

# Spatial Control: Geographical Approaches to the Study of Immigration Detention

Global Detention Project Working Paper No. 24

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The Global Detention Project (GDP) is a non-profit research centre based in Geneva, Switzerland, that investigates the use of detention in response to global migration. The GDP's aims include: (1) providing researchers, advocates, and journalists with a measurable and regularly updated baseline for analysing the growth and evolution of detention practices and policies; (2) facilitating accountability and transparency in the treatment of detainees; and (3) encouraging scholarship in this field of immigration and refugee studies.

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The Global Detention Project Working Paper Series is edited by Michael Flynn (GDP) and Matthew Flynn (Georgia Southern University).

This working paper series is made possible in part by the generous support of the Open Society Foundations.



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# Spatial Control: Geographical Approaches to the Study of Immigration Detention

By Deirdre Conlon, Nancy Hiemstra, and Alison Mountz

**ABSTRACT:** This Working Paper surveys research on immigration detention conducted using geographical methods, highlighting how geography’s conceptualization of detention as a form of spatial control offers tools to scholars and activists working to contest this form of immigration control. The authors organize their review around three core themes: im/mobilities, scaled analyses, and borders/bordering. They argue that geographical approaches to the study of detention have helped generate a critical orientation that can disrupt the spread of detention across and within a widening array of places and social groups.

## I. INTRODUCTION

Geographers conceptualize non-citizen detention as a form of *spatial control*. As Martin and Mitchelson (2009) observe, detention is ‘fundamentally reliant on *spatial tactics* or the use of space to control people, objects, and their movement’ (p. 459 [italics in original]; see also Martin 2015). The study of detention has grown over the last decade as a dynamic area of research within the discipline of geography. Although our main objective in this chapter is to explore geographical perspectives on detention, the inherent interdisciplinarity of this research effectively calls into question and, often, defies disciplinary boundaries. This interdisciplinarity is significant, we suggest, because it emphasizes an orientation that explicitly recognizes the ‘messiness’ of borders, whether they are conceptual, sovereign, political or physical. Furthermore, this geographic approach illuminates the ‘*productive messiness*’ that we believe is necessary to understanding *and* ultimately undermining the breadth and depth of detention’s reach. Geographical perspectives provide insight and tools to scholars and activists well beyond disciplines or academic study. They take seriously the need for alliance and critical mass in working to address the continuum of practices linked to detention, from deterrence policies to deportation systems. Geographical approaches thus embody and exemplify a critical orientation that informs efforts to disrupt the various ways in which spaces of detention are materialized and maintained across an ever-widening array of places and social groups.

As migration studies scholars, we purposefully omitted “immigrant” from our definition of detention. Work in the discipline of geography shows that detention is used across a wide range of contexts to control “undesirable” or “deviant” individuals and groups, including so-called “enemy combatants,” “terror suspects,” and racialized youth (Bashford and Strange 2002; Loyd et al. 2012). Therefore, as we examine detention’s geographical and spatial expansion and attend to its effects for migrants in particular, we also must keep in mind its extension to an increasing swath of social groups and its dispersal into specific communities and society at large. We recognize the breadth of groups detained, and focus in this chapter on the status of non-citizens.

Geography’s spatial analytics provide a rich variety of insights into detention. In this chapter, we identify and examine three foundational concepts underlying and driving geographical research on detention: **im/mobility, scaled analyses, and borders/bordering.**

Where the 'new mobilities paradigm' (Sheller and Urry 2006) in social science emphasizes various ways that people, objects and ideas are 'on the move' in conjunction with globalization, geographical research on **im/mobility** in detention examines how movement is controlled or curtailed for non-citizens. **Scaled analyses** draw on feminist geography to scrutinize detention at different and overlapping levels and, in doing so, link everyday, lived experiences to abstract state, inter-state, and global political and economic processes. In a related yet distinct vein, scholarship on **borders and bordering** focuses attention on the proliferation and impacts of borders and securitization across myriad sites including the body, community spaces, detention centres, ports of entry, off-shore and out-of-sight locations. As a whole, the processes and practices associated with these concepts exemplify detention as spatial control. In what follows, we review geographical work propelled by these concepts and highlight specific examples of research. We show that this work offers important conceptual and methodological tools for all critical scholars of detention, as well as migration studies more broadly.

