A FEW WORDS FROM OUR CHAIR
Paul Almeida

Dear PEWSers,

My vision as Chair involves highlighting new areas of insight from a global political economy perspective such as innovative approaches to explaining the rise of mounting environmental crises and worldwide austerity, as well as race, class, and gender stratification dynamics in the world system (among many other examples). I believe it is the global political economy framework that distinguishes PEWS and provides a wide umbrella allowing scholars to work from multiple perspectives and methods to address compelling questions on the patterns and consequences of globalization (past and present). Working together, I am confident we will continue sustaining and diversifying a vibrant section.

Paul Almeida, UC Merced
Chair of PEWS Section of the ASA
Interview with PEWS Chair Paul Almeida

What do you hope to accomplish as Chair of the PEWS Section?

I would like to continue the trend of diversifying the section by bringing in new topics and members. In the period of accelerated capitalist globalization it is essential to highlight the work of PEWS-type researchers in analyzing and explaining worldwide trends of the past few decades such as precarious labor, international migration, warfare, mounting environmental crises, and austerity. We are holding a joint reception with the Development section at ASA in Seattle as one means to reach out to others with similar interests as the PEWS section. PEWS is also co-sponsoring a mini-conference with the Labor and Labor Movements (LLM) section in Seattle that I hope will showcase the work of PEWS scholars. I think that ASA in Seattle in 2016 will be an opportunity to address inclusive themes that highlight PEWS links to new areas previously understudied from an economic globalization perspective.

It sounds like PEWS is at the forefront of the growing push in the academy for greater cross-disciplinary research and collaboration. How else does PEWS engage with other sections of ASA or with other disciplines beyond Sociology?

In addition to our collaboration and membership overlap with the Development Sociology Section and Labor and Labor Movement Sections, I also think we share much in common with at least half a dozen other ASA sections. Across disciplines, I have colleagues at my home university in the history department that engage with the World Systems literature. I know that several non-sociology disciplines are represented at the annual PEWS conference, especially anthropologists, geographers, and historians. Recently, prominent ecologists working on the evolution of the Anthropocene era have cited world system scholars in their work. In general, because of its multidimensional and longue durée views of globalization, the PEWS perspective offers insights to several fields beyond Sociology. This may be rather unique compared to other ASA sections.

Beyond it’s interdisciplinary scope, what are PEWS’ greatest strengths? Conversely, what are the greatest difficulties that PEWS as a section is facing, and how do you plan to deal with them?

PEWS’ greatest strengths center on the focus of globalization—past and present. It was the first ASA section to observe global processes decades before “globalization” became a popular academic buzzword. PEWS scholars are well equipped with the tools to examine the power dynamics driving the current period of deepening neoliberalism on a global level. I would also like to see the PEWS membership stabilize at over 400 members on an annual basis. I think the challenge is to continually publicize the compelling work deriving from a global political economy perspective and how multiple subareas of sociology are influenced by globalization, including ecological decline, international migration, welfare state retrenchment, and incentives for popular movements to resist unwanted conditions driven by the global economy.
Are there any gaps in PEWS research right now? In what ways could PEWS benefit from cross-pollination with other research frameworks, and in what ways could other frameworks benefit from PEWS influence?

I am not sure about glaring gaps. I believe it is challenging to keep up with global change in the past few decades in terms of research programs. The pace of global technological and economic change—along with its social and environmental consequences—also provides opportunities for novel lines of investigation. Applying sophisticated tools to global problems and crises seems like one promising area of recent PEWS scholarship. One example would be social network analysis (SNA) with many variants such as international trade, corporate linkages in cities across the globe, or transnational ties among nongovernmental organizations. I also find the employment of Geographic Information Systems (GIS) and mapping as another innovative area for PEWS scholars. Forming interdisciplinary teams seems consistent with the founders of the PEWS framework that came from history, economics, and macrosociology. In the 2010s, the possibilities for cross-fertilization can be broadened by collaborations with geographers, computational engineers of “big data,” and even archeologists of societal evolution.

Is there a role for PEWS scholarship within the larger (national or global) society beyond the pursuit of theoretical and empirical knowledge? If so, what is it?

Definitely, a political economy of the World System analysis assists in accomplishing C. Wright Mills’ vision of contextualizing individual and group experiences. For one, PEWS moves sociology away from being North American-centric, while simultaneously placing powerful nations such as the United States in a global and historical perspective. Understanding that global trade and investment networks, punishing austerity policies, and wars for geo-political/economic influence can play a major part in international migration is critical in constructing bridges of solidarity with different groups within and between countries. I think the more PEWS scholars can make their work relevant beyond strictly academic circles—via public talks, blogging, advising less privileged organizations, and translating articles and books into multiple languages—the more we can close the communication gap between academic research and efforts to address vital problems of economic and environmental justice.

