

PEWS NEWS

Political Economy of the World-System

American Sociological Association

A PEWS REVIEW:

GLOBALIZATION, SOCIAL MOVEMENTS, AND PEACEBUILDING

The omnipresent focus of political economy on inequality has sometimes overlooked the importance of conflict and peacebuilding in the formation and maintenance of the world system. In *Globalization, Social Movements, and Peacebuilding*, (Jackie Smith and Ernesto Verdeja, eds.) the authors of each chapter delve into the ways in which the modern world system's functions exacerbate conflict and make the desire for world peace more difficult to achieve. In a variety of geographic contexts, the authors of each chapter focus on different aspects of the pursuit of peace. Paramount to all explanations are ways in which neoliberal reforms affect the functioning of democracy, which is held by the authors as the ultimate source of the potential for peace.

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A LETTER FROM THE PAST CHAIR

My year as PEWS Chair ended August 10 and I was looking forward to fading into the sunset of PEWS retirement, but PEWSNews Editor Nicole Shortt asked me to contribute one last letter to PEWSNews. So here I am. I promise you'll get a break from me as soon as 2013 is finally over! Until then, here I am with one final letter.

The view from Australia is grim. A new kind of social disease has spread from recession in the United States to austerity in Europe to manufactured crisis in Australia.

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GLOBALIZATION, SOCIAL MOVEMENTS, AND PEACEBUILDING

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Part one focuses on the discourses surrounding conflict and how the dominant discourses of many peacebuilding groups, both NGO and political parties, are paradoxically justifying the system of conflict they seek to end. In chapter one, Neil Cooper documents the efforts of the International Campaign to Ban Landmines lead to a bifurcation in international attitudes toward the weapons trade; landmines and cluster munitions are “immoral”, while small arms, which kill many more people annually, are morally permissible and not subject to the same oversight, either by states or peace NGOs. The recent awarding of the Nobel Peace Prize to the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons is an interesting new case of this phenomenon that deserves readers’ consideration. The last chapter of this section by Dia Da Costa details the use of street theater by the political Left of India to counter Hindu nationalism. The failure of this street theater group to create a public discourse in India on the use of religion for ethical thinking is indicative of the failure of the Indian Left to challenge the growing nationalist movement. The need for discursive public debate in building democracy and the effect on peace and inclusion this will bring is a theme continuing throughout this book. Perhaps most importantly, the second chapter of the first section of the book details the use of market-driven ideology by aid organizations and donor governments. The aid community’s dependency on state and corporate funding keeps it beholden to the interests of powerful states and transnational corporations, in spite of the empirical reality that market-based solutions to the social problems which create conflict have a poor track record of solving conflict. The failure of these market-based reforms are rooted in their failure to close the inequality gaps which often lead to conflict, especially ethnic and religious conflict. As with many of the criticisms of the dominant paradigms of peacekeeping and development found in this book, this critical approach calls into question the ability of market-driven reform to bring about a just peace. **Continued on pg. 4**

A LETTER FROM THE PAST CHAIR

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Australia, with a growing economy, an unemployment rate of 5.6% and falling, and government debt of around 20% of GDP just elected a conservative government on the premise that economic mismanagement was spiraling out of control.

The new government has convinced the electorate that the biggest problems facing Australia today are: (1) too much environmental regulation, (2) too little government support for coal barons, and (3) the arrival by sea of around 25,000 refugees. In order to solve these problems the government must eliminate taxes and regulations on corporations and dismantle public health insurance and public education. This in the world’s most successful advanced economy.

If this is what happens in Australia -- a highly developed democracy with a well-funded public broadcaster and compulsory voting for all citizens -- what hope is there for the rest of the world?

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A LETTER FROM THE PAST CHAIR

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There has been much debate lately in PEWS circles and at PEWS conferences about the current crisis of capitalism ... and what will come next. Capitalism is clearly in crisis. Will the outcome be a new Polanyian double-movement? Is a democratic socialist world order just around the corner? Or is the near future perhaps a little less bright?

The organized forces that hold power to account are everywhere in retreat, nowhere more so than in the imperial centers of the English-speaking world. Unions are now next to irrelevant, so irrelevant that the most creative among them have stopped even trying to organize members. This year fast food workers have demonstrated all around America -- before and after working their schedule minimum-wage shifts. They can't afford to go on strike.

Journalism as a profession is all but dead.

We are next in the firing line. Those of you who teach at US state universities know this only too well. Critical social scientists in the UK know it even better.