## II. IM/MOBILITY

A geographical emphasis on the spatial control of im/mobility fosters new understanding of the intentions, mechanisms and consequences of non-citizen detention, with implicit potential for challenging the growth of detention as an institution in scholarly thinking, policy-making frames and activist-led initiatives. Governments and other actors aim to control human mobility through space by restricting, curtailing or managing the activities and liberties of non-citizen individuals who are supposedly out of place or out of step with a society's laws and norms of membership and belonging. Work in this area is not solely concerned with movement; as Hannam et al. (2006) observe, it involves 'tracking the power and politics of discourses and practices of mobility in creating both movement and stasis' (2006, pp. 3-4).

One area of geographical research propelled by attention to the spatial control of *mobility* analyses transfers within detention systems. In detention, the frequent and often unannounced movement of individuals within and around detention sites is commonplace, and geographers have highlighted the extent to which this practice is used, as well as how disruptive it is for detainees, along with their families and advocates. In the United States (US), for example, detainees are given little or no warning prior to a transfer, and may not be informed of where they are going until they arrive. In her research on Ecuadorian nationals who migrated to the US, Hiemstra (2013) draws on interviews with deportees to create maps of some of these transfer paths through the detention system. These maps clearly illustrate patterns of forced mobility through space, visually representing how detainees may be forced to zigzag and loop through space in circuitous, unpredictable paths that seem to defy practicality and logic. By pairing these maps with additional qualitative analysis, Hiemstra (2013) traces the 'chaotic geography' of detainee transfers through and, when migrants are deported, out of the US detention system. This analysis supports the point that frequent transfers work to maintain migrants on the path to deportation. In his research on detention in England, Gill (2009; 2013; 2016) argues that the use of detainee transfers around the UK detention estate - in addition to the use of alternatives to detention, such as electronic monitoring - are forms of imposed mobility that contrast with normative associations between mobility and freedom/liberty. He also elaborates on the detrimental impact of frequent movement for detainee health and well-being, access to support services, as well as for detention centre staff and those involved in advocacy on behalf of detainees (Gill 2009; 2013).

Geographers have also examined the political and economic dynamics associated with detainee transfers. Mobility in, through and as part of detention's carceral system is rationalized on the basis of bedspace, staffing or, occasionally in cases of medical emergencies, for the welfare of detainees. Interviews with detained and formerly detained migrants show that

mobility is used as a form of punishment (see Gill 2013; Conlon and Gill 2013; Conlon 2011) for unruly behaviour. Mobility is also used for economic gain, as Mitchelson (2013; 2014) details. Geographers attending to mobility and immobility highlight how it produces ambivalence and insecurity, and how movement within and around sites of detention is part of a calculus that commodifies detainee bodies, turning detainees into vehicles for profit (Conlon and Hiemstra 2014).

Scholars researching detention have focused on *immobility* as much as mobility. Research has examined issues such as the politics and practices of waiting and stasis in formal and informal spaces of detention (Mountz 2011a; Schuster 2011; Darling 2014). There, immobility is imposed unpredictably with the stated purpose of waiting for decisions on legal adjudication of asylum claims, appeals on deportation orders and the like (Conlon 2011; Hyndman and Giles 2011). This work contributes to understanding how detention is experienced in day-to-day life and as part of the life course (Conlon 2007, Mountz 2011a). As such, these are analyses of time and temporality as well as space. In addition, this work makes an important intervention in understanding the ways detained individuals cope with and sustain themselves during periods of prolonged stasis and immobility. Drawing on feminist geographers' emphasis on scales of analysis, such as the everyday, which are often overlooked in discussions of political issues, Conlon (2007) and Mountz (2011a), for example, examine acts of resilience and agency that take place in the midst of the turmoil and uncertainty of detention. Migrants and asylum-seekers often experience the acute stress of uncertainty when they inhabit temporal, spatial and psychological limbo associated with interstitial times and places (like islands or asylum-seeker shelters as well as detention facilities).