What are your research interests right now and how do they relate to larger PEWS frameworks?

One project I am working on examines the role of state-led development strategies in the mid to late twentieth century and their organizational and ideational legacies in the twenty-first century. More specifically, I ask how the vast expansion in organizational infrastructure by the state in the pre-globalization era conditions the opposition to neoliberalism in the current period. After researching this question in Central America, I am now moving to a more global level of analysis.

Interview by Danny Burridge, University of Pittsburgh
Conference Announcements:
Chaos and Governance in the 21st Century: Prospects and Challenges to Peace and Justice in an Age of Uncertainty February 18-19 2016
Florida Atlantic University, Boca Raton, FL USA
Co-Organized by the FAU Peace Studies Program (http://www.fau.edu/peaestudies/) and the Johns Hopkins University’s Arrighi Center for Global Studies (http://krieger.jhu.edu/arrighi/)

At the close of the 20th century Giovanni Arrighi and Beverly Silver published their influential work, Chaos and Governance in the Modern World-System (1999). Arrighi, Silver, and their collaborators employed world historical methodologies to take on crucial scholarly controversies about systemic and structural transformations characterizing global capitalism at the time, including the rise and spread of market fundamentalism, the financialization of capital, and processes of global economic integration and liberalization. Were these world systemic changes a sign of US hegemony or hegemonic decline? Did they signify a fundamental structural shift in the balance of power among states? Has “globalization” irremediably underminded state power? Was the close of the 20th century the autumn of five centuries of Western dominance in the modern world system?

We welcome paper presentation proposals that critically engage with four core areas of inquiry laid out in Chaos and Governance:
1) Financialization, Geopolitics and Global Governance in the 21st Century
2) New Strategies of Capital Accumulation, New Modalities of Domination
3) Anti-Systemic Movements: Land, Labor and Environmental Struggles
4) Hierarchies of Wealth and Power: Global Inequality and the North-South Divide

Please submit proposals (1-2 pages) by October 30th 2015 to Phillip Hough at phough2@fau.edu. Please include your institutional affiliation and contact information.

40th Annual Conference on the Political of Economy of the World-System (PEWS)
University of Maryland, College Park, MD, USA April 8-9, 2016. Submission deadline passed.

The 40th Conference on the Political Economy of the World-System will provide a unique opportunity to take stock of enduring theoretical and empirical contributions of this perspective, and to identify promising directions for future inquiry and discussion. To this end, we look for contributions offering analytical syntheses of major fields of inquiry (e.g., the spatial and temporal boundaries of global commodity chains; the construction and challenge of various dimensions of social inequality; systemic and anti-systemic social movements).

Conference Organization:
Scott Albrecht and Patricio Korzeniewicz, Department of Sociology, University of Maryland, College Park, MD, 20782, USA.

Conference Announcements Continued on page 9
Publications

Books


This handbook covers social movement activities in Latin American countries that have had profound consequences on the political culture of the region. It examines the developments of the past twenty years, such as a renewed upswing in popular mobilization, the ending of violent conflicts and military governments, new struggles and a relatively more democratic climate. It shows that, from southern Chiapas to Argentina, social movements in the 1990s and especially in the 2000s, have reached new heights of popular participation. There is a lack of research on the politics of this region in the contemporary era of globalization, this volume partially fills the void and offers a rich resource to students, scholars and the general public in terms of understanding the politics of mass mobilization in the early twenty-first century. The contributors each address social movement activity in their own nation and together they present a multidisciplinary perspective on the topic. Each chapter uses a case study design to bring out the most prominent attributes of the particular social struggle(s), for instance the main protagonists in the campaigns, the grievances of the population and the outcomes of the struggles. This Handbook is divided into seven substantive themes, providing overall coherence to a broad range of social conflicts across countries, issues and social groups. These themes include: 1) theory of Latin American social movements; 2) neoliberalism; 3) indigenous struggles; 4) women’s movements; 5) movements and the State; 6) environmental movements; and 7) transnational mobilizations.


Terrorism, mass uprisings, and political extremism are in the news every day. It is no coincidence that these phenomena come together at the beginning of a new era. *Radicals, Revolutionaries, and Terrorists* provides a comprehensive survey of the intersection of radical social movements and political violence. The book considers eight essential questions for understanding radicalism, including its origins, dynamics, and outcomes. Ranging across the globe from the 1500s to the present, the book examines cases as diverse as nineteenth-century anarchists, the Nazis, Che Guevara, the Weather Underground, Chechen insurgents, the Earth Liberation Front, Al-Qaeda, and the Arab Spring. Throughout, Colin J. Beck connects these cases to key social movements literature to demonstrate how using multiple areas of research results in better explanations.


