environmental and Health Engineering, The Johns Hopkins University * Jamie Peck details the workings of outsourcing industry, the culture it creates, and the levels to which firms are willing to go to deliver on a contract. At bottom, outsourcing is about cost; higher up, it is accompanied by evangelical promises of organizational efficiency; and in some cases there are truly transformational results, with wholly new capabilities and smoothly running global operations. This book is a must read if you wish to understand how companies decide what to outsource and what they expect will result, once the armies of business consultants have finished their work. * Amy Katherine Glasmeier, Professor of Economic Geography and Regional Planning, Massachusetts Institute of Technology * Offshore is a superb book of very wide significance. Employing a sophisticated, multi-layered, nuanced analysis Jamie Peck really gets inside this elusive and opaque industry whose rapidly evolving practices are transforming business and economic landscapes at a global scale with potentially immense economic, social and political implications. It is, without doubt, a major contribution. * Peter Dicken, Emeritus Professor University of Manchester *

Jamie Peck, Canada Research Chair in Urban & Regional Political Economy and Professor of Geography, University of British Columbia Jamie Peck is Canada Research Chair in Urban & Regional Political Economy and Professor of Geography at the University of British Columbia, Canada. His research interests include labour studies, economic restructuring, neoliberalization, and urban transformations. Elected to the fellowships of the Royal Society of Canada and the Academy of the Social Sciences, Jamie Peck has been the recipient of Guggenheim and Harkness fellowships, and received the Royal Geographical Society's Back Award for contributions to

economic geography. He is the managing editor of the journal Environment and Planning A and the coordinator of the Summer Institute in Economic Geography.

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