Senior PEWS members with tenure and six-figure salaries (to be frank, members like me) are for the most part secure in their positions. We can ride out the apocalypse with little more than a slight nod to the forces of destruction wreaking havoc all around us. Say the right thing here, operate under the radar there, get a grant or two, and keep the deans happy. Pay the mortgage on time. If not thrive, then at least survive in the iron cage.

Junior members and (especially) student members have much more to worry about. The recession was an excuse to stop hiring new social scientists. As the recession passes, will universities return to business as usual? Or are we already experiencing the new business as usual, the new normal? I see no reason to expect tomorrow's corporate-model, online-focused, rankings-chasing universities to hire large numbers of sociologists who study the bases of power in the contemporary world-system.

Yet we are the last line of civilizational defense against the new state-corporate barbarism.

The great Pitirim Sorokin thought that civilizations moved in epochal cycles from ideational through idealistic to sensate cultural foundations. He identified the post-war cult of science in America and the Soviet Union as the culmination of centuries of sensate culture that had begun around the time of the birth of the modern world-system in the late 1400s. A spiritualist and an optimist, he looked forward to the dawn of a new ideational Age of Faith at the close of the twentieth century.

Sorokin died in 1968, in midst of the death throes of the old sensate age. He just missed the birth of the new Neoliberal Age of faith-based economics. Forty-five years into that age, governments are de-funding universities, rich individuals and corporations lavishly fund "think tanks" that produce and promote "knowledge" to support their capture of the public discourse, and even the most progressive elements of the English-language press -- the New York Times, the Guardian, MSNBC, the Daily Show? -- take the legitimacy of transnational corporate capitalism for granted.

Science -- real social science, anti-scientists call it what you will -- has been relegated to the role of critique, and even that critique is increasingly relegated to peripheralized publication venues. We implicitly accept this when we define our own appropriate role as that of "critique." As Weber taught us, an important characteristic of legitimate rule is that the ruled accept the right of the rulers to rule them. So long as we define ourselves as critics of power, we will never exercise power. **Continued on pg. 5**

GLOBALIZATION, SOCIAL MOVEMENTS, AND PEACEBUILDING

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Part two shifts attention to global models of conflict and peacebuilding. Moghadam's chapter on security and gender justice sheds light on the need to protect women in conflict situations in order for stable peace to be established. The chapter's focus on women's rights and security in Iraq and Afghanistan is particularly timely, given the withdrawal of US troops from those areas. Isaac Kamola writes on the consequences of globalization for Somalia, using the growth of piracy in the Gulf of Aden to treat state failure not as a political consequence of clan-based fighting in Somalia, but an effect of the transformation of Somalia by foreign capital from the colonial period to the present. Lastly in this section, Bolten's case study of the disconnection of the aid community from understandings of the process of democracy in post-conflict Sierra Leone highlights the difficulty fledgling democracies face when balancing the need for development with institutional practices that lead to conflict. Bolten's section is can be read as a pointed criticism of the overwhelming faith placed in democracy as a method of preventing conflict and healing post-conflict tension. While this criticism can easily be pointed at the hegemonic free market, and US democracy-styled solutions of the aid community, it is important to remember that these democracies remain enmeshed in an unequal world system, and that democracy, no matter its composition, is not a one-size-fits-all solution to social problems, often due to the divisions within civil society.

Part three reflects on the opportunities and challenges of peacebuilding in a globalized world. Of paramount importance for Bohman and Smith et al. is the need for dialogue between or among groups in conflict. These authors reiterate the same faith of many scholars in the potential of the World Social Forum as a space for democratic deliberation and a challenge to the preeminence of market-based solutions in peace negotiations. While the faith of political economy scholars to realize a more just global system through greater democracy can seem trite, especially through the WSF, these sections help to reframe the debate on creating just peace from the easy solution of suggesting an end to neoliberalism towards the establishment of institutions guaranteeing a voice for disadvantaged groups. World systems scholars accustomed to viewing social movements as anti-systemic may be surprised by the tone of these two chapters. An emphasis on dialogue, deliberation, and a search for democratic legitimacy may sound unfamiliar. These emphases may tend to downplay what is often necessary (though ideally non-violent, civil disobedience-based) struggle to overcome inequalities and attain political concessions for many oppressed groups. At any rate, these last chapters posit a way forward against the bulwark of neoliberalism and the structural barriers it creates to establishing peace.