Should surrogacy remain a private agreement? Should it be treated as an enforceable contract? Are surrogate mothers workers? What happens inside the countries that have chosen different ways of handling this new and controversial matter? And, the most important question of all: How can we live in this era of new techno-medical possibilities and try to stay human? Can we resist commodification in the field of human relations concerning procreation? *Contract Children* discusses the different ways available to obtain a child through surrogate motherhood. It is fundamental reading for anyone wanting to be involved in the surrogacy process. It gives prospective surrogate mothers and infertile couples the background information necessary for their own informed decision. It is also an essential instrument for policy makers and activists in the field of women's rights, social justice, and children's rights. The question of how to publicly deal with surrogate motherhood touches upon our social vision of motherhood, ultimately marking the position of women in contemporary society.

"Many thought China’s rise would fundamentally remake the global order. Yet, much like other developing nations, the Chinese state now finds itself in a status quo characterized by free trade and American domination. Through a cutting-edge historical, sociological, and political analysis, Ho-fung Hung details the competing interests and economic realities that temper the dream of Chinese supremacy—forces that are stymieing growth throughout the global South.”


"If you’re interested in cutting edge ecological thinking, Capitalism in the Web of Life is a must-read. Or if you’re interested in value. Or world history. Or food. Or energy. Or labour....There’s enough scholarship, wit and insight to leave your copy with margin notes on every page, and ideas for a lifetime." -- Raj Patel, author of Stuffed and Starved

Globalization and transnational capitalism in Asia and Oceania . Edited volume by Jeb Sprague. Published in August of 2015.

News headlines warn of rivalries and competing nations across Asia and the Pacific, even as powerful new cross-border relations form as never before. This book looks behind the Asia-Pacific curtain: at the new forms of social, economic, and political integration taking place through a global capitalism that is rife with contradictions, inequality, and crisis. We are moved beyond traditional conceptualizations of the inter-state system with its nation-state competition as the core organizing principle of world capitalism and the principal institutional framework that shapes the makeup of global social forces.

These important studies examine and debate over how there is a growing transnationality of material (economic) relations in the global era, as well as an emerging transnationality of many social and class relations. How does transnational capitalist class fractions, new middle strata, and labor undergird globalization in Asia and Oceania? How have states and institutions become entwined with such processes? This book provides insight into a field of dynamic change.

**Articles**


Nickow, Andre. 2015. "Growing in value: NGOs, social movements and the cultivation of developmental value chains in Uttarakhand, India." Global Networks 15 (s1), S45-S64.


Section Awards Presented at the 2015 ASA
PEWS Book Award Co-Winners:


Chin asks, “In what ways and with what consequences do contemporary economic restructuring processes encourage and facilitate women’s transnational migration for sex work?” (p.3). To answer this question, she uses a case study of non-trafficked women who migrate to work in the sex industry in Kuala Lumpur, the capital of Malaysia. Her book is exceedingly readable and insightful. She brings together in-depth interviews with thirty-nine migrant women and fieldwork observations of the syndicates they work for within a rich and innovative political economy framework. First, in her exploration of the structural transformations of Kuala Lumpur as a global city, she describes how the liberalization of tourism and education created paths for women to migrate to work in formal and informal low-wage sectors. This focus on the city is the first C in her “3C” framework. Second, she examines her second C, the creativity by which the Malaysian state seeks to contain and exclude migrant workers, thus producing and re-producing migrant illegality. Third, the richest part of her analysis is the third C, the cosmopolitan identities developed by migrant women shaped by the racialized-ethnicized, gendered, and classed hierarchies they encounter in this global city. Chin brings to light the stratified contact zones within with these women live, work, make choices, and create meaning in Kuala Lumpur. Her innovative political economy framework, her detailed ethnography, and engaging writing provide a model for future work in international political economy.