Understanding detention as the use of space to control mobility also fosters attention to strategic uses of geography in relation to the location of sites of detention. Within migrant destination countries, detention facilities can be characterized by their *dispersal* and *remoteness* (see Bloch and Schuster 2005; Mountz and Loyd 2014). As a result, discussion of the spatial patterns and implications of dispersal and remoteness are common in the geographical literature on detention. Geographers have long studied the rurality of detention and imprisonment on mainland territory (e.g. Bonds 2009), with similar forms of isolation, dispersal, detachment and remoteness at work internally, even when facilities were not located remotely offshore (Mountz 2012; Hiemstra 2013). This research finds that detention not only removes people from social and economic networks and communities, but that it becomes embedded (both productively and counter-productively) in the economies of rural communities (Gilmore 2007; Bonds 2009). For some geographers, dispersal becomes a way to distance migrants from communities where they find support and resources to either find freedom from detention or stay in sovereign territory. Martin (2012) has shown how, to the US Department of Homeland Security, the difficulty of access is a positive trait when selecting detention sites, to limit detainees' access to support networks and resources such as pro bono lawyers. More recently Martin (2015) has argued that the spatial patterns of detention are designed to intensify migrant precarity.

Geography's attention to movement encourages scholars to consider ways in which spaces of detention are used to control stages of human mobility that take place outside of intended destination countries. Geographers write about the growth of detention in transit regions en route to the country non-citizens wish to enter to make claims for asylum or to work. Levy (2015), for example, details how international organizations and states fund and support a developing 'enforcement infrastructure' in Moldova. Levy and Krane (forthcoming) describe the emergence of 'buffer zones turned processing spaces' in Moldova and Ukraine where detention and bordering practices are producing 'holding pens for migrants who are detained, deported, or denied EU entry' in the Black Sea region. Collyer (2010) details some of the ways transit has become increasingly prolonged and fragmented for migrants who cross the Sahara to Morocco

with the hope of reaching Europe, thanks to policies and practices designed to detain and exclude. Brigden and Mainwaring (2016) examine ‘suspended mobility’, or periods of immobility, en route as a characteristic of migrant journeys. They observe how ‘suspended mobility’ is intensifying largely as a consequence of increased securitization and harsh immigration controls. Collyer (2007) and Hyndman and Mountz (2008) analyze emerging strategies of ‘externalization’ that numerous European countries have implemented, for example, to prevent asylum seekers from ever entering their territory and being able to make an asylum claim. Hugo (2001), Mountz (2011b) and Hodge (2015) show how Australia excised parts of its sovereign territory for the purposes of migration, and also contracted third countries such as Indonesia to house people en route to Australia, in order to prevent arriving asylum seekers from gaining rights to which they would be entitled if they were to land on national territory.

The focus in geography on the spatial control of im/mobility contributes to productive synergies between detention studies and incarceration studies. The myriad spaces designed to control people have been conceptualized as carceral geographies (Moran et al. 2013). Carceral geographies identify continuities between marginalized, minority, immigrant and frequently poor communities and systems of incarceration, including prisons and detention, where individuals are shut in or shut off from resources and thwarted from realizing aspirations and potential. In short, scholarship on carceral geographies describes how spaces of control operate in and beyond conventional sites and understandings of confinement. For example, Gilmore (2007) details the multi-scalar political economies of the prison industry. Bonds (2009) and Bobrow-Strain (2015) examine not only prison and detention facilities but also the ways these institutions influence the economy, social life and culture of the communities where they are located. Shabazz (2012) and Massaro (2015) examine the ‘traffic’ from community to incarceration and back again with an emphasis on how disinvestment and dispossession reinforce and reproduce marginality. In their edited collection, Moran, Gill and Conlon (2013) attend to the ways mobility, agency and space articulate within and across prison and detention systems. This work shows how detention is part of a carceral system operating across a range of contexts, and to a variety of ends. Furthermore, emergent work in carceral geographies calls attention to the increasing variation in sites that operate as spaces of control. These scholarly synergies make openings for collaboration between anti-detention and anti-incarceration activism (Moran et al. 2013; Loyd et al. 2012):-