Book: *Globalization, Social Movements, and Peacebuilding*. 2013. Jackie Smith and Ernesto Verdeja, eds. Syracuse University Press

**Review by: John McCollum
PhD student in the Department of Sociology
University of California-Irvine**

A LETTER FROM THE PAST CHAIR

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Neoliberal economists, their sponsors, and their followers do not conceive of themselves as critical social scientists. They are in command: of the government, of the corporations, and increasingly of civil society. They suffer embarrassments but they do not suffer losses. Their Great Recession has only strengthened their grip. Even in Australia, which dodged the Great Recession through old-fashioned Keynesian demand management under a largely technocratic Labor government, the neoliberals have taken power, resoundingly.

The 1957 novel / 1959 film "On the Beach" is set against the aftermath of a global nuclear war. Only Australia remains habitable, and the nuclear cloud is slowly spreading into the southern hemisphere. A stray radio signal gives some hope that there have been survivors in the north, and an expedition sets out to track down the source. Finding that the signal is false, Australians decide to commit suicide rather than await a slow but certain death from the radioactive fallout.

The founding generation of world-systems scholars was imbued with the spirit of the 1960s. Many of them were in the thick of it, at Columbia University, at Berkeley, at the Port Huron Convention, in Paris, in Latin America, and in Africa. They fought the good fight, and for a time it must have seemed as if they had won.

Our generation -- our generations -- must take up the fight anew. The only alternative is to give up: to commit academic mass suicide before the poisonous cloud imposes a slow, painful death on us all. For those (quite reasonable and realistic) people who prefer the pill, I suggest secure non-academic careers in market research rather than marginal academic careers in survey data analysis. For those with more quixotic personalities, Europe might be the best base from which to mount a counter-offensive.

I am not joking, but I am finished. I pledge to use my secure position and what resources I can muster to support those of you who want to work for a more a more humane, more human, more social social science in the service of a better society. We will disagree on the science; we will even disagree on whether or not to call it "science"; but we will do our best. I look forward to working with you. You know how to find me.

**Salvatore Babones
University of Sydney
2013 PEWS Chair**

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Call for Papers:

Social Movements and World-System Transformation: Prospects and Challenges

38th Conference of the Political Economy of the World-System (PEWS)

University of Pittsburgh

April 10-12, 2014

As the world faces unprecedented challenges caused by financial and ecological crises, social movements have been advancing increasingly developed proposals for alternatives to the programs and policies offered by elites. Nevertheless, they remain plagued by persistent challenges to building global solidarity. This conference looks at these emerging alternatives to the capitalist world-system and considers their strengths and limitations in addition to uncovering the factors affecting their prospects for realization. What knowledge can be gained from looking at the history of struggle against globalized capitalism and its effects? How do existing practices in social movements and in the wider society advance or obstruct efforts to envision and make possible alternative world-systems? This conference will be an international gathering of scholars from a diverse range of disciplines, together with political organizers with substantial experience in contemporary global activism to share ideas and generate new knowledge that can inform contemporary social movements and scholarship and public policy.

An important innovation in this conference is that we recognize that world-systemic transformation requires new practices that consciously resist reproducing the boundaries, hierarchies, and exclusions of the existing order. Thus, this conference will model relationships and practices that might better advance knowledge and learning about the world-system and its transformation by including both scholars and social movement organizers in the workshop and by working to maximize the interdisciplinary content and international participation of the program.

Keynote Speakers:

Boaventura de Sousa Santos,

<<http://www.boaventuradesousasantos.pt/pages/en/homepage.php>> Professor of Sociology at the School of Economics, University of Coimbra (Portugal), Distinguished Legal Scholar at the University of Wisconsin-Madison Law School and Global Legal Scholar at the University of Warwick.

Sylvia Walby, <<http://www.lancs.ac.uk/sociology/profiles/sylvia-walby>> Professor of Sociology at Lancaster University, UNESCO Chair in Gender Research Group. Professor Walby's talk will address the theme "Feminism as Counter-Hegemonic"

Immanuel Wallerstein, <<http://www.iwallerstein.com/>> Senior Research Scholar, Yale University, Distinguished Professor of Sociology, Binghamton University (SUNY), [Emeritus], Former Directeur d'études associé, Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales (Paris)

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

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The conference calls for papers under the general theme, Social Movements and World-System Transformation: Prospects and Challenges and should fall within one the following sub-themes: Roles of States and Movements in World-Systemic Transformation, Knowledge and Paradigms in Contestation, The Role of Peripheries in Contesting World-Systemic Hierarchies, or Collective Identities and Democratic Transformation. For details see <http://www.sociology.pitt.edu/PEWSConference.htm>