ASA Awards Continued

Robinson’s *Global Capitalism and the Crisis of Humanity* reconceptualizes the dynamics of the world economy in the twenty first century. In this rapidly changing era, the globalization of production is fragmented and decentralized into novel chains of production. In Robinson’s words, “national economies have been dismantled and then reconstituted as component elements of new globally integrated production and financial systems.” This new structure of global capitalism is characterized by economic transactions and wealth concentrated in a few thousand transnational corporations and controlled by an incipient transnational capital class. Robinson finds that representatives of the emerging transnational capitalist class are relatively diverse in terms of geography (they’re found in the core as much as the semi-periphery) and less tied to national identities compared to the past. The international faction of capital also increasingly took state power by the end of the twentieth century, accelerating the transition to full neoliberalism. Hence, Robinson forces us to alter our conventional understandings of the global class system in the age of a globalized capitalism. Robinson’s portrayal of the structure of international capital is also indispensable for resistance movements that seek to locate leverage points as they collectively strategize to achieve a more sustainable and equitable global system.

**Honorable Mention:**


**Distinguished Article Award:**


Donald Clelland’s path-breaking article, “The Core of the Apple: Dark Value and Degrees of Monopoly in Global Commodity Chains,” is methodologically creative and analytically meticulous. Clelland makes a timely and original contribution to our understanding of the relations of exploitation embedded in the capitalist world-system and opens up new avenues of research into global commodity chains. He returns commodity chain analysis to its conceptual roots in world-systems analysis by focusing on commodity transfers through surplus value chains. Clelland introduces the original concept of dark value to capture forms of exploited labor and externalities, including ecological that are embedded in global commodity chains but are not readily transparent, and then proceeds to quantify these forms of exploitation through a case study of first generation Apple iPads. In doing so, he pushes commodity chain analysis beyond the obvious visible inputs into global production and convincingly demonstrates that workers, households, informal sectors and ecosystems are exploited in concealed ways through monopoly control and unequal exchange to keep exported commodities cheap for distant customers and monopoly capitalists.

**Terence K. Hopkins Award (Best Student Paper):**

Victoria Reyes’ unique and timely article “The structure of globalized travel: a relational country-pair analysis” combines a world-system perspective on global inequality with a network approach to globalized travel and tourism. In so doing, Reyes is able to effectively illustrate how, despite consistent calls from international financial institutions encouraging tourism as a means of economic development, travel is not global but is instead limited to a relatively small number of countries. Reyes’ article is especially unique because, unlike most macro-studies of global inequality, she highlights the role that culture plays in manipulating and attracting global travel. By combining data on documented international travel with a unique indicator of cultural wealth, Reyes convincingly shows how institutional connections and country history have a substantial impact on global travel. It is the particular relationship between countries, Reyes argues, that affects individual travel preferences and reinforces global asymmetries. Her analysis of country-pair variables, for example, reveals that a scant “2.26 percent of all country-pairs account for 90 percent of global travel” (2013:154). In addition to her excellent contributions to the literature on globalization, structural and economic inequality, and global tourism, Reyes also provides future researchers with an excellent foundation for understanding the nuances of globalized travel that will be useful for years to come.

Conference Announcements Continued from page 4

The 37th Annual Hawai’i Sociological Association Conference
University of Hawai’i at Hilo
February 20-21 2016
CALL FOR PAPERS

Subaltern Sociology: Social Justice, Islands, and Movements
The subaltern captures the simultaneity of oppression and resistance embodied in marginalized peoples along with the need for understanding our social worlds from these positions. Subaltern is a term associated with the post-colonial experience, referring to groups in society that have been oppressed or exploited due to gender, sexuality, race, migrant status, class, nation, ability, indigeneity, rurality, or region. Islanders too, because island geographies can be eclipsed by mainland-centered approaches of development and because the distinct cultural and social resistance found on them, often are included as subaltern. On islands and globally, social justice movements are converging to stop and address the increasing disparities and infringements on human rights and ecological damage. Recognizing the different localities and positionalities by which sociology is produced, a subaltern sociology seeks to draw together subfields and approaches in the discipline and contribute to building a just and equitable society.

Keynote Speaker: Dr. Manisha Desai, Associate Professor of Sociology and Women, Gender, and Sexuality Studies, University of Connecticut

Submissions are open and we welcome papers and sessions not only on substantive areas of sociology and from related disciplines tied to the conference themes but also presentations on instruction, teaching methodologies, student mentorship, and professional development (e.g. careers in sociology, preparing for the job market, graduate school). Please submit an abstract of approximately 250 words for presentations or complete sessions to mkarides@hawaii.edu and kfrench@hawaii.edu by November 27, 2015.

Come join us for sociology with aloha!