### III. SCALED APPROACHES

Geographers work frequently and in disparate ways with the concept of scale (see Herod 2011). As a key concept in geography, scholarship has traditionally focused on analyses that delineate different frames of analysis such as the city, region, nation or globe. As noted earlier, feminist geographers call attention to the significance of other – often finer – scales such as the body and home as locations for understanding how matters of a political nature are conveyed and take effect (Marston 2000; Hyndman 2004; Mountz and Hyndman 2006; Pratt and Rosner 2006). While many social scientists view their work as ‘cross-scalar’ or ‘multi-scalar,’ functioning at once across these multiple (household, local, state, federal and global) scales, geographers have embarked on efforts to conceptualize levels or scales beyond these hierarchical delineations – through, for example, the social construction and deconstruction of such scales imagined as ‘levels’. Sallie Marston (2000), for example, argues that scale is a social construct and thus is commonly understood in ways that overlook the political and economic participation of women. Building on these ideas, feminist geographers have worked through constructions of scale to shed light on forms of economic and political participation that are not traditionally ‘counted’ in socioeconomic indicators (Nagar et al. 2002; Cope 2004). They note that intimate spaces of the body form one scale where such work and participation can reflect

and refract global relations often discussed in masculinist, economic terms (Smith 2012). Pratt and Rosner (2006) refer to this as ‘the global intimate’, a term that encapsulates a critique and call to expand analyses of political and economic matters beyond traditionally hierarchical and frequently masculinist approaches.

Conceptualizing detention across multiple scales and through distinct approaches to scale means that geographers pursue a broad variety of approaches and interpretations of detention, from policy to legal geographies to political economies. Geographers studying detention, therefore, consider a comprehensive range of scales, from the global to the intimate, *and* draw multiple scales together at once in their analyses. Disparate scalar approaches also require geographers to explore, experiment and utilize a diverse range of methodological approaches to understand and document detention, from mapping to ethnographic approaches that elucidate systems in concrete and tangible ways through research grounded in particular sites yet that also considers a range of scales and spaces. As a way of humanizing and documenting experiences in detention, they have often emphasized research at finer scales, such as the household, family and body.

Geographers may work at these very fine-grained scales to better understand the causes and consequences of detention regimes. In the US, research and activism around detention have highlighted how the ‘per bed’ daily rate that Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) pays in conjunction with political lobbying and private interests promote profit seeking and drive the expansion of detention. Until recently, much less attention has been directed to tracing the political and economic geographies that operate at the micro scales of detention. Feminist geographers working on detention are now examining mundane, everyday, typically overlooked spaces of detention. Conlon and Hiemstra (2014); Conlon and Hiemstra (eds.) (2016); Hiemstra and Conlon (2016) turn attention to the “internal” and “intimate” economies of detention centers, illuminating the complex social, political and economic relationships that develop and sustain life within detention facilities. This focus on the micro *scale* allows identification of the overlapping, extended networks of individuals and entities that rely on immigration detention as a source of income. It also contributes to deeper understanding of the driving forces behind the expansion of detention regimes at the global scale.

