

[Call for Proposals - Special Issue of Fast Capitalism on NAFTA and Brexit](#)

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Call for Papers

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CALL FOR PROPOSALS:

[NAFTA and Brexit: Reconsidering the Global Forces of Populism and Free Trade](#)

Fast Capitalism is seeking critical essays for possible inclusion in a special issue on NAFTA and Brexit. The goal is to gather both scholarly essays and political commentaries in time to present careful critical studies of the links between neoliberal trade practices negotiated by nation-states, large corporations, international organizations and the populist opposition to such global initiatives in local, regional, and national arenas, while the respective governments involved in these activities debate new policy initiatives.

In January 1994, the United States, Mexico, and Canada entered into the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA). Embodying neoliberal values in a free trade pact for North America, NAFTA provided the freer flow of capital, goods, and wealthy people, while restricting the flow and opportunities of labor. Industrial jobs drained from the USA into Mexico where labor restrictions kept wages low, and a lack of environmental laws permitted pollution. Fast forward 24 years, and the unmitigated disaster that NAFTA brought to many communities has stirred enough populist pushback that President Trump and his administration have pushed for a makeover to “make America great again.”

At this remarkable confluence of angry populist resistance with the bravado of life-long businessperson, Trump declared that he would “rip-up the deal” in 2015 if elected. This was a promise many on the left hoped he would keep, believing that new opportunities could be claimed for deindustrialized towns and underemployed workers. Of course, his opposition to the deal from the 1990s was not based upon a systematic critique. Instead, his position on free trade played upon real and

imagined losses felt by certain interest groups, economic regions, and electoral blocs that have sought to have their concerns heard for years. In many ways, Trump has used global trading practices as one of his familiar rebranding exercises by taking what he was “unfair” to the US, making a series of mid-range recalibrations in NAFTA practices, and then appropriating the rhetoric of “fair trade” as a radical transformation of North American trade processes. Reframing some minor changes to the agreement as the United States-Mexico-Canada-Agreement (USMCA), Trump presents himself as the defender of American businesses, labor groups, and national sovereignty. Yet, critics ask if these political ploys only lead to “putting lipstick on a pig.”

During the same times in which Donald Trump has tried to rebrand free trade in America, nationalist conservative interests in Great Britain have pushed to find a path to separate the United Kingdom from the European Union (EU). As the first, and largest free trade agreement developing out of the post-WW 2 reconstruction of the war-torn European continent, the European Economic Community gradually evolved into the supranational governance structures of the European Union to fulfill the postwar dream of a liberal world order where capital, goods, and people could move freely throughout Europe (eventually under a single currency) as well as ensure a long-lasting “democratic peace” through trade between liberal capitalist democracies. Great Britain always kept the EU at arm’s length by refusing to accept the Euro as its currency as well as refusing to have Brussels dictate its directives to London. In 2016, larger populist currents in Great Britain, not unlike those that lead to the election of Trump in the US, approved a national referendum to negotiate a “British Exit” (i.e. Brexit) from the EU. Now the British Government and Conservative Party are struggling at home and on the Continent with how to remake their place in Europe, while leaving the EU. The finalization of both these historic agreements is still in process, but those negotiations also are worthy of comment.

We seek papers to address the history, impact, and current debates about both the European Union/Brexit and NAFTA/USMCA, and are interested in reviewing submissions in a number of forms including: scholarly research essays, commentaries, polemics, policy proposals, biographies, etc.

Proposals should be 200-400 words. Describe your argument and the format of your contribution. Please send proposals to David Arditì (darditi@uta.edu) no later than December 1. Full essays of accepted proposals will be due by March 1, 2019. Please let us know if you have any questions.

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http://www.uta.edu/theory/docs/NAFTA-Brexit_FastCapitalism_Special-Issue-CFP.pdf