For more information visit: https://sites.google.com/site/hawaiisociology/home
Abolitionism and Restorative Justice in Chicago
Brendan McQuade, DePaul University

In Chicago’s 2015 mayoral election, the incumbent Rahm Immanuel and the challenger Jesus 'Chuy' Garcia both promised to hire more police. At first glance, this pro-police position appears sound. In the past decade, there have been between 400 and 500 homicides per year in Chicago. This consistent level of violence has earned Chicago national infamy, exemplified in the distasteful and controversial moniker “Chiraq.” The sensational focus on violent crime obscures a more complicated picture, however. With approximately 450 police officers per 100,000 residents, Chicago is also the most policed city in the United States. This oversized police force is aggressive. Chicago stops and frisks youth at four times the rate of the NYPD’s more controversial program. Policing is clearly not the answer to Chicago’s problems. As many sociologist and criminologists have long argued, the roots of violent crime lie in social causes: poverty and segregation. What is more, the disruptive effects of aggressive policing and mass incarceration further exacerbate these problems, criminalizing and marginalizing already disadvantaged communities.

At the 2015 of meeting of the American Sociological Association, the Political Economy of the World System Section co-sponsored a panel that highlighted the alternative solutions being put forward by grassroots activists. The event featured speakers: David Kelly, a Catholic priest of the Missionaries of the Precious Blood; Page May, a Chicago-based organizer with We Charge Genocide; Byron Hobbs, the executive director of Southsiders Organized for Unity and Liberation (SOUL), an inclusive, multi-generational social justice organization comprised of religious congregations, affordable housing groups, block clubs, students, and neighborhood groups across the South Side and South Suburbs; and Frank Chapman, the field organizer and Educational Director of the Chicago Alliance Against Racist and Political Repression (CAARPR).

Together, the speakers provided vivid example of the struggle of communities across Chicago to establish community control of police, roll back mass incarceration, build alternative institutions to restore justice to their communities, and, in the long term, abolish police and prisons. These activists provide a transformative vision, one that is increasingly important in a political moment where both parties talk about rolling back mass incarceration but still struggle to think of security beyond policing. While their work is specific to the struggles around the carceral state, they also exemplify an important shift and the character of antisystemic movements. These movements do not practice the old two-step strategy of the Old Left: seize the state and remake society. Instead, they provide expression to the new-two step strategy recently enunciated by Grace Lee Boggs: personal and community transformation that leads to political and institutional transformation.

Dave Kelly and Page May explained how their work heals the damage of the carceral state and develops leadership. In Chicago, the Missionaries of the Precious Blood work to combat the deleterious effects of a criminal justice predicated on punishing. The organization works out the Back of the Yards/New City neighborhood of Chicago, a community that struggles with issues of poverty, gangs, and racial divisions. Their peace circles provide a safe place for residents to work through the trauma that infuses their community. The work is built around the five principles of restorative justice: (1) repairing harm; (2) the radical hospitality required to welcome hurt people; (3) accompaniment; (4) engagement with families, stakeholders, and systems; (5) collaboration.

Where Kelly’s work seeks to provide services in challenging neighborhoods, Page May does more explicitly radical leadership development work. May is one of the co-founders of We Charge Genocide, a grassroots, inter-generational effort to center the voices and experiences of the young people most targeted by police violence in Chicago. The organization formed last summer in response to the death of Dominique Franklin Jr, known to his friends as Damo, who passed away after a police
Restorative Justice Continued

officer shocked him with a taser. Damo’s friends were devastated by the loss and demoralized by feeling that Damo’s life taken and there would be no consequence.

The nascent group decided to create a new project: a reiteration of an effort of a group of Black activists who in 1951 took a petition to the United Nations. The petition, called "We Charge Genocide," cited over 150 police killings of Black people in the United States. This new group decided to compile a similar report about police violence against youth of color in Chicago and to send a delegation to Switzerland to present the report to the UN Committee Against Torture. The reformed adopted the name We Charge Genocide to recalled parallel tactics from a moment in time in which conversations about anti-Black violence were being brought to a world stage, specifically in relation to anti-colonial movements in Africa, and there was a more broad-based political basis for global and diasporic Black solidarity. May was the lead author of the report one of the 8 youth delegates who traveled to the United Nations. While the organization formed as an immediate response to the traumatic death of Damo, its work has continued. We Charge Genocide has organized around campaigns to win reparations for victims of police torture, pass a local ordinance to record police stops, and bring justice for Rekia Boyd, who was killed by an off duty police officer in 2012. As a related project, May is also one of the co-founders of Assata’s Daughters, an intergenerational organizing collective for Black women in Chicago.