Attention to the scale of the body reveals ways in which spaces *within* detention facilities have been fashioned to control targeted populations in particular ways. Detention facilities around the world have been shown to physically and emotionally isolate people, cutting them off from the outside (Hiemstra 2013; Gill 2009; Silverman and Massa 2012; Mountz 2012, 2010). Further geographical and emotional isolation happens within facilities. Drawing on ethnographic research in Romanian facilities, Michalon (2013) calls attention to the ways detention spaces are configured so that they distance detainees from staff and supports within centers, reproducing bureaucratic systems of control and reinforcing preconceived ideas about gender roles. Numerous reports indicate that conditions within many detention facilities range from poor to blatantly abusive. From a geographical perspective, these conditions produce social and spatial impacts marked by prolonged, indeterminate, indefinite periods of waiting and isolation (Conlon 2011; Bosworth 2014; Brigden and Mainwaring 2016). These factors can evoke feelings of disorientation and despair among people detained, with serious mental health consequences (Gill 2016; Tyler 2013; Michalon 2013; Briskman et al. 2010) and with the effect that they feel their deportation is inevitable (Coutin 2010; Martin 2012).

A scaled approach also fosters awareness of the disciplinary effects of spaces of detention: how particular perceptions and behaviors are evoked without overtly mandating them. Scholars have argued that the organization and daily operation of detention facilities influence employees working within the facilities to view detainees in particular (racialized, criminalized) ways (Gill 2009, 2016; Hall 2012; Bosworth 2014; Hiemstra 2014). The disciplinary effects of

detention also extend far beyond the detention centre. Seeing migrants confined in criminal settings conditions the broader public to think that they deserve to be punished or that their eligibility for citizenship is questionable (Conlon and Gill 2013). Detention policies are driven by disciplinary logics of deterrence, in which policymakers assume detention deters future migration by projecting a transnational message of non-welcome via the bodies of detained and deported migrants (Mountz et al 2013; Hiemstra 2012; Martin 2012). Spaces of detention are used to control and curtail behaviour and as part of the effort to normalize passivity as desirable detainee behaviour.

Additionally, geographers pair differentially scaled approaches together in ways that bring new insights to detention studies. For instance, Tyler et al. (2014) critically examine the UK government's decision to award a child detention contract in the UK to Barnardos, a non-profit organization. In doing so they interrogate the ways distinct actors that operate at different scales and with different constituencies and agendas are changing the landscape of detention. This analysis has significant implications for activism because it calls attention to some of the ways non-governmental organizations are being co-opted to perform policing, population control and immigration enforcement.

Another burgeoning area of scaled research involves activism related to detention, and here we find fertile intersections between the work of geographers, activists and scholar-activists invested in not only conceptualizing but also confronting spaces of detention (Loyd et al. 2012; Tyler 2013; Marciniak and Tyler 2014; Conlon and Gill 2015). Similarly, some advocacy organizations such as the International Detention Coalition work at a global scale to change detention policies, as in recent campaigns encouraging national governments to release children from detention and pursue alternatives to detention. Still others operate nationally. One example is the Detention Watch Network, a coalition-based organization comprised of member groups in the US. Yet another vibrant subset of activist and advocacy groups works locally, whether to protest facilities in their community or to visit and find other ways to support those detained inside.

There are many other examples of scaled approaches to detention in geography wherein scholars identify the individual, social, cultural, political and economic ramifications of detention as well as the implications of detention expansion in these realms. Researchers may work at a global scale to map trends in the construction, use and growth of detention (Sampson 2013; Nethery and Silverman 2015; Morris 2016). Coddington (2016) pairs analysis of local intimacies with global processes and histories of colonization in an exploration of detention in Darwin, Australia. Her work offers a model to explore how and why detention takes root in disparate places around the world.