Please submit proposals electronically to Jackie Smith at jwsr@pitt.edu <<mailto:jwsr@pitt.edu>>. (Please use the subject line PEWS Conference). Submissions should include a paper title and abstract (no more than one page) and full contact information for all authors by January 21, 2014. Authors of accepted papers will be asked to provide drafts of their papers by March 30, 2014 and papers will be considered for a planned edited volume. Meals and lodging for authors of accepted papers will be provided during the conference. Note to non-U.S. scholars: We expect to have a limited number of scholarships to partially defray travel costs for international authors whose papers have been selected for the program and who lack other sources of travel assistance. Please indicate if you wish to be considered for an international travel stipend.

Call for Papers-Journal of World-Systems Research

The Journal of World-Systems Research <<http://www.jwsr.org/>> invites submissions of original articles, datasets, and special issue proposals relevant to the study of world-systems and global political economy. Founded in 1994, JWSR is the official journal of the American Sociological Association http://www.asanet.org/journals/journals_and_publications.cfm Section on Political Economy of the World-System <http://www.asanet.org/sectionpews/index.html>. It is an online, open source (free) journal that seeks to make research available to readers around the world regardless of their access to university libraries and other resources.

We especially want to include works that proceed from several different theoretical stances and disciplines, including, but are not limited to, political science, history, sociology, archaeology, cultural anthropology, economics and geography. We also encourage the application of comparative, quantitative and network-analytic methods to world-systems research, though publish many pieces that do not use these methods. Any empirical study deemed relevant to world-systems analysis may be published even if it uses a very different conceptual framework. In addition, we consider discussions of future trajectories and options for the modern world-system and considerations of what can be done to create a more humane, peaceful and just world society.

To submit your work, please email a manuscript of 10,000 words or less to jwsr@pitt.edu <<mailto:jwsr@pitt.edu>>. See the journal's website at <http://www.jwsr.org> to view past issues, a list of Editorial Board members, and further submission guidelines. The Editorial team includes Editor, Jackie Smith (University of Pittsburgh), Production Editor, Scott Byrd (Murray State University), Book Review Editor, Jenn Bair (University of Colorado-Boulder), and Managing Editor Ray Kanemoto (University of Pittsburgh).

Call for PEWS Syllabi

We are excited to begin a syllabi and generals reading list sharing initiative. Please email Amy Quark (aaquark@wm.edu <<mailto:aaquark@wm.edu>>) with any PEWS-related syllabi or generals reading lists you have. After collection, we will add a section on the PEWS website so everyone can access them.

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

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Call for PEWS Initiatives Volunteers

If anyone is interested in volunteering with PEWS, please let us know. In addition to any ideas you may have, we have some exciting activities that you could help with, including:

(1) **A graduate mentoring program** (contact Victoria Reyes, vreyes@princeton.edu)

(2) **Journal of World-Systems Research (JWSR)** (contact jwsr@pitt.edu)

We are particularly looking for help with outreach/publicity and our effort to advance creative commons licensing.

(3) **Contributions to PEWS News** (contact Nicole Shortt, nshortt@uci.edu)

Including book reviews, essays, interviews, or announcements

(4) **Membership Drive** (contact Matthew Sanderson, mattr@ksu.edu)

Encouraging members to renew, contacting lapsed members, recruiting new members

BOOKS

David Baranov. 2013. *Dialectics of Inquiry Across the Historical Social Sciences*, Routledge Press. (Routledge Studies in Social and Political Thought)

The *Dialectics of Inquiry Across the Historical Social Sciences* upends conventional global-historical analysis, demonstrating, first, that local events cannot be derived - logically or historically - from large-scale, global-historical structures and processes and, second, that it is these structures and processes that, in fact, emerge from our analysis of local events. This is made evident via an analysis of three disparate events: the New York City Draft Riots, AIDS in Mozambique, and a 2007 flood in central Uruguay. In each case, *The Dialectics of Inquiry* chronicles how expressions of human agency at the level of those caught up in each event give form and substance to various abstract global-historical concepts - such as slavery in the Americas, global capitalist production, and colonial/postcolonial Africa. Underlying this repositioning of the local and the ephemeral is an immanent, phenomenological analysis that illustrates how mere transient events are the progenitors of otherwise abstract, global-historical concepts. Traversing the intersections of human agency and structural determinism, Baranov deftly retains the nuance and serendipity of everyday life, while deploying this nuance and serendipity to further embellish our understanding of those enduring global-historical structures and processes that shape large-scale, long-term, historical accounts of social and cultural change across the historical social sciences.