Bryon Hobbs spoke about SOUL, a more traditional advocacy organization. Unlike many advocates, however, SOUL is a grassroots organization rooted in the communities of Chicago’s South Side. Hobbs spoke about the SOUL’s efforts to fight the carceral state. In January SOUL launched Decarcerate Chi, campaign to end the mass incarceration and criminalization of black and brown people in Chicago and Illinois. The Cook County Jail is the largest pretrial detention center in the country. It holds people for unnecessarily pending trial. SOUL is currently engaged in a campaign of direct action in support of a decriminalization bill that would divert non-violent drug offenders from the prison system. They are also running a related campaign to end bail for people who do not pose a threat or flight risk. With a new bipartisan consensus emerging on criminal justice reform, Hobbs explained that it’s time to “go big or go home” and work to transform the carceral state.

Like Hobbs, Frank Champan and CAARPR seek to reform the carceral state. Champan was wrongfully convicted of murder and armed robbery in 1961 and sentenced to life and fifty years in the Missouri State Prison. His case was taken up by the National Alliance Against Racist and Political Repression (NAARPR) and after 14 years imprisonment he was released in 1976. In 1983 he was elected Executive Director of NAARPR. He has been a part of leading the struggle in Chicago for the past three years to stop police crimes, especially murder, torture, beatings and racial profiling. His current work centers around an effort to legislation that would create an elected Civilian Police Accountability Council with powers to appoint the police commissioner, rewrite the police rule book, investigate police shootings, and otherwise oversee the police department. When Champan spoke, CAARPR was in the final push for mobilize for a demonstration in support on the legislation.

In short, these four panelist spoke of the important and innovative activism happening in the United States around issues of state violence. While many want to reduce the Black Lives Matter to a project of cultural affirmation and protest movement with no alternative vision, Kelly, May, Hobbs and Chapman show that these upsurge in protest is part of longer trajectory of political action rooted in community struggles for justice, decency, and autonomy. Most importantly, these organizations show a new revolutionary two step strategy. Their work to heal the damage of the carceral state, build alternative institutions, and develop leaders is connected to and informs a project of abolitionist reform.
The Globalization of Jamaican Ganja
John M. Talbot, University of the West Indies, Mona

As of April 15, 2015, ganja has been decriminalized in Jamaica. Possession of less than two ounces of ganja for personal use is now a ticketable offense, punishable by a fine equivalent to about US $4.50. Rastafarians can now legally use ganja as a religious sacrament. The new law also legalizes the use of ganja for medical purposes and provides for the creation of a licensed medical ganja industry. Criminalization of ganja in Jamaica has created problems similar to those it has caused in the US. According to the Minister of National Security, nearly half of all arrests in Jamaica were ganja related. Poor and lower class youth were the ones who were being arrested for possession of ganja, despite the fact that it is used by all social classes. The resulting criminal record then made it difficult for youth to get jobs in the formal sector and they had to subsist in the informal sector or turn to criminal gangs. As part of the decriminalization, the government has also expunged the criminal records of many people who were recently arrested for possession of small amounts of ganja.

Decriminalization and outright legalization have been discussed for decades in Jamaica. A National Ganja Commission chaired by noted anthropologist Barry Chevannes (who authored an early, definitive study of Rastafarianism) recommended decriminalization in 2001. But the government of Jamaica has been reluctant to move on this issue, afraid of what their very large neighbor to the north would do. The real impetus for this change in the law has been the legalization of medical marijuana in 23 US states plus Washington DC and in Canada, and the more recent legalization of recreational use in 4 US states plus DC.

The Ministry of Industry, Investment and Commerce (MIIC), through its Bureau of Standards Jamaica (BSJ) has put forward an ambitious plan to protect and profit from Jamaica’s biological resources in ganja. The plan envisions identification and registration of the various strains of ganja grown in Jamaica. The registered strains would be owned by the communities where the strains were developed. This of course requires research to document the genetic profiles and chemical compositions of the different strains, which would be carried out at our two major universities, University of the West Indies (UWI) and University of Technology (UTech). There would be a seed repository which would distribute seeds to anyone wanting to grow the different strains. And, since Jamaicans would be registered owners of the strains of marijuana grown from the seeds, they would earn royalties on every plant grown, harvested and sold. There would also be licenses to consume ganja in Jamaica for medical purposes, available to residents and tourists, so the government would rake in money from licensing as well as sales taxes (which in Jamaica are of the magnitude of European VATs, at 16.5%).

This is all still just a plan, and implementation of plans is not a strong suit of the Jamaican government, its ministries and agencies. All of this requires establishment of a seed repository and a Cannabis Licensing Authority, which will probably take a few years. In fact, as of early June, the police had not even received the ticket books they would need to issue tickets for possession of less than two ounces of ganja, and there was no estimate of when the ticket books would be ready.