Scholars have also scrutinized the growing trend of detention on islands with attention to colonial legacies. Colonial histories and contemporary detention practices result in quixotic and extreme forms of the global intimate in island detention facilities. In her research on island detention facilities, Mountz (2011b, 2015) traces the ways that mainland state sovereignty infringes on the rights to citizenship and mobility of those residing and detained on remote islands whose jurisdiction has often been forged through colonial histories of outsider occupation and control. Non-citizens who land or are detained on islands with idiosyncratic forms of sub-national islands jurisdiction (Baldacchino and Milne 2006), find their rights to mobility and freedom constricted by territorial status and partial forms of citizenship. In the Island Detention Project, Australia's Christmas Island, Italy's Lampedusa, and US' Guam and Saipan are all territories with neo-colonial status, governed by faraway overseas administrators and exploited for purposes of detention. The project has sought to understand detention in these sites from a range of perspectives that move across geographical sites and scales. Researchers interviewed people who had been held in facilities, as well as people with freedom to reside on and off island.



Geographers have also paid attention to the scaled relationships between spaces of detention and the development of illicit and extra-legal spaces. For example, expanded use of punitive and restrictive immigration enforcement measures, including detention, have been shown to directly contribute to the expansion of human smuggling and trafficking, as migrants still determined to reach a particular destination will pay ever-increasing amounts of money or risk exploitation at the hands of those willing to facilitate their journeys for a fee (Mountz and Hiemstra 2012; Lewis et al. 2014). Others ask critical questions related to the continuities between humanitarian efforts and militarization and securitization in border zones (Williams 2015, 2016) Yet other scholars examine similar questions at the scale of international organizations, arguing that with the growth of humanitarian organizations in migration we see the paradoxical development of a ‘detention improvement complex’ (Morris 2016). This refers to the expanding network of agencies involved and benefiting from detention and migration more broadly. Morris argues that in several ways this network is as problematic as the immigration industrial complex (Golash-Boza 2009).

Overall, geographers’ analyses of the scaled influences on and impacts of detention present substantial insights that are relevant to understanding reasons for the expansion of detention as well as activism on detention-related issues. For example, by paying close attention to fine-grained details at the scale of the body such as behavior, comportment and language used in immigration court hearings, Gill et al. (2015) have been able to identify inconsistencies in the UK’s immigration adjudication process. These and other findings have informed legal hearings as well as being used as evidence presented to the UK’s Parliamentary Inquiry into the use of immigration detention in 2014 (APPGs on Refugees and Migration 2014). By bringing the body and lived realities of detention and closely related experiences into sharp focus this work has informed campaigns related to rights and resources within centres as well as the use of detention more generally. In addition, multi-scalar analyses often serve to alert us to the broad and expanding array of agents who have a stake in or benefit from detention. Research findings in this area can contribute to greater scrutiny as well as efforts to hold all those involved in the expansion of detention to account. Furthermore, by highlighting ways in which detention is laced and linked in space and time to colonial history as well as contemporary examples of abuses of power, scholarship in this area can inform social movements that forge alliances across distinct interest groups pursue social justice and an end to exploitation broadly.

#### **IV. BORDERS/ BORDERING**

Geographical research on bordering and the proliferation of borders addresses matters including territory, sovereignty and geopolitical relations. Border scholarship has been especially generative and germane to detention studies. Mountz observes that, today, borders are ‘more diffuse and proliferating more rapidly than at any time’ (in Johnson et al., 2011b, p. 65). As a reflection of this, scholarship in border studies is expansive, as Jones et al. (2011) note. There are particular overlaps with detention studies in work on the spatiality of borders, which examines where and how bordering practices occur (Nevins 2010; Coleman 2007; Amoore 2006). First, as securitization intensifies, we see the expansion of data-driven information measures through which entry, exit and apprehension at borders is controlled. The border is expressed and articulated virtually and is experienced differently depending on migration status (Sparke 2006). At another level, shifting politics, policies and practices of immigration enforcement mean that borders are moving in opposite directions simultaneously, meaning that processes associated with national inclusion versus exclusion are increasingly untethered from territorial boundaries (Mountz et al. 2013). Research in geography serves to document how these

shifts operate in practice and how they impact social relations and communities alike. For example, Coleman (2007), Varsanyi (2008) and Coleman and Kocher (2011) have examined issues such as the devolution of immigration policing to everyday, mundane, interior spaces of nation-states, while Mountz (2011b, 2012) interrogates the extension of sovereign power to off-shore, extra-territorial sites used to deter, detect and detain migrants. With this scholarship, we see that how and where migrants experience borders has changed dramatically in recent years, and that these experiences are increasingly linked to detention practices. For advocacy and activists, this work is relevant to pinpointing new sites where support and action are needed.

