

PEWS 2018 Annual Conference: Call for papers

The Theme of the 42nd Annual Conference will be “Business Cycles in the Modern World System: Past, Present and Future.” The conference will be held at Fairfield University, in Fairfield, CT on April 26-28 2018. Paper proposals (around 500 words) should be sent to pews2018@gmail.com by October 30, 2017.

We invite papers on the following sub themes:

- 1) business cycles and social movements
- 2) business cycles and political trends
- 3) business cycles and commodity chains
- 4) business cycles and migration
- 5) business cycles and the web of life

From the sixteenth century until the present day the capitalist world economy has been characterized by different economic cycles or conjunctures of various duration and intensity. Economic cycles impacting the core, the periphery and the semi-periphery have regularly played out across a multitude of commodity chains, impacting nation states, corporations, and households. Since the profound social, economic and political consequences of the Great Recession in 2008-2009 are still unfolding, the 42nd conference of the PEWS section of the American Sociological Association seeks to examine the role and significance of business cycles in the modern world-system by examining the following themes:

1) business cycles and social movements: these have influenced each other over long periods of time and continue to do so. How have labor movements, anti-systemic movements and other social movements emerged and operated in times of changing business cycles in the modern world system? To what degree does the spatial location, or gendered and racialized dimension of social movements in the world economy impact this relationship? What differences can exist between past and present economic cycles and various forms of social movement activity?

2) business cycles and political trends: these have influenced each other over long periods of time as well. To what degree do changing economic upturns or downturns interact with the emergence and success of various far left, far right, protectionist or other political constellations in different parts of the world economy? How is public policy impacted by changing economic cycles? Is the political and economic hegemony of the US in the modern world system fading and if so, what will replace it by the end of this century? Has excessive financialization of the world economy (the increased size of the FIRE sector) contributed to a political backlash and if so, what are the short and long term implications?

3) business cycles and commodity chains: The interaction between economic conjunctures and commodity chains has been studied for several decades by world system scholars. How have commodity chains operated throughout the existence of the capitalist world economy and been

impacted due to the business cycle? How do transnational companies adopt and adjust to changing business cycles as well as different political pressures? To what extent can we observe a declining rate of profit in specific sectors? Has there been a significant increase in legal monopolies or oligopolies in various countries? In which way are households adjusting to a changing economic situation?

4) business cycles and migration: International as well as domestic and regional migration have usually been impacted by a changing economic context. We invite several case studies as well as comparative research on this topic that focuses on the past, present and future state of affairs.

5) business cycles in the web of life: Studies of capital accumulation have often bracketed environmental change. We invite analyses of how capitalist cycles – long, short, and middle-run – shape regional and global environments, and how such transformations constitutive of economic boom and bust. To what extent has commodification and enclosure in recent business cycles distinguished contemporary capitalism, and what are implications of climate change and other vectors of planetary crisis for “business as usual” in the near- and middle-term?

Empirical as well as theoretical contributions are welcome. The conference organizers will attempt to provide an equal balance between both.

Fairfield University is located 50 miles north of New York City. For information on how to get there cf. [Fairfield University Website](#)