President Obama visited Jamaica just before decriminalization took effect. There was much talk in Jamaica about the money we would earn from ganja, and someone asked Obama about it in a town hall meeting. In what I thought was an astounding statement by a US president (he never would have gotten away with this inside the US), he said that Jamaicans shouldn’t expect ganja to be a “silver bullet” to solve Jamaica’s economic problems, and that Jamaicans should realize that large corporations would be moving to control the trade, as they do with all other products. And he was right. Developments are moving much faster than the Jamaican government.
Ganja Market Continued

Two Jamaican ganja researchers, Drs. Manley West and Albert Lockhart have developed two medications from ganja: canasol, for the treatment of glaucoma, and asmasol, for the treatment of asthma. In collaboration with UWI, they formed a task force on commercialization of ganja, which held a conference in May 2014 with the slogan, “Wake Up Jamaica, Our Opportunities are Slipping Away.”

Dr. Henry Lowe, another Jamaican ganja researcher, founded Jamaica’s first medical marijuana company, Medicanja, in 2013. In October 2014, he introduced the company’s first seven products; creams, ointments and sprays to ease pain and inflammation and to treat nausea. He has applied to the Jamaica Intellectual Property Office (JIPO) for registration of these products. In fact, within ten days of the new ganja law coming into effect, the JIPO had received 15 applications for patents or trademarks for ganja products. Approval has to wait on the development of the legal and regulatory framework for the medical marijuana industry.

These are the efforts from the Jamaican side to take advantage of the new law, develop value-added ganja products, and insure that ownership of the intellectual property related to ganja remains with Jamaicans. They face several major hurdles. None of these products have yet been approved for sale in the US or Canada, and the research needed to support applications for approval will be expensive. Even if this is achieved, it will not prevent North American companies from developing similar products through slightly different processes, which potentially could compete with the Jamaican products and devalue their intellectual property. And it ignores the intellectual property associated with the biological resource on which the products are based, Jamaican ganja.

Just as President Obama predicted, cannabis capital from North America is moving rapidly to take advantage of the new situation. United Cannabis Corporation, based in Denver, has formed a 50-50 joint venture with Jamaican investors called Cannabinoid Research and Development Company. United Cannabis claims to have a genetic catalogue of well over 150 strains of marijuana as well as intellectual property in various oils, lotions and pills derived from it. This joint venture will give them access to the Jamaican ganja strains.

UTech has formed a public-private joint venture with another Denver-based company, Ganja Labs, a subsidiary of Ganja Inc., “to develop high-quality ganja strains.” Interestingly, the “chief ganja officer” of Ganja Inc. is a Jamaican who was formerly the CEO of Marley Coffee (see below), now also based in Denver.

In these cases, the North American cannabis capitalists are more interested in the intellectual property related to the genetic resources of the distinctively Jamaican strains of ganja, which the BSJ plan is also focused on. In the United Cannabis case, Jamaicans will at least have 50% ownership. The Ganja Labs case is less clear; the shares of ownership of the partners have not been reported, but the company is aiming to develop new strains that it will own, presumably based in part on Jamaican genetic material. These cases present the potential for biopiracy, where the genetic resources of the South come to be owned by Northern capitalists.

Then there is the Marley family. Bob Marley, like many Jamaican men, fathered a large number of children with several different women. These children and Bob’s widow now control Tuff Gong International, the Marley family enterprise (the name is derived from Bob’s Jamaican nickname). It was started by Bob as a record label and recording studio, but has now expanded into other businesses, most notably licensing the use of Bob’s image (often smoking a spliff) on every kind of tourist souvenir imaginable.
Ganja Market Continued

One of the children, Rohan Marley, recently started a coffee company, Marley Coffee, to market organic Jamaican Blue Mountain coffee in the US. (For those of you who are not coffee aficionados, Blue Mountain is considered one of the world’s best coffees. It sells for incredibly high prices in the US market, primarily because of scarcity. Japanese importers, who have been involved in the Jamaican coffee industry for decades, buy over 80% of it.) Marley coffee uses the registered trademark “100% Jamaican Blue Mountain Coffee,” which is owned by the Jamaican Coffee Industry Board. This experience of taking a Jamaican-grown product, with its associated intellectual property owned by Jamaicans, processing it and marketing it directly in the US, thus controlling the entire commodity chain, makes the Marleys’ entry into the ganja business even more mind-boggling.