Regardless of their location (whether close to or distant from land borders), detention centers are also sites where the enforcement of national borders takes place, where non-citizens are held on their way in or out of sovereign territory, and where they can be held because of their status as non-citizens. Geographer Paolo Cuttitta (2014), for example, locates the island of Lampedusa as an island site where the Italian government performs what he calls ‘the border play.’ There, border enforcement at sea and detention on the island perform border politics before national and international audiences.

Border enforcement, which also almost invariably entails detention practices, is, thus, linked to what officials claim as the sovereign right of nation-states to regulate who enters their territories. Indeed, as previously noted, intensification and externalization of detention can be seen along and beyond the boundaries demarcating sovereign territory and increasingly, in recent years, in the transit regions that migrants cross en route to sovereign territories they may be seeking to enter to work or make claims for asylum. In addition to sites mentioned earlier, scholars have documented this growth in detention along borders and in transit regions such as the southern tier of the EU with destinations of western and northern European countries (Mainwaring 2012), and the Indian Ocean region en route to Australia (Hugo 2001). Bordering, thus, encapsulates national imperatives and politics as well as geopolitical efforts to control and contain in ‘other’ territories. These efforts extend to individual bodies as well as social groups, defining who belongs or who may be eligible to make a claim to membership within a sovereign territory as well as demarcating who is likely to be excluded. The regulation of who enters their territories, alongside the monopoly to assign identities places states as primary border authorities (Kearney 1991). State actors exercise these powers along borders and through bordering practices, which are increasingly dispersed (Coleman 2007). The carceral geographies introduced previously are thus always happening across multiple sites and scales (Bernardie-Tahir and Schmoll 2014). Collectively, this scholarship illustrates a continuum of practices through which detention is used to control space.

Additionally, scholars often locate detention facilities as sites where bordering practices unfold (Mountz et al. 2013); put another way, detention centres are heavily laden with boundaries and borders (Hall 2012). For example, in 1999, the Canadian government intercepted four boats carrying almost 600 smuggled Chinese migrants attempting to enter Canada. These migrants were immediately detained on a Canadian naval base, which was quickly designated a “port of entry” into Canada, despite its significant distance from the country’s territorial borders. Mountz (2010) shows how the Canadian government devised a ‘long tunnel’ between the physical border and actual arrival on Canadian soil, essentially shifting its borders through the manipulation of law and legal designation of microgeographies. Mountz describes these as ‘detached geographies of detention’ that work to limit refugee claimants’ receipt of support for their cases, with highly detrimental impacts on case outcomes.

Boundaries not only surround detention centres, but also proliferate within them, as instances of solitary confinement and various divisions among different categories of detainees separate people within shared institutional spaces. Others examine how borders within detention facilities manifest spatial control. Indeed, Hall (2012) understands the detention centre as a border zone. Her work combines the use of ethnographic methods (mentioned previously), attention to everyday life within detention centres and the day-to-day production and

reproduction of social, cultural and political-territorial borders. Hall focuses on the daily routines enacted by detention officers employed in a single detention facility in the UK and argues that through these routines detention enacts security with processes that are reproduced and extend all the way to and beyond nation-state borders.