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BOOKS

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Amy Quark. 2013. Global Rivalries: Standards Wars and the Transnational Cotton Trade. University of Chicago Press.

Global Rivalries explores rule-making in an era of increasing geopolitical uncertainty. With its accession to the WTO and the liberalization of the apparel/textile trade, the Chinese state and Chinese firms have emerged as powerful actors challenging the dominance of the U.S. state and Western merchants in the transnational cotton trade. Quark considers the efforts of the Chinese state to recast the institutions governing the cotton trade to work in its interests, the efforts of the US state and Western merchants to reconstitute their institutional power, and the implications for more marginalized actors such as cotton-producing countries in West Africa.

<http://press.uchicago.edu/ucp/books/book/chicago/G/bo15997106.html>

Kathleen C. Schwartzman, 2013. The Chicken Trail: Following Workers, Migrants and Corporations across the America. Cornell University Press.

This study highlights the contemporary American dilemma: economic transformations have left the U.S. labor market with jobs that “nobody wants,” jobs that are shipped overseas, and jobs for which American workers are unqualified. It highlights the Global Dilemma: in developing nations, as rural survival is undermined by international trade, people attempt to alleviate their poverty by packing their suitcases and abandoning their country. The Chicken Trail demonstrates how the externalities of free trade and neoliberalism become the social problems of nations and the tragedies of individuals.

<http://www.cornellpress.cornell.edu/book/?GCOI=80140100183300>

Alvin Y. So. 2013. Class and Class Conflict in Post-Socialist China. Singapore: World Scientific.

The first of its kind in the field of China Studies that offers a comprehensive overview and traces the historical evolutions of different patterns of class conflict (among workers, peasants, capitalists, and the middle class) in post-socialist China. It uses a state-centered approach to study class conflict, i.e., how the communist party-state restructures the patterns of class conflict in Chinese society, while also bringing in a historical dimension by tracing the origins and developments of class conflict in socialist and post-socialist China.

<http://www.worldscibooks.com/economics/8712.html>

ARTICLES

Atasoy, Yıldız. 2013. “Supermarket Expansion in Turkey: Shifting Relations of Food Provisioning”, in the *Journal of Agrarian Change* Vol. 13, no. 4: 547-70.

Dougherty, Michael L. 2013. "The Global Gold Mining Industry: Materiality, Rent-seeking, Junior Firms and Canadian Corporate Citizenship" in *Competition & Change*, Vol. 17, no. 4: 339-354

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ARTICLES

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Dougherty, Michael L., Laura E. Brown and Gary Paul Green. 2013. "The Social Architecture of Local Food Tourism: Challenges and Opportunities for Community Economic Development" in the *Journal of Rural Social Sciences*, Vol. 28, no. 2: 1-27

Hung, Ho-fung. 2013. "China: Savior or Challenger of the Dollar Hegemony?" *Development and Change*. Vol. 44, No. 6:

Hung, Ho-fung. 2013. "Labor Politics and Three Stages of Capitalism in China." *South Atlantic Quarterly*. Vol. 112, no. 1:

Hung, Ho-fung. 2013. "China's Rise Stalled?" *New Left Review*, Series 2, no. 81:

Longo, Stefano B, Brett Clark, & Richard York. 2013 "The Globalization of Ecologically Intensive Aquaculture (1984–2008)" in the *Journal of Environmental Studies and Sciences*. Vol. 3, no.3: 294-305.

Reyes, Victoria. 2013. "The Structure of Globalized Travel: A Relational Country-Pair Analysis" in the *International Journal of Comparative Sociology*, Vol. 54, no. 2:144-170

BOOK CHAPTERS

Hung, Ho-fung and Zhan Shaohua 2013. "City and Industrialization, East and West" Peter Clark et al. eds. *Oxford Handbook on Cities in World History*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

AWARDS

Rose Brewer received the ASA Distinguished Teaching Award in NYC at the 2013 ASA annual meeting. Brewer is a member of the PEWS Council.

Thank you to the contributors that helped to produce this newsletter!

**Look for the Spring Issue of PEWS NEWS in
April 2014**

CHECK US OUT ON THE WEB!

<http://www2.asanet.org/sectionpews/publications.html#pewsnews>

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