Last year, Seattle-based Privateer Holdings announced a deal with the Marley family to develop a brand, Marley Natural, to be used to market both ganja and value-added products. The announcement said that the brand would be used on strains of ganja “similar to those Bob might have smoked in his homeland.” In other words, the ganja will not be Jamaican, the entire commodity chain will be controlled by the North American company, and the Marley family will receive a licensing fee. The only Jamaican intellectual property involved will be Bob’s name and image. Ethnomusicologist Steve Heilig, who studies reggae, blasted the deal in a column in the Jamaica Gleaner titled, “Are the Marleys high?” He labeled Privateer Holdings “pure Babylon” for its desire to profit from the Marley name and challenged the family to devote all of its profits from the deal to build human service facilities in Jamaica. The struggle for control of the Jamaican ganja commodity chain has begun, and Jamaica appears to be losing badly.

JWSR Moves to Second Generation of Open Access Publishing!
—Action Needed by PEWS Members

By the Journal of World-Systems Research Editorial Office
Jackie Smith, Editor
Danny Burridge, Managing Editor
George Weddington, Managing Editor

After twenty years of publishing as an independent Open Access journal affiliated with the PEWS Section of the ASA, the Journal of World-Systems Research has moved to the next generation of Open Access publishing with the support of an institutional publisher, the University of Pittsburgh’s Office of Scholarly Publishing e-journal platform. The new platform enables authors to submit papers online, and it will streamline our review process. Most importantly, this move will help us make the content of JWSR more accessible to readers all over the world. The skilled librarians who operate this platform take pride in their efforts to maximize the visibility of journal content and to ensure that content remains free and open to all readers. These same information specialists are working to help authors and readers assess the wider impact of our journal’s content, and Plum Analytics is used to monitor the use of our journal’s content. When metrics are available, you’ll see a Plum Analytics icon beneath the article’s abstract. (Unfortunately, this feature is only available for articles published on the new platform, starting with the Summer 2015 issue, Vol. 21/2). In addition, our publishers are ensuring that our journal is included in the major scholarly indices used for professional evaluations. This is something we were unable to do as an independently published online journal.
Open Access Publishing Continued

There are a few new features we’d like to point out to PEWS section members and other readers. First, you should note that the old website addresses (URLs) from jwsr.org are no longer valid, as the journal content has been moved to a new server. So all those old links you’ve saved need to be updated. The good news, however, is that now every article ever published in JWSR now has its own Digital Object Identifier (DOI) which provides a permanent reference to the document. This will not ever change, even if the journal moves to a different platform or server. Please use the article DOI when referencing papers, rather than the web address in your browser. We are in the process of updating the old links in the journal archives, so please be patient (and if you find a bad link to JWSR content on the site, please send us the article name, volume, number, page, and we’ll fix it). Please let us know of any other glitches you find on the site: It was a big job to set up the new site, and we no doubt have overlooked a few details!

If you haven’t yet done so, please go to the www.jwsr.org website and create or update your profile. Be sure to include your review interests, if you see this option on your profile form. If you are not registered as a reviewer and would like to be please let us know (send an email to jwsr@pitt.edu).

When submitting a paper, be sure to upload a blinded version of your paper. There are instructions on the submission screen of the steps for doing this. All author data is entered into submission form, so your paper is linked to the author within the system.

Finally, we want to remind you that October 19-25 is Open Access Week. As scholars and citizens it is critical for us to be involved in the efforts to keep information free and accessible to those who need and want it. This growing movement is worth finding out more about, and we encourage PEWS members to visit the Open Access week website to learn more about Open Access and its political importance, to find out about OA Week events, or to list an event on your campus. Consider contacting a librarian on your campus to find out if there are OA advocates near you, and find out how you can support the movement for the knowledge commons as an author and reviewer.

One World-System or Many? A Critical Appraisal of the Work of Christopher Chase-Dunn

A panel assessing the impact of the scholarship of Christopher Chase-Dunn, recipient of the PEWS 2014 Distinguished Career Award, was held at this year’s ASA meeting in Chicago. This session, organized by Jeff Kentor, included Ho-fung Hung, Valerie Moghadam, Andrew Jorgenson, and Jackie Smith. A wide range of topics was discussed, including Chase-Dunn’s contribution to our understanding of pre-modern/non-western world systems and dynamics of hegemony, his work on the semi-periphery and social movements, his influence on environmental sociology, and his work on the World Social Forum. Further noted were his numerous service contributions our section, including creation of the Journal of World-Systems Research. Many appreciative personal comments were also made by both panelists of the audience about Chase-Dunn’s impact on their own careers. A more formal assessment of Chase-Dunn’s work, by the session panelists and others, is scheduled for a forthcoming special issue and members of JWSR.

Written by Jeffrey Kentor, Eastern Michigan University
Thank you for all those that contributed to this edition. Look for the Spring Issue of PEWS NEWS in April 2015!

Ben Marley
Department of Sociology
Binghamton University