Finally, spaces of detention have been interpreted as extending beyond the actual immigration detention facility. Coutin (2010) argues that increasingly punitive and restrictive immigration policies morph territorial borders and beyond into zones of confinement for undocumented immigrants as well as for forcibly returned immigrants. In concrete terms, this means the threat of detention forces non-citizens to exist with fear and in hiding; the process of detention strips them of their identity when, for example, green cards are destroyed upon apprehension, as occurs in somewhat ritualistic fashion; and deportation following detention effectively extends US sovereign influence across borders and into non-US territories. William Walters (2008, 2016) observes the effects of spaces outside designated detention facilities that discipline through spatial control, such as how stowaways are treated on ships and deportees on deportation flights. Bruzzone (2016) elaborates the complex ways that US detention is materialized, lived and externalized through enforcement across the US-Mexico border. In effect, attention to these ever-expanding spaces of control shows the growth of confinement beyond detention and the exposure of those who are detained to the ‘care-less-ness’ of so-called protection and adjudication systems along transnational trajectories.

There are a number of important conclusions to draw from geographical analyses of borders. First, this work complicates understandings of where the border and bordering practices begin and end. Related to this, scholarship in this area makes it clear that detention and bordering are not separate issues; instead, they are inextricably interconnected. With this, advocacy and activism on these issues is well-served by recognizing these links. Perhaps more pessimistically, geographical research on borders and bordering highlights how states have become increasingly distant actors in detention and related mechanisms of control. Through processes such as devolution, ‘long tunnels’ and extra-territorial enforcement states extend their influence yet diminish their presence. As a result, holding states accountable for their actions becomes increasingly difficult and presents practical and political challenges for detention advocacy and activism.

## V. CONCLUSION

To summarize, detention hinges upon *the use of space as a means of control*. From this perspective, geographers have made several key contributions to the broader interdisciplinary literature on detention. Here, we have discussed recent empirical research from sites where detention practices are entrenched and wide ranging in their impact. We have also identified emerging zones and spaces where a continuum of policies and practices linked to detention are being rolled out with increasing speed. We focused on three concepts in geography—im/mobility, scaled approaches, and borders/bordering – in order to highlight their thematic prominence and overlap in geographical research on detention.

Detention affects a wide-ranging and ever-widening swath of the population. Research in geography spatializes detention while also expanding understandings of what and how spaces of detention are constituted. Moreover, this chapter has also shown that advocacy and activism must contend with and recognize the ways that detention is linked to other insidious processes aimed at the control, exclusion and potential excision of human beings. Because of this, we again re-iterate the view that detention is and can be used for a wide range of contexts and social groups. As a consequence, we argue that an expansive approach to activism is required, one that

connects the sites, scales, experiences and social groups to the challenges of the use of detention across these spheres.

The research we have discussed in this chapter highlights how geographic approaches can be used to foster new understandings of detention as well as offer new tools for confronting and disrupting detention regimes. The concepts and empirical examples presented here shed light on detention as a complex system of control. As detailed in this chapter, it is a spatialized system that: reproduces historical practices of exploitation, such as colonialism; overlaps with other supposedly discrete institutions, such as prisons, as well as agents that exercise power in increasingly privatized, discretionary, or extraordinary ways; intersects state sanctioned practices of population classification and sorting at borders and in local communities, and exerts influence and effects at multiple scales from the intimate to the transnational. In short, our analysis elucidates detention's breadth, depth and expansion in and through space. From this, we understand the broader significance of geographical perspectives on detention as attunement to complexity, which can inform correspondingly complex and linked up approaches to advocacy and activism. For instance, a scaled approach to detention, and in particular the fine-grained analyses highlighted here, opens up new sites and new loci for action and confrontation in relation to the supply chains that profit from detention expansion. Similarly, geographical attention to the ways border enforcement - across a range of scales and sites - connects to detention provides knowledge that extends opportunities for advocacy and activism, and links groups working in distinct situations and disparate locations. Finally, highlighting the ways im/mobility conjoins detention as well as other carceral systems invites scholarship and advocacy across these systems. Approaching detention as the use of space as a means of control thus provides ways to imagine and realize expansive social movements mobilized along a continuum of discrete yet inter-related spaces and situations, and unified in contesting systems aimed at the control, exclusion and potential excision of non-citizens *and* citizens